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Focus on aging: a critical issue for us all!



In 1975, Dr. Robert Butler, the first Director of the National Institute on Aging, won the Pulitzer Prize for his book *Why survive? Being old in America* portraying the elderly as poor, isolated and ignored, due to a form of prejudice called ageism. The elderly faced inadequate and unsecured pensions, Social Security rules limiting the option to work, forced retirement, marginal housing, and inadequate and costly medical care. He also contended that community services did not meet the needs of the elderly in the areas of safety, transportation, shopping, home care, and recreational and social amenities. He recommended a reordering of national priorities and the development of a national policy on aging. But the same problems are still with us.

Worldwide, the population is aging at an unprecedented rate. Each month, 800,000 more people join the ranks of those 65 and over. Older Alaskans will account for more than 10 percent of the State's population by 2018, up from 5 percent in 1998. Specialized workers, programs and facilities will be required.

UAA has responded! The Departments of Sociology and Psychology are collaborating to offer a new interdisciplinary minor in gerontology. In August, UAA also received a \$2 million grant from the Federal Health Resources and Service Administration to help fund the new Alaska Geriatric Education Center. The Alaska GEC joins 46 other Geriatric Education Centers in America to train health professions faculty, students and practitioners in the diagnosis and treatment of seniors' health problems.

Health care providers will also need the best possible information resources on the aging process to meet the physical, psychological and social needs of seniors.

Aging Resources Online

Aging with Dignity: Information, advice and legal tools to ensure that a loved one's wishes regarding medical care will be respected. Includes information about *Five Wishes*, an excellent living will. <http://www.agingwithdignity.org/>

National Institute on Aging: Informative website from NIA which leads the federal effort on aging research. <http://www.nia.nih.gov/>

U.S Administration on Aging: Information on federal programs for seniors and their caregivers, the aging process and healthy lifestyles for seniors. <http://www.aoa.gov/>

CarePlanner: a highly useful living/care arrangement "decision support tool" for seniors and others with physical disabilities or chronic illnesses. <http://www.careplanner.org>

Health Compass is a free self-guided learning program designed to help seniors locate and better understand information on aging and health. <http://www.healthcompass.org/>

Geriatric Grand Rounds Lectures: A unique resource designed to help physicians understand how to better care for geriatric patients. Covers both physical and psychological aspects of aging. Free CME credit. <http://www.virginia geriatics.org/grounds/index.html>

Regence BlueShield: An excellent library of health and wellness information for seniors. Take the shortcut to the Health Library. <http://www.wa.regence.com>

AgeSource Worldwide: New database from AARP covering more than 200 information resources on aging or closely allied subjects from 24 countries, mostly North America and Europe. http://research.aarp.org/general/agesource_home.html

AgeLine Database: summaries of publications on aging and life at 50+, retirement, baby boomers, health, long term care, caregiving, Medicare, Social Security, older workers, grandparents, nursing homes, Alzheimers. <http://research.aarp.org/ageline/>

Aging well - in a nutshell!



- Remain involved, stay working if you love it.
- Retire if you don't enjoy your work.
- Be kind to your body and keep physically active.
- Maintain your mind - read, think and learn.
- Enrich your emotional life with friends and family.



Goodbye Carol ...

Our wonderful office manager for almost 30 years is retiring this month to be a full-time grandma. We wish her a long and happy retirement. You are welcome to send your good wishes to Carol at ayhsis@uaa.alaska.edu

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Sally Bremner 09/29/03