



The Center for Aging
Research and Education
SCHOOL OF NURSING
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2021

Annual Report

ESTABLISHED RELATIONSHIPS WITH

NINE

**CARE AND COMMUNITY
SETTINGS**

RECRUITED

160+

**OLDER ADULT
VOLUNTEERS**

FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS
WITH SCHOOL OF NURSING
UNDERGRADUATES

DEVELOPED

**1 NEW COURSE
AND
1 NEW TOOLKIT**

SUPPORTED

**14
ONLINE
WORKSHOPS**

FOR DIRECT CARE STAFF USING
OUR CARE U CURRICULUM

COUNTED

**13 SCHOOL OF NURSING
RESEARCHERS AND
17 RESEARCHERS FROM OTHER
DISCIPLINES**

AMONG CARE AFFILIATES



Outside exercise class organized by the Healthy Aging in Rural Towns (HeART) Iowa County coalition, a CARE partner

Throughout 2021, CARE advanced our mission to support discoveries that improve aging and build the skills and capacities of those who care for older adults, despite the continuing pandemic.

AGING RESEARCH

Research in support of older adult health and well-being has become even more vital.

In 2021, CARE convened discussions of ways to mitigate the social isolation of long-term care residents, and of the approaches that research teams are using to safely continue their work with older adults.

“Older adults who live in nursing homes or other long-term care settings have lost connections with family members during COVID,” warned School of Nursing Associate Professor and CARE Affiliate Tonya Roberts, PhD, RN. “My research suggests that residents can have challenges trying to develop close relationships with both peers and staff.”

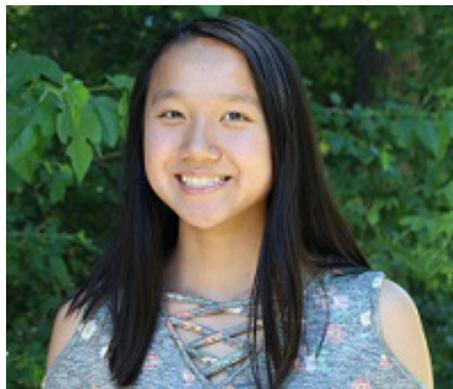
“Unfortunately, there are a lot of anecdotes to suggest residents are experiencing cognitive decline, weight loss, depression, newer or increasing disruptive or distressing behaviors,

and failure to thrive in general,” added Roberts. “That’s why these amazing strategies that long-term care staff used to combat social isolation during COVID,” such as newspapers written by and for residents or video visits with family members, “are so important.”

Throughout the year, CARE also connected research teams with campus and community partners; helped faculty develop proposals for future studies; and expanded our CARE Network of faculty, staff, and graduate students who conduct aging research.

NURSING EDUCATION

“I want to learn, implement plans, and educate about caring for elderly populations, especially those of color,” said School of Nursing first-year student Angie Li.



Angie Li

“Based upon my trips to the doctors with my grandparents, I know that the homogeneous care that exists today will be unable to keep the aging population healthy as those who identify as people of color increase in numbers.”

In 2021, CARE awarded Angie our undergraduate scholarship. She was also one of three students to join CARE’s advisory committee, with School of Nursing doctoral student Laura Block, BS, BSN, RN, and Department of Sociology doctoral student Gracie Venechuk.

“As a Registered Nurse working in a long-term care facility, I regularly benefit from the foundational knowledge on nursing home systems and reimbursements and emphasis on conditions highly prevalent among geriatric populations that was infused into my coursework thanks to CARE,” wrote Laura in her advisory committee application. She felt that joining the group “would represent an opportunity to ‘give back’ to CARE.”

Throughout the year, CARE also recruited more than 160 older adults for video or phone conversations with School of Nursing undergraduates; organized virtual discussions of older

AGING RESEARCH

- » Worked with researchers across **11 disciplines and programs**
- » Established relationships with **9 care and community settings**
- » Contributed to **4 proposals** for national funding agencies
- » Counted **13 School of Nursing researchers and 17 researchers from other disciplines** among CARE Affiliates

NURSING EDUCATION

- » Presented on older adult health topics to **8 courses, 7 within the School of Nursing**
- » Recruited **160+ older adult volunteers** for one-on-one virtual meetings with School of Nursing undergraduates
- » Donated **16 new pieces of aging simulation equipment** to the School of Nursing, including gear simulating hearing loss, reduced mobility, unsteady gait, and arthritis

IMPROVING CARE

- » Worked with **7 organizations** to disseminate CARE resources
- » Developed **1 new course and 1 new toolkit**
- » Supported **14 online workshops** for direct care staff using our CARE U curriculum
- » CARE's evidence-based toolkits had **232 downloads**

adult health topics with the student Geriatric Interest Group; and analyzed gerontological content in the undergraduate curriculum.

IMPROVING CARE

Strange noises. Confusing hallways. Being woken up in the middle of the night. Hospital stays can be challenging for anyone—but especially for people living with dementia.

In 2021, CARE began developing a Dementia Friendly Hospital toolkit with support from the Rennebohm Foundation, working with School of Nursing faculty and hospitals across Wisconsin.

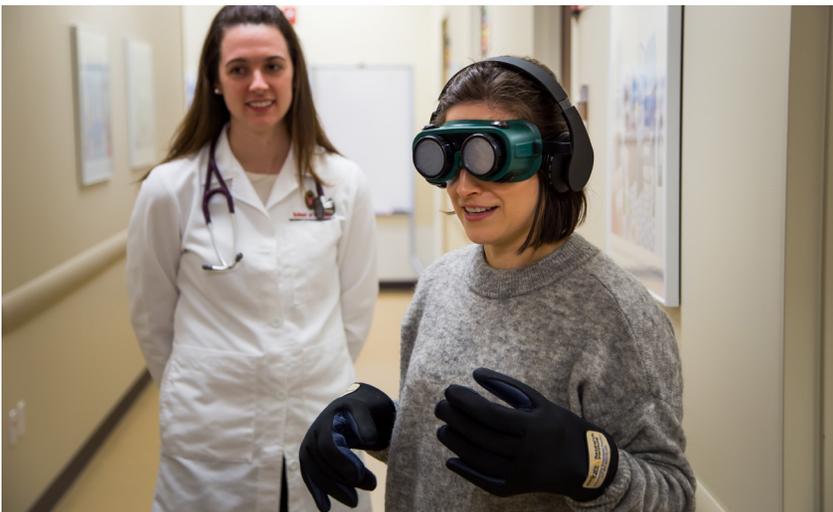
CARE surveyed hospital staff and interviewed family caregivers of people living with dementia. Both groups identified dementia-specific training for hospital staff, simple environmental changes, and engagement of family caregivers as key to dementia-friendly efforts.

“Just who my mother was in that moment, they treated her more like ‘you’re just a difficult person to deal with,’ not that there could be something behind all that,” one person shared about her family’s hospital experience.

Families are often stressed from “having to advocate for the patient and be present constantly. Having to consistently explain and re-explain the same thing over and over,” wrote one hospital staff member.

Development of the toolkit, which will include interactive training exercises, videos, and an organizational guide, will continue in 2022. The toolkit will include strategies to improve communication with and care coordination for patients with dementia.

Throughout the year, CARE also supported CARE U Trainers providing online workshops for direct care staff; coordinated with Affiliates to develop aging content for a new public health curriculum; and created “Onboarding nurses in assisted living,” an online course offered through the UW–Madison Interprofessional Continuing Education Partnership.



Doctor of Nursing Practice graduate students take part in a dementia friendly role play exercise

PLANNING FOR IMPACT

In 2021, CARE consulted with our advisory committee, Affiliates and Network members, School of Nursing leadership, other campus centers, and community partners to identify priorities for our work over the next three years.

Our new strategic plan has four goals:

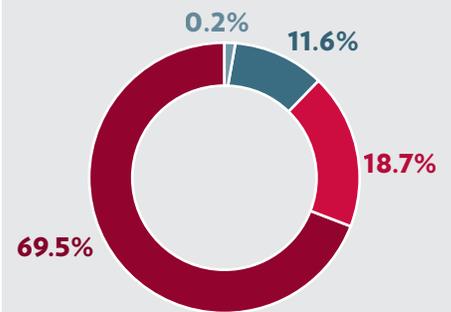
- Address health disparities across older populations by supporting the inclusion of diverse older adults in research and nursing education
- Increase gerontological content across School of Nursing curricula, including through innovative learning opportunities that promote careers in aging

- Foster interprofessional research and scholarship that supports healthy aging and improves quality of life and quality of care for diverse older populations
- Develop and promote evidence-based resources for the eldercare workforce, including nursing staff, direct care staff, and family / friend caregivers

SEEKING YOUR SUPPORT

Support from individuals and foundations is vital to CARE. To learn about how you can help ensure that older people, their families, and caregivers benefit from our cutting-edge research and nursing expertise, call Scott Fletcher at 608-263-6007 or visit: <https://go.wisc.edu/igt055>

CARE REVENUE



CARE's mission is to support discoveries that improve aging, and to build the skills and capacity of those who care for older adults.

CARE Team:

Barb King, Executive Director
 Diane Farsetta, Senior Outreach Specialist
 Barb Bowers, Founding Director
 Kendra Deja, Adult and Student Services Coordinator
 Maica Ho, Aging Outreach and Program Support
 Sara Wilke, Dementia Friendly Hospitals Project Assistant

CARE Advisory Committee:

Jonette Arms, Wisconsin Department of Health Services Division of Public Health
 Liz Jensen, Direct Supply
 Christine Klotz, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging
 Edith Lawrence-Hilliard, Precious Memories Choir
 Geana Shemak, Iowa County HeART Coordinator
 Lisa Thomson, Pathway Health Services
 Deanna Truedson McKillips, Agrace Hospice and Palliative Care
 Mike Wallace, Fort HealthCare
 Sarah Endicott, School of Nursing faculty liaison
 Laura Block, Morgan Cesarz, and Angie Li, School of Nursing students
 Grace Venechuk, Sociology student



Word cloud showing how School of Nursing undergraduates described their interactions with older adult volunteers

For more info, visit: care.nursing.wisc.edu or contact us at: care@son.wisc.edu or (608) 265-4330

