

THE ARIZONA GWEP MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025



ABOUT

The mission of the Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (AZ-GWEP) is to provide the best possible care through an interprofessional approach to individual, system, community and population level education, training and models of care innovations.

The AZ-GWEP Newsletter is an important forum to share AZ-GWEP activities and highlight your valuable work. Please use this form by the 10th of each month to be featured in the next issue:

[SUBMIT INFO FOR
OUR NEXT ISSUE](#)



The month of May, designated as both Mental Health Awareness Month and Older Americans Month, is a crucial time to focus on the mental well-being of older adults. This month provides an opportunity to address the unique mental health challenges faced by older adults and promote resources that can help.

The National Institute on Aging has provided some helpful information about [Depression and Older Adults](#), including an infographic on [Four Things to Know about Depression and Older Adults](#) (also available in [Spanish](#)). On [pages 5-6](#), we explore more about depression in older adults, the common signs and symptoms, treatment options, and ways to provide support.

**OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH**



FLIP THE SCRIPT ON AGING: MAY 2025

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PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

MEET ELAYNE, ADMINISTRATOR AT QUIBURI MISSION NURSING & REHABILITATION

www.quiburimission.com

I was born in Barberton, Ohio to Robert and Dorothy Wheeler - the 10th of 11 children. When I graduated from high school my father gave me luggage — a symbolic gesture toward the adventures awaiting me. At 18, I relocated to San Diego, establishing the foundation for my career in healthcare.

I started my career in the kitchen as a cook. From there, I moved into the Activities Department where I truly found my calling — taking care of older adults and having fun doing it. I spent the next 11 years completing my bachelor's degree in healthcare management from Southern Illinois University of Carbondale. From there, I earned my Master of Science in Operations Management from the University of Arkansas Fayetteville. I worked my way through the nursing facility to the top and now serve as a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator, holding a license in 3 states. I had the privilege of being appointed by the Governor of Tennessee to serve for 4 years on the Board of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators.

My best accomplishment is marrying my husband of 36 years, being the mother of 2 amazing adult sons Cornelius, (Tucson, Arizona) and Deric (Austin, Texas); and being called GiGi by my two amazing grandchildren, Cornelius (CJ) 17 and Chloe 14.

I also had the privilege of building from scratch a 33-Bed Skilled Nursing Facility in the Acute Hospital setting in the beautiful setting of the Oro Valley Hospital.

I am so honored to now have an opportunity to be a part of an amazing program with the goal of improving the lives of the population that I serve.



Linked in

Connect with our
AZ-GWEP Community
Group Page on LinkedIn

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



ADVANCES IN AGING LECTURE SERIES

MAY 12TH
12 - 1 pm (MST)

Assistive Technologies,
Mobile Health, and Tele-
health
Meenakshi Dagar, MD

[VIEW PRESENTATION](#)

View archived
presentations [here](#)

Download the event flyer

Advances in Aging Lecture Series

Meenakshi Dagar, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor, Medicine
Director, Ambulatory Geriatrics, Banner-
University Medicine Tucson

INTERPROFESSIONAL PANEL DISCUSSION

Cheryl Luciani, RN
Jawanda Lee, MSW
Mindy Fahn, PhD

Assistive Technologies,
Mobile Health, and
Telehealth

LIVESTREAM
<https://streaming.biochm.arizona.edu/streaming/2025/05/12/12-1pm-mst/>

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Define Assistive Technologies, Mobile health, and Telehealth
- Highlight Their Impact on Older Adult Care
- Discuss Practical Applications and Implementation Strategies

VIEW ARCHIVED PRESENTATIONS
<https://streaming.biochm.arizona.edu/streaming/2025/05/12/12-1pm-mst/>

**May 12, 2025
12-1 pm (MST)**

CME Credits Provided by the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson

Accreditation Statement:
The University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s). Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Disclosure Statement(s)
All faculty, CME planning committee members, and the CME office reviewers have disclosed that they have no financial relationships with commercial interests that would constitute a conflict of interest concerning this CME activity.

Arizona Geriatrics
Workforce
Enhancement
Program

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
College of Medicine, Geriatrics
& Palliative Medicine

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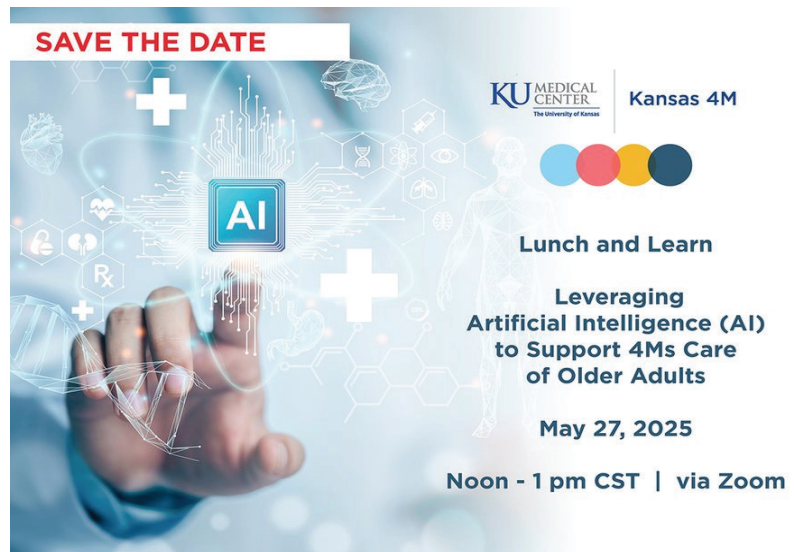
MAY 2025

LUNCH AND LEARN

This webinar will address advancing the care of older adults through Artificial Intelligence, supporting the evidence-based 4Ms framework: What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility. Registration link will be shared when available.

OBJECTIVES

- Describe the fundamentals of artificial intelligence (AI) and its relevance in health-care.
- Identify currently available and potential AI tools and applications in healthcare.
- Apply AI to evidence-based 4Ms care of older adults.



COLLABORATING PARTNERS

Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program | Iowa GWEP | Minnesota Northstar Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program | Saint Louis University Family Center for Healthy Aging GWEP

PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA R. KEN COIT COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

www.pharmacy.arizona.edu

The University of Arizona R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy has “Better Science. Better Health” as a motto. Dedicated to shaping the future of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences, we educate the next generation of leaders, professionals, and innovators. Founded in 1947, the Coit College of Pharmacy was the first health science college established on the University of Arizona campus. Today, we train students at the undergraduate (BS in Pharmaceutical Science and BS in Medical Pharmacology & Toxicology), Master’s, PharmD, and PhD levels, and **rank #4 in the nation** among 143 pharmacy programs in NIH funding. The world-renowned faculty in the Pharmacy Practice & Science and Pharmacology & Toxicology departments are committed to **improving health** through scientific contributions, educational mission on our Tucson and Phoenix campuses, and community outreach.

In aging, **thriving research** is conducted through the Center for Longevity & NeuroTherapeutics, the Center for Drug Discovery, and other centers and external partnerships. We offer a required **Perspectives in Aging course in the PharmD** program, collaborate with other health sciences colleges in aging curricula including the **Innovations in Aging Master’s and Certificate**, and participate in the works of the UA Arizona Center on Aging, Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (AZ-GWEP), and community partners. The Coit College of Pharmacy **Centers and Museum serve as pillars of excellence** to address key areas of pharmaceutical sciences, making a difference in healthcare and communities.

(Continued on next page.)

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UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA R. KEN COIT COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

www.pharmacy.arizona.edu

[Coit Center for Longevity & NeuroTherapeutics](#)

fosters discoveries toward healthy aging and drives a college-wide effort to achieve healthy longevity and new therapeutic agents for age-related diseases. To promote healthspan and resilience, the Center develops and tests new targets, biomarkers, and drugs to slow aging and halt or reverse neurodegenerative disease (Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and ALS) pathology, clinical onset, and progression.

[Arizona Center for Drug Discovery \(ACDD\)](#) is

dedicated to the integration and collaboration of interdisciplinary researchers for innovative discovery and development of drugs and therapies. A team of experienced researchers with extensive academic and industry expertise leads drug discovery efforts. With internal and external partners, the Center was established to provide focused support and guidance to researchers traversing the long and complex path of drug discovery and development in an academic setting.

[Arizona Poison & Drug Information Center](#) is a vital resource (24/7) for healthcare professionals and the public. Clinical pharmacists and toxicologists provide timely and accurate information on medication safety, drug interactions, and poison exposures, including accidental poisoning and bites from desert creatures (e.g., venomous snakes, spiders). The Center handles over 250 calls daily and works with experts in pharmacology, pediatrics, emergency medicine, and genetic counseling. Call 1-800-222-1222 to connect with the nearest poison center anywhere in the US.

[Health Outcomes & Pharmacoeconomic \(HOPE\) Center](#) assesses healthcare interventions from clinical, economic, and humanistic views, focused on research in cost-effectiveness, quality-of-life, pharmaceutical policy, and drug use. Collaborating with researchers, academic institutions, health care organizations, and pharmaceutical firms worldwide, the Center performs quality research to enhance the application of economic and effectiveness measures to healthcare practice and health systems management.

[Southwest Environmental Health Sciences Center \(SWEHSC\)](#) studies the health effects of environmental agents and serves as a resource for the community. The Center's innovative research targets mechanisms by which exposures to environmental agents and stressors contribute to human disease among people living in our arid environments experiencing extreme heat. The experts collaborate on exposures in Southwest populations, environmental lung diseases, and adaptive responses to environmental stress.

[Coit Museum of Pharmacy & Health Sciences](#) is home to one of the world's leading collections of pharmacy artifacts and offers a unique glimpse into the past. From the Upjohn Disneyland collection to a full-scale replica of an old-time drugstore, we help keep pharmacy history alive. The Coit Museum creates an authentic and engaging experience to broaden perspectives about pharmacy and health sciences by collecting, preserving, and interpreting our histories to enrich present and future generations.



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UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION IN OLDER ADULTS

A Hidden Challenge That Requires Our Attention

Depression affects approximately 4% of adults aged 70 and over, yet it remains one of the most misunderstood and undertreated conditions among older adults. Although depression is not a normal part of aging, older adults often experience challenges related to health or changes in life circumstances that may put them at increased risk. This month, we explore this important topic to help you recognize the signs and know when to seek help—whether for yourself or a loved one.

Depression Can Look Different in Older Adults

Depression in older adults may be difficult to recognize because symptoms may look different when compared to younger people. For some older adults with depression, sadness is not their main symptom. They could instead be feeling more of a numbness or a lack of interest in activities.

Common signs to watch for include:

- Persistent feelings of emptiness or hopelessness
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Sleep disturbances
- Irritability or restlessness
- Fatigue or low energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide



In older adults, these symptoms can sometimes be mistaken for normal aging or other physical conditions. Common symptoms such as fatigue, appetite loss, and trouble sleeping can be part of the aging process or a physical illness, which is why early depression symptoms may be ignored or confused with other conditions.



Life Changes That Can Trigger Depression

Several factors can increase the risk of depression in older adults:

- Retirement and loss of professional identity
- Relocation from a long-time home
- Financial concerns
- Death of spouse, family members, or friends
- Chronic health conditions
- Loss of independence
- Social isolation

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Depression Is Treatable at Any Age

The good news is that, in most cases, depression is treatable in older adults. The right treatment may help improve overall health and quality of life. Effective options include:

- Medications (often starting at lower doses for older adults)
- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)
- A combination of both approaches

For those who don't respond to standard treatments, additional options exist. A recent study found that for treatment-resistant depression in older adults, adding a second medication was more effective than switching to a different antidepressant.

How to Help a Loved One

If you notice signs of depression in an older friend or family member:

- Encourage them to speak with their healthcare provider
- Offer support, understanding, and patience
- Help them keep track of medical appointments
- Assist with transportation to appointments
- Stay connected through regular visits, calls, or video chats
- Encourage participation in enjoyable activities



Prevention Strategies

Depression may affect only a small proportion of older adults, and there are ways to reduce the risk:

- Maintain social connections
- Stay physically active
- Eat a balanced diet
- Pursue meaningful activities
- Volunteer or help others
- Practice stress management techniques
- Get regular health check-ups



In Crisis? Get Help Immediately

If you or someone you know is experiencing thoughts of suicide:

- Call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988)
- Go to the nearest emergency room
- Call 911

Remember, depression is not a normal part of aging—it's a medical condition that requires attention and care. With proper treatment and support, older adults can regain their emotional well-being and continue to live fulfilling lives.

Reference: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/mental-and-emotional-health/depression-and-older-adults>

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HAPPY NATIONAL NURSES WEEK!

FREE!



DEMENTIA
Care Aware

COGNITIVE HEALTH ASSESSMENT TRAINING

Join us as we equip primary care teams with tools to identify, address and care for patients experiencing cognitive change.

**Monday, May 5, 2025
12-1pm PST**



Register [HERE](#)



TRAINING INCLUDES

- Overview of Dementia
- Review Screening Tools
- Conducting a Cognitive Health Assessment
- Team Based Implementation Strategies
- Resources Available

1 CE/CME

For more information, please visit <https://www.dementiacareaware.org>

UCSF

University of California
San Francisco

**ALZHEIMER'S[®]
ASSOCIATION**