

COMMITTEE ON AGING (CONA) 2024 Annual Report

Mission statement

There shall be a Committee on Aging that shall concern itself with furthering the major purpose of APA to advance psychology as a science and profession and as a means of promoting health and human welfare by ensuring that older adults, especially the growing numbers of older women and minorities, receive the attention of the association. Specifically, the committee will pursue the following goals:

Science: Provide strong and visible advocacy for a scientific agenda on aging to policymakers and private and public funding agencies.

Practice: Promote the practice of psychology by advocating policies that enhance the availability and reimbursement of health and mental health services to older adults and their families.

Policy: Contribute to the formulation and support of public policies and associated regulations that promote optimal development of older adults, facilitate psychological practice with older persons, and expand scientific understanding of adult development and aging.

Education: Promote inclusion of knowledge about adult development and aging in all levels of education, including continuing education, training programs and professional development of psychologists.

Public Interest: Promote the application of psychological knowledge to the well being of older people, with special attention to the influences of gender, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation and family in science, practice and policy relating to older adults.

Public Affairs: Develop and disseminate information concerning the scientific findings and practice issues about older adults to psychologists, other professionals, policymakers and the public.

APA: Serve as a visible focus for the coordination of information among groups within APA that address aging issues and offer consultation to relevant APA boards, committees, divisions, state associations and directorates; also ensure that older members of APA receive the appropriate attention of the association

2024 Members

Christopher Nguyen, PhD, ABPP (chair), Rebecca S. Allen, PhD, ABPP, Lisa Lind, PhD, ABPP, Cecilia Poon, Ph.D., ABPP, Ann Steffen, Ph.D., ABPP, and Susan Krauss Whitbourne, Ph.D., ABPP

Science:

- CONA provided comments to the National Institute of Health 2026-2030 strategy planning
- Rebecca Allen was the recipient and the Principal Investigator of a Graduate Psychology Education grant funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (2D40HP33364), Department of Health and Human Services, for a grant titled, “Responding to the Deep South’s Opioid and Substance Use Crisis (ReDO)”

Practice:

- CONA members participated in the BPA town hall on becoming a multi-tiered profession
- Lisa Lind participated in a meeting with APA Advocacy and US House Representatives to discuss the proposed Increasing Mental Health Options Act
- CONA members discussed future collaboration with APA Advocacy as it relates to the Physician Fee schedule and Medicare reimbursement rates for psychological and neuropsychological testing and assessment services

Policy:

- CONA provided comments for the CRSSPP Geropsychology Specialty Petition (renewal petition)
- CONA provided comments to the Older Americans Act Request for Information
- APA guidelines for the Psychological Practice of Older Adults were approved on February 24 by the Council
- CONA provided comments to APA's Guidelines on Trauma Competencies for Education and Training
- CONA provided comments to the Call for Public Comments: APA Professional practice guidelines on Measurement-Based Care, with Lisa Lind specifically serving on the committee
- CONA provided comments to the policy statement on Advancing Evidence-Based Prevention across the Lifespan.
- CONA provided comments on the Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Adults
- CONA provided comments on the Revisions to APA's Telepsychology Practice Guidelines
- CONA provided comments on APA Guidelines for Psychological Evaluations in Child Protection Matters
- APA's Senior Director, Congressional and Federal Relations, Serena Davila, JD, joined CONA's monthly meetings to provide the Committee with updates on APA's state and federal advocacy work relevant to aging issues.
- Cecilia Poon provided comments on the Report of Presidential Task Force on Immigration and Health
- Ann Steffen and Lisa Lind organized a Workgroup to revise/update the APA Resolution on Family Caregivers
- Rebecca Allen and Cecilia Poon organized a Workgroup to revise/update APA's 2017 Resolution on Palliative Care and End-of-life Issues
- Susan Whitbourne and Chris Nguyen reviewed/updated the APA Ageism Resolution
- Ann Steffen and Lisa Lind collaborated with the Workgroup to revise/update the APA Resolution on Family Caregivers, along with the APA Advocacy Office, to draft the Caregiver Policy Statement to be reviewed at the February 2025 Council Meeting
- Susan Whitbourne and Chris Nguyen collaborated with the APA Advocacy Office to draft the Ageism Policy Statement to be reviewed at the February 2025 Council Meeting

Education:

- Rebecca Allen represented CONA in a presentation for the National Council on Aging's 7th Annual Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day entitled "*Managing Substance Use Crises in Older Adults: Innovative Models for Screening and Treatment*". The live session was attended by 1,478 individuals, with 80 on-demand views as of 6/30/2024. The session was very well received.
- Rebecca Allen mentored a Critical Conversation presentation at the APA Convention, titled "*Enhancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Geropsychology: Barriers and Facilitators*"
- Rebecca Allen and colleagues contributed to a chapter titled "Clinical Geropsychology," to be published in the forthcoming APA Handbook on Adult Development and Aging.
- Ann Steffen and a colleague provided a 4-hour workshop at the 2024 APA Convention titled "*Aging at the Intersection: Expanding Your Practice to Address the Needs of Diverse Older Adults*"
- Ann Steffen offered a 3-hour single CE webinar for the APA Clinicians Corner Series, titled "*Treating Later-Life Depression: Personalized Approaches*"
- Anne Steffen and a colleague offered a 3-hour webinar for the Missouri Psychological Association, titled "*Telehealth with Psychotherapy Clients in the Second Half of Life*"
- Ann Steffen offered a 90-minute CE webinar at APA 2024, titled "*Brain Health in the Second Half of Life: Strategies and Tool for Clinicians*"
- Cecilia Poon co-organized Nebraska Mental Health and Aging Coalition's 8th Annual Mental Health and Aging Conference on Assessment and Treatment of Late Life Hoarding Disorder
- Cecilia Poon presented a 1.5-hour webinar to the Nebraska Internship Consortium for Professional Psychology on Working with Older Adults based on the updated APA Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults.

Public Interest:

- CONA met with APA Media to discuss the role of psychologists in addressing ageism in election media coverage and the broader issue of ageism in society and media.
- Chris Nguyen participated in APA's 2024 Member Disability Inclusion Strategy Forum
- CONA provided comments to APA Advocacy staff on the written testimony to the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging Field Hearing—From Infancy to Aging: The Effects of Caregiving Across the Lifespan
- Lisa Lind, Cecilia Poon, and Chris Nguyen co-authored an article entitled, "*Reframing Aging in Politics: Evaluating Job Candidates Beyond Chronological Age*" that was published in Caring for the Ages newsletter of the Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association
- Lisa Lind contributed to an article for the Monitor, entitled "*Treating substance misuse in older adults Substance use often goes untreated in older adults, but psychologists have the skills and knowledge to help*"

Public Affairs:

- CONA met with APA Media to discuss landing page (i.e., APA website revisions)

- CONA collaborated with Jim Sliwa, APA Director of Public Affairs, and contributed to establishing an advisory group of aging specialists to be dispatched to reporters, providing experts on cognition and aging, specifically mild cognitive impairment, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease in older adults.
- For BAPPI's Mitigating Bias, Stigma, and Discrimination (BSD) to Advance Equity Diversity & Inclusion Initiative, Chris Nguyen reviewed House Bill 23 of the 134th General Assembly that added dementia training to the New Peace Officer curriculum
- For BAPPI's Mitigating Bias, Stigma, and Discrimination (BSD) to Advance Equity Diversity & Inclusion Initiative, Chris Nguyen presented at the Ohio Department of Public Service's Older Road User Emphasis Area meeting about current national trends regarding aging/dementia and the impact on safety (i.e. Roadways), and participated in the development of a 5-year strategy on interprofessional screening, prevention, and reduction of traffic accidents among older road users.

APA:

- CONA met with members of APA leadership, including President Cynthia de las Fuentes, PhD, President-elect Debra Kawahara, PhD, and Past-President Thema Bryant, PhD, Board of Directors member Talee Vang, PsyD, and BAPPI Chair Kelly McConnell, PhD, and senior staff to promote additional attention to aging issues.
- CONA met with President-Elect Candidate Wendi S. Williams, PhD, to discuss/promote additional attention to aging issues
- CONA provided nominees for the Board of Educational Affairs
- CONA successfully advocated for expertise with aging to be listed as a desired/specific quality for the Member-at-Large candidates
- CONA nominated four candidates for Member-at-Large positions
- APA Continuing Education Committee (CEC) and Liaison to CONA facilitated discussion on collaborations
- CONA attended the virtual summit on Addressing Population Health via Mental Health Technology
- CONA met with a board member from APA's Policy and Planning Board at SCM to discuss ongoing efforts related to aging
- CONA reviewed and provided comments to the APA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Office foundational document that will support the introduction of the Accessibility and Inclusion Maturity Model (AIMM)
- CONA chair Chris Nguyen attended the 2024 Psychology Day at the United Nations
- CONA Award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging was presented to Karlene Ball, PhD, in recognition of her extraordinary contributions to education, practice, scholarship, public interest, and public policy in geropsychology.
- CONA Chair and Chair-Elect participated in quarterly Geropsychology Leadership and Specialty Council Team meetings to enhance collaboration on shared priorities and ensure efficient use of resources in addressing those priorities
- CONA hosted a conversation hour with Division 20 and Division 12-II members to discuss updates for the most frequently visited APA website specific to aging
- CONA advocated for a Webinar Series on the updated APA guidelines for psychological practice with older adults
- CONA Chair provided updates to Division 20 and Division 12- Section II newsletters

- CONA welcomed Dustin Hammers, PhD, the CONA liaison from the Society for Clinical Neuropsychology (APA Division 40) to the April meeting.
- CONA discussed the formal liaison from the Society for Counseling Psychology (APA Division 17) with CONA; Ayli Pinedo, PhD (current BAPPI member and liaison to CONA), discussed a formal position with the D17 presidential trio, and will serve as D17 Liaison to CONA
- CONA welcomed Joann Montepare, PhD, Ranak Trivedi, PhD, and Cristina Pinheiro as 2025-2027 CONA members
- CONA member Rebecca Allen was voted as President-Elect of APA Division 20, Adult Development and Aging.