Wealth and health in predicting elders’ social capabilities in China: mediating role of social network

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and participation in activities, feelings of being valued by others, barriers to supports and services, and the overall isolation experienced by older adults. The responses from 1,719 urban and rural older adults indicate that 24.1% of respondents felt that they lack support, 17.2% feel less connected to family and friends, and 16.8% of respondents do not feel valued by their friends and family. Overall, almost one-quarter (23.9%) of the survey respondents score ‘high’ or ‘medium’ on a Social Isolation Index. One-third of respondents report they experience barriers to participation in activities outside the home. Several key categories of barriers were identified: health, personal, environmental, social, transportation and systemic. Respondents identified accommodation, services, practices, and activities as areas where their community could assist in participation of community activities outside of the home. Social isolation can have serious health consequences for older adults. The results of this survey highlight several key areas that older adults identify as important for reducing their feelings of isolation and enhancing their overall health and well-being.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A PEER-BASED INTERVENTION ON SOCIALLY ISOLATED OLDER CHINESE IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA

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Objectives: This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of a peer-based intervention in reducing older Chinese immigrants’ loneliness and social isolation to improve their psychosocial well-being. Method: A randomized controlled trial design was adopted. A sample of 60 community-dwelling older Chinese immigrants aged 65 and above were randomly assigned to the intervention group (n=30) and the control group (n=30). Intervention group participants received an eight-week peer support intervention. 25 volunteers aged 48 to 76 were recruited and trained to provide one-to-one peer support services through home visits and telephone. The services included multiple activities such as providing emotional support, assisting in problem-solving, and community resources sharing. Different types of activities were consecutively executed throughout the eight weeks in accordance with the service protocol. Standardized assessments including loneliness, social support, social participation, and other psychosocial outcomes such as life satisfaction, happiness, depression, and resilience at baseline and after intervention were measured. Results: After the intervention, as compared to control group participants, intervention group participants reported a significant decrease in loneliness, fewer barriers in social participation, and a significant increase in resilience. They also reported fewer depressive symptoms, increased life satisfaction, and happiness, but no such improvements were observed in the control group. Discussion: The study findings illustrate the need to further examine the use of peer-based interventions for both program effectiveness and delivery efficiency. In the era of population aging, baby boomers can be trained to provide emotional support, assisting in problem-solving, and community resources sharing. Different types of activities can be executed throughout the eight weeks in accordance with the service protocol. Standardized assessments can be used to measure loneliness, social support, social participation, and other psychosocial outcomes.

SELECTION OF MEDICAL AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS TO MAXIMIZE HEALTHSPAN

Chair: Viviana I. Perez, Linus Pauling Institute, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, United States

The mechanistic target of rapamycin (mTOR) is a key nutrient and growth factor-responsive pathway that has emerged as a central regulator of aging. Inhibition of mTOR complex I in particular has been found to increase lifespan and improve functional declines during aging in yeast, worms, flies, and mice. Recently clinical studies have provided the first evidence that similar effects may be achievable in pet dogs and in elderly people. This session will focus on new discoveries related to mTOR signaling and aging.

MECHANISMS OF NEUROPROTECTION BY MTOR INHIBITORS

Veronica Galvan1, J. Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies, San Antonio, Texas, United States

The mammalian/mechanistic target-of-rapamycin (mTOR) inhibitor rapamycin, that delays aging in mice, halts and even reverses memory deficits, and restores cerebral blood flow (CBF), neuronal activation, and neurovascular coupling in