Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society
Western Division
An Affiliate of the American Geriatrics Society

Fall Program

Living a Good Life - Not Just a Long One

Guest Speaker

Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and its three operating arms, the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), Health Careers Futures (HCF), and the Women’s Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal)

As we age, we’re challenged to find new meaning and purpose in life. The roles that defined our adult years—doting parent, accomplished professional, weekend warrior athlete—start to fade. In a society that glamorizes youth and novelty over experience and wisdom, older adults can feel marginalized. A growing body of research suggests that finding renewed purpose later in life can, quite literally, be a life-saver. Seniors who have a clear sense of purpose in their lives tend to have better physical, mental, and even spiritual health compared to those who don’t. Thankfully, a life without purpose is a preventable, and modifiable, condition. All of us—from health providers and policy-makers to next-door neighbors—have a role to play in ensuring that older adults remain active, engaged community members who derive meaning from their Golden Years.

Thursday
NOVEMBER
1

6:00 pm
Registration, Networking and Visit with Exhibitors

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Program

The University Club
123 University Place
Pittsburgh PA 15260

Complimentary Registration for Members
Guests welcome (guest fee $50)

ON-LINE REGISTRATION
begins September 27th

Visit www.pagswd.org
periodically for program updates or contact
Nadine Popovich, Administrator
for details: npopovich@acms.org

Thank you to the following who provided support for the program
At the end of this year, I will have served my final term as President of the Society. It truly has been an honor and privilege to have served in this role. I wish to thank the Board of Directors and Planning Committee members for their support and dedication to achieve our goals of the mission statement, which include the provision of educational activities for our members and for the healthcare community in our region. I would also like to thank our members, who are the strength of the organization. We accomplish so much more when we work together!

This year, our outstanding educational programs were recognized by the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) with the 2018 AGS State Affiliate Achievement Award. This prestigious award is given to an AGS state affiliate that has successfully achieved continued growth of educational programs. Since our inception in 1991, we have devoted enormous time and energy towards this goal. It is gratifying to be recognized by the national organization for our hard work. The award recognition, in its entirety, can be found on page 4.

As you will read in the following pages, 2018 has been a productive year. I hope you had the opportunity to attend one or all of the programs offered. The final program for 2018 (Fall Program) will take place November 1 at the University Club in Oakland. This year’s program features guest speaker Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD, president of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, who will discuss Living a Good Life—Not Just a Long One, about how our patients find purpose and meaning in their lives as they age. Mark your calendar and join us on November 1 for a stimulating evening of learning and socialization.

A recap of highlights from this year include:

• The Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine – The conference yielded a robust attendance, with superlative evaluations. The course continually attracts numerous healthcare professionals from our region and beyond. This year, we welcomed registrants from 19 states. Held in ‘our own backyard,’ this premier educational event offers outstanding and timely education to all geriatrics health care professionals. The conference is designed by the PAGS-WD planning committee, a dedicated and tireless group of your colleagues, including those from the community, academic, and payor sectors.

• Controversies in Geriatric Medicine - In its fourth year, the program continues to attract a large audience. What sets this case-based presentation apart from other programs is the focus on audience participation through interactive discussion between panelists and audience members.

• Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Award – Initiated in 2016, this award recognizes outstanding teachers for their dedication and commitment to geriatric education. The next call for nominations will begin October 1, with the awards presentation to take place during the dinner symposium at the 2019 Clinical Update.

• David C. Martin Award - Named after Pittsburgh’s first full-time geriatrician, this award provides financial support for medical students and other trainees who have had their scholarly work accepted for presentation at the national meeting of the American Geriatrics Society. A student may receive up to $1,500 for travel, registration, and hotel costs. Since

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its inception, the society has granted more than $81,000 to awardees.

- Resident and fellow interest remains strong, with recruitment of 11 new resident and fellow members this year. This brings the total number of resident and fellow members to 34. The society waives membership dues for the length of training for this select group. We hope this initiative will be a pipeline to bring young physicians into our organization.

You are an integral part of the Society and your commitment, by renewing membership, is a testament to our efforts and mission: to educate, communicate, and engage health care professionals in the provision of quality health care for all older persons.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to seeing you on November 1st.

Fred Rubin, MD

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

2019 Slate of Candidates

Kawita Vichare, MD, chair of the Nominating Committee announces the slate of candidates for election of Officers and Board of Directors. The following individuals will be placed on the ballot, which will be mailed to the membership on November 2, 2018.

President (two-year term beginning January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020)

President: Namita Ahuja, MD
Secretary: Judith S. Black, MD, MHA

Board of Directors (three-year term beginning January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021).

Kawita Vichare, MD

Recruit a Member!

The Fall Program is the perfect opportunity to strengthen our membership. Consider inviting a colleague to attend the program. The nominal guest fee includes the program registration and one-year of membership in the organization. Forward the society website www.pagswd.org for current program registration or to download the membership application.

Membership dues have not increased in over 5 years! Our award-winning programs are offered at a discount to members (and in many cases, complimentary)! Your dues are instrumental in supporting our educational offerings. Renew today at www.pagswd.org!
AGS Honors the Society with the 2018 State Affiliate Award

The American Geriatrics Society (AGS) awarded the Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society – Western Division (PAGS-WD) with its 2018 AGS State Affiliate Achievement Award for Innovative Educational programming. This prestigious award is given to an AGS state affiliate who has successfully achieved continued growth of educational programs. The society was recognized for the Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine Conference (the largest CME event in the region), the Controversies in Geriatric Medicine (June) Program, and the annual Fall Program. The David C. Martin Award (DCM), the society’s student scholarship program, was also highlighted. A portion of the profits from the educational series sustains the DCM honorariums that are awarded to recipients. Honorariums are used by awardees to offset the costs of attending the AGS national conference where they have the opportunity to display their work.

Neil Resnick, MD, COSAR Representative, and Fred Rubin, MD, president, accepted the award on behalf of the Society at the AGS Awards Ceremony, held in conjunction with the AGS national meeting on May 3-5, 2018 in Orlando, FL. Dr. Resnick was also invited to speak at a separate AGS State Affiliate Chapter meeting. He presented highlights and implementation strategies on the society’s award-winning programs. The valuable resources and tools shared served as a guideline for other state affiliates to create and implement programming in their respective region. In addition to being recognized at the AGS meeting, the society received an honorarium of $1,500.

This is the third honor bestowed on the society. In 2003, the AGS awarded the State Affiliate Achievement Award in the area of continuing education for members to the organization, specifically, the overwhelming success of the Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine conference. In 2011, the society was honored for their accomplishments in membership recruitment and retention.
2019 Membership Dues
NEW! On-line Renewal

Members will receive an email which will include an E-statement. A link will be provided on the E-statement for on-line payment (Visa, Mastercard, Discover). A paper statement will be mailed to members who have not provided an email. You may also send a check for payment or contact Nadine Popovich if you wish to renew your dues by phone. She can be reached at (412) 321-5030, ext. 110, or npopovich@acms.org.

Membership supports our award-winning programming for healthcare professionals in our region, as well as sustaining our philanthropic efforts in support of medical students, residents, and fellows. As a member, you are entitled to discounts or complimentary registration when registering for all society-sponsored programs.

American Geriatrics Society
2018 Annual Scientific Meeting - Spotlights Society Members

The AGS Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) is the premier educational event in geriatrics, providing the latest information on clinical care, research on aging, and innovative models of care delivery. The meeting addresses the educational needs of geriatrics professionals from all disciplines. Physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants, social workers, long-term care and managed care providers, health care administrators, and others update their knowledge and skills through state-of-the-art educational sessions and research presentations.

The AGS issues a call for submission of applications to present new information either as a verbal presentation or a poster (abstracts receiving the highest scores through the peer review process are included in the Presidential poster session).

The following submissions were accepted and selected to present at the 2018 annual meeting. Accompanying the meeting is a published supplement to the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, which includes abstracts of the selected submissions.

Congratulations to the PAGS-WD members on achieving this prestigious honor of their submissions being accepted at a national meeting.

Gina Ayers, PharmD, BCPS
Benjamin Cahill, MS2
Megan, Carr, PharmD, BCPS
Woody Chang, MD
Amelia Gennari, MD
Susan Greenspan, MD
Nivedita Gunturi, MD
Steven Handler, MD
Mary Kotlarczyk, PhD
Karthik Kota, MD
Krista Leman, DO
Elizabeth Mohan, MD
David Nace, MD, MPH, CMD
Neelesh Nadkarmi, MD
John Naumovski, MD
Weston Nix, DO
Sangeeta Rana, MD
Neil Resnick, MD
Amrit Riarh, MD
Anne B. Newman, MD, MPH
Fred Rubin, MD
Heather Sakely, PharmD, BCPS, BCGP
Naushin Udyawar, MD
Debra K. Weiner, MD
David Yuan, MD, MS
Members in the News

Anne B. Newman, MD, PhD, and Richard Schulz, PhD, honored by UPMC Senior Services

The Society congratulates Anne B. Newman, MD, PhD, and Richard Schulz, PhD, selected as Grand Champion and Caregiver Champion awardees, respectively, for the 10th annual Celebrating Senior Champions dinner scheduled for October 18, 2018 at the Omni William Penn Hotel. The event is hosted by UPMC Senior Services.

Dr. Newman is the 2018 Grand Champion. The UPMC Senior Services Grand Champion recognition is the highest honor awarded to an individual who demonstrates extraordinary leadership in an effort to improve the lives of seniors within UPMC Senior Services and beyond. Dr. Newman serves as chair, Department of Epidemiology; Katherine M. Detre Endowed Chair of Population Health Sciences; director, Center for Aging and Population Health; professor of Epidemiology, Medicine, and Clinical and Translational Science University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health; clinical director, the Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services and the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Schulz is this year’s Caregiver Champion. This award recognizes an individual or organization who demonstrates an extraordinary ability to champion senior causes through their work to set policy, establish programs or advocate for care of seniors and/or caregivers.

Dr. Schulz is distinguished service professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine; Professor of Epidemiology, Sociology, Psychology, Community Health, Nursing, & Health and Rehabilitation Sciences; Director of Gerontology; director, Geriatric Education Center of Pennsylvania; associate director, Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services and the University of Pittsburgh.

Society members previously honored at the Celebrating Senior Champions dinner include: Grand Champions Fred Rubin, MD, in 2010; Charles F. Reynolds, III, MD, in 2015; Neil Resnick, MD, in 2016; and Caregiver Champion Eric Rodriguez in 2017.

Tickets for the event are on sale now. Reservations are available online at the website https://www.showclix.com/event/upmc-celebrating-senior-champions87877387019207 or (412) 864-3524. Proceeds from this event will directly benefit the UPMC Senior Communities Benevolent Care Fund.
The Society honored Judith S. Black, MD, MHA, during the Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine conference on April 6.

Dr. Black, who has served as course director for the Clinical Update for more than 26 years, stepped down from her leadership role. Co-course directors Shuja Hassan, MD, and Neil Resnick, MD, presented Dr. Black with a plaque and expressed grateful appreciation for her exceptional leadership, dedication and tireless commitment. Dr. Black will remain involved with the course, as a member of the planning committee. Under the leadership of Dr. Black, Dr. Hassan, and Dr. Resnick, the conference continues to be a well-respected course that attracts close to 400 attendees and was awarded the American Geriatrics Society Achievement Award in Excellence in a CME program in 2009 and 2018.

The society welcomed over 40 attendees to the annual Controversies in Geriatric Medicine program held June 19th at the Herberman Conference Center, Pittsburgh, PA. The program was made possible with sponsorship from: Medstar™, naviHealth, Optum, Portolo Pharmaceuticals, and Sanofi Pasteur. Navigating Difficult Decisions presented the case of an 80-year old woman with diabetes and generalized atherosclerosis who underwent repair of a 5.7 cm AAA with an endovascular stent. She had a stormy post-operative course and spent the next 4 months in the hospital.

Leading the panel discussion was Nivedita Gunturi, MD, Fellow, Division of Geriatric Medicine, Department of Medicine, University of Pittsburgh, who presented the case, and stopped at various key points to elicit audience opinions. Jane Schell, MD, FNKF, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Section of Palliative Care and Medical Ethics, Division of Renal Electrolyte, University of Pittsburgh discussed the evaluation of decision-making capacity, the risks and benefits of hemodialysis in a frail elderly patient and the challenges of establishing goals of care when the patient had made no advance directive and family that disagree. A lively discussion from panelists and audience members concluded the presentation. Moderator for the evening was PAGS-WD President, Fred Rubin, MD.

This is the 4th Controversies in Medicine program hosted by the Society, and is part of the yearly educational series, which was recently awarded the American Geriatrics Society State Affiliate Award for Innovative Educational Programs in Geriatrics.
More than 380 geriatrics professionals from all healthcare disciplines, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants, social workers, long-term care and managed care providers, and health care administrators participated in the 26th Annual Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine conference held at the Pittsburgh Marriott City Center April 5-7. The course attracted registrants from numerous states, including California, North Carolina, New York and Washington.

Awarded the American Geriatrics Society Achievement Award for Excellence in a CME program, this conference continues to be a well-respected resource to educate healthcare professionals involved in the direct care of older persons by providing evidence-based solutions for common medical problems that afflict older adults daily and for which rapidly evolving research (much done in Pittsburgh) is revealing new approaches that are feasible for the real world.

Under the leadership of course directors Shuja Hassan, MD, Judith S. Black, MD, MHA, and Neil M. Resnick, MD, who worked tirelessly with the planning committee, the course is a premier educational event in the region.

The course attracts prominent international and national lecturers and nationally renowned local faculty. William Applegate, MD, and Barbara Messinger-Rapport, MD, comprised this year’s exceptional guest faculty.

Nearly 40 state-of-the-art sessions taught by highly regarded clinician-educators and researchers were offered during the three-day event. Each lecture, symposium and breakout session offered participants evidence-based “pearls for practice” designed to be immediately incorporated into the realities of daily practice.

The conference is jointly sponsored by the Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society – Western Division; UPMC/University of Pittsburgh Aging Institute; and University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, in partnership with the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Center for Continuing Education in the Health Sciences.
Society Honors Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Awardees and David C. Martin Award Recipient

The Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society Western Division (PAGS-WD) honored the 2018 Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Award recipients Jordan F. Karp, MD, Physician Award Recipient, and Heather A. Sakely, PharmD, BCPS, BCGP, Healthcare Professional Award Recipient. The Geriatrics Teacher of the Year award is presented to two outstanding teachers for their dedication and commitment to geriatrics education and exemplify geriatrics teaching excellence.

The awards presentation was held April 5, 2018, prior to the dinner symposium of the 26th Annual Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine. Rollin Wright, MD, MS, MPH, awards chair, and Fred Rubin, MD, president, shared the podium to highlight the achievements and significant contributions each awardee has made to the education and training of learners in geriatrics and to the progress of geriatrics across the health professions. More than 70 attendees were on hand for the plaque presentation.

David C. Martin Award

The 2018 recipient of the David C. Martin Award is Mr. Benjamin Cahill, a medical student attending the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Mr. Cahill was recognized during the awards presentation on April 5 and received an honorarium to defray the expenses of attending the 2018 Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Geriatrics Society conference where his abstract, Contact Frequency and Older Adult Participation in Cardiac Rehabilitation, was selected for poster presentation. Mentor for the project was Daniel Forman, MD, professor of medicine - University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Department of Geriatrics; chair, Geriatric Cardiology Section, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

The award was named after David C. Martin, MD, who established the first geriatrics fellowship in Pittsburgh, PA. The goal of this prestigious award is to encourage and prepare future physicians in the field of geriatric medicine.

Since its inception, the Society is proud to have awarded more than $81,000 to area medical students interested in the field of geriatric medicine.
Mark Your Calendar

National Conference of Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
When: September 26-29, 2018
Where: Marriott Wardman Park, Washington DC
Phone: 866-355-1392
Email: gapna@ajj.com
Website and Registration: www.gapna.org/annual-conference
Participants can earn up to 21.5 contact hours, with Pharmacology hours available for designated sessions.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging SWPPA
2018 SWPPA Annual Conference
Embracing Aging
When: Tuesday, October 16, 2018
Where: Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh/Southpointe, Canonsburg, PA
This year’s keynote speaker is Rawle Andrews Jr., Esq., who is a regional vice president and a member of the National Leadership Team of AARP. His duties include leadership of AARP’s operations in Pennsylvania, California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Texas.
Previously, Rawle was the senior state director for AARP Maryland, the managing attorney of AARP’s Legal Counsel for the Elderly, and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University and the Howard University School of Law.
Rawle’s keynote address is, “Embracing Aging: Reclaiming Your Inner David to Find Purpose, Promise and Peace of Mind in a World of Goliaths.” Please visit www.swppa.org/education for additional conference details.

2018 ASCP Annual Meeting and Exhibition
The largest gathering of consultant and senior care pharmacists
When: November 1-4, 2018
Where: Gaylord National Harbor, Oxon Hill, MD
Website and Registration: www.ascp.com
Pharmacists can earn up to 15 CPE credit hours during the 2018 ASCP Annual Meeting & Exhibition.

26th Annual PMDA Symposium
November 9-10, 2018
The Hotel Hershey, Hershey, PA
The 26th Annual PMDA Symposium will be held in Hershey on November 9-10, 2018 at the Hotel Hershey. Over 130 Pennsylvania Medical directors and long-term care health professionals, physical medicine, rehabilitation professionals, geriatricians, NPs, PAs, registered nurses, family physicians, nursing home administrators, and consultant pharmacists will gather for a weekend of education and networking. Registration is open. Please visit http://bit.ly/e596819. To view the conference brochure and for further details please visit: www.pamda.org and click on ‘education’.
American Medical Directors Association (AMDA)
The Society for Post-Acute
and Long-Term Care Medicine
AMDA Annual Conference - 2019
When: March 7 - 10, 2019
Where: Hyatt Regency Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
Email: registration@paltc.org
Website: https://paltc.org/
Credit Type: CEUs for Nurses, CMD Clinical, CMD Management, CME, Other

American College of Physicians (ACP)
Internal Medicine - 2019
When: April 11-13, 2019
Where: Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA
Phone: 800-523-1546 x2600 or 215-351-2400
Website: https://annualmeeting.acponline.org/
Choose from more than 200 CME courses in internal medicine and the subspecialties presented by distinguished faculty and the ability the ability to earn up to 30.5 AMA PRA Category 1 credit(s)™

American Geriatrics Society
2019 Annual Scientific Meeting
When: May 2-4, 2019
Where: Portland, OR
Phone: 212-308-1414
Website: https://meeting.americangeriatrics.org/
The AGS Annual Scientific Meeting is the premier educational event in geriatrics, providing the latest information on clinical care, research on aging, and innovative models of care delivery. The 2019 Annual Meeting will address the educational needs of geriatrics professionals from all disciplines. Physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants, social workers, long-term care and managed care providers, health care administrators, and others can update their knowledge and skills through state-of-the-art educational sessions and research presentations. The 2019 Annual Meeting offers many continuing education sessions, including invited symposia, workshops, and meet-the-expert sessions. Sessions will include information about emerging clinical issues, current research in geriatrics, education, health policy, and delivery of geriatric health care.

Society of General Internal Medicine
2019 Annual SGIM National Meeting
Courage to Lead: Equality, Engagement and Advocacy in Turbulent Times
When: May 8-11, 2019
Where: Washington Hilton, Washington, DC
Website: https://www.sgim.org/meetings
Email Annual Meeting inquiries to: support@sgim.org

Promoting Geriatric Education To All Healthcare Professions.
Background: Clinicians have been encouraged to utilize the surprise question (SQ) – “Would I be surprised if this patient died within 12 months?” – to identify patients at high 1-year mortality risk. When clinicians answer “No – I would NOT be surprised if this patient died within 12 months,” the SQ may help clinicians identify patients with unmet palliative care needs who could benefit from advance care planning discussions and/or a palliative care referral. This Fast Fact reviews the clinical utility of the SQ.

Rationale of the SQ: As difficult as it is for clinicians to prognosticate accurately, multiple studies have shown that patients with incurable disease desire more prognostic information the sicker they get and prognosis is a major factor in preferences for rehospitalizations, life support, and CPR. Although, patients and surrogates often want temporal prognostic predictions (the clinician’s estimated length of time he or she predicts the patient will live), clinicians are more accurate and willing to offer probabilistic predictions (the clinician’s estimate, often in a percentage, of the chance of death in a set time frame, such as 1 year). The SQ was designed as a clinical tool that generalist clinicians would utilize willingly and routinely to identify patients at risk of death in a year and thereby lead to more appropriate advance care planning, goals of care discussions, symptom management, and hospice referrals.

Effectiveness of the SQ: Although variations on the SQ have been described in the published literature including “Would I be surprised if this patient died this hospitalization?” or “Would I be surprised if this patient died in 3 months?”, the SQ most commonly referred is “Would I be surprised if this patient died within 12 months?” This SQ has been studied in diverse populations, including a general inpatient setting, high-risk primary care clinic, pediatric patients, advanced kidney disease, cancer, acute surgical patients, emergency department settings, and nursing home settings. In general, the SQ has performed modestly well in identifying patients with a prognosis of < 1 year across these various patient populations. A meta-analysis of the SQ among 26 studies across these patient populations found that it had a pooled accuracy of 75%, a sensitivity of 67% and specificity of 80%.

• “Yes” answers appear to be much more accurate than “No” answers. The predictive value of a “Yes” answer was 93%, while only 37% for a “No” answer. This means that the SQ is likely better designed to identify patients who will live more than a year vs the patients who live less a year. It also suggests that there is “false positives” are relatively common when clinicians answer “No” to the SQ.

• The SQ may be slightly more accurate for cancer patients (pooled accuracy 79%) and renal patients (76%) vs other disease groups (72%) This may reflect a more predictable illness trajectory in cancer and renal disease. See Fast Fact #326 for more information on illness trajectories.

• In most studies, the SQ was utilized as one aspect of a broad prognostic assessment which included clinician gestalt and/or other prognostic tools. Hence, used in isolation, its accuracy is unclear.

Implementing the SQ Into Clinical Practice: The SQ can be helpful in identifying patients at risk of medical decline and death in a certain time frame when used...
as part of a larger prognostic assessment. Yet, considering the relatively high false positive rate of a “No” answer, it is not established if the SQ is a cost-effective tool nor an effective way to trigger a palliative care consultation on its own. A consensus panel of experts suggested that a “No” answer trigger generalist clinicians to perform a primary palliative care assessment or screening for unmet palliative care needs. Sentinel medical events like hospitalization, decline in performance status, or disease progression are reasonable triggers to implement the SQ into clinical practice. Note templates, medical records, or screening for unmet palliative care needs are reasonable triggers in performance status, or disease events like hospitalization, decline in performance status, or disease progression are reasonable triggers. Reasonable components of the primary palliative care assessment triggered by a “No” include:

- Assessment for distressing physical, psychological, social, or spiritual concerns.
- Identification of whether the patient completed an advance directive such as a health care power of attorney that is available in the medical records.
- Assessment of patient, family, and/or surrogate’s understanding of the underlying illness, treatment options, and prognostic trajectory.
- Assessment of decision-making capacity.
- Engagement in honest conversations about prognosis and medical expectations.
- Elicitation of the patient’s care preferences and values.
- Consideration of whether a hospice referral would be appropriate.
- Consideration of whether a palliative care consultation may be beneficial.

References:

Author Affiliations: 1University of Colorado School of Medicine, Aurora, CO,

Continued on page 15
Depression is the second most prevalent neuropsychiatric disorder in late life. When it is not successfully treated, depression becomes a persistent problem in approximately 50 percent of older adults. Men, ethnic minority groups, non-native English speakers, and those who are poor or have limited education are at risk of not being screened for depression and receiving sub-optimal depression treatment.

Many older adults prefer to receive care for depression from their primary care physician. Successful treatment of depression in primary care settings improves quality of life and other medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. There is established literature linking late-life depression with subsequent cognitive decline and the development of dementia, so minimizing the burden of depression in older adults may have benefits for brain health.

Several treatment options are available for resistant late-life depression. These include antidepressant medications, psychotherapy, or a combination. Other clinical options include exercise programs and electroconvulsive therapy.

Medications may target somatic symptoms, sleep, and energy. All depression treatments have potential adverse effects, especially in medically ill older adults taking multiple medications. Carefully review all medications before starting a patient on new medications. Minimizing polypharmacy may reduce side effects and improve medication adherence.

Brief counseling strategies such as behavioral activation may help with the inactivity often associated with depression. Psychotherapy can address negative thoughts and help patients learn strategies to solve current and future life problems.

More than 50 percent of depressed older patients will not improve with initial treatment and require adjustments such as medication changes and/or addition of psychotherapy.

Systematic tracking of depression severity with rating scales such as the PHQ-9 may 1) minimize clinical inertia, 2) guide dose escalation and medication switch strategies, and 3) suggest when it is time for a specialty consultation.

Engaging family members and caregivers is critical in the treatment of depressed older adults, especially if they’re cognitively impaired. When families do not understand that depression is a treatable illness, feel frightened by the idea of mental illness, or fear that antidepressant medications are addictive, they may sabotage care. Involving family members and caregivers in discussions about depression treatment leads to better clinical outcomes and improved treatment adherence.

It’s also important for clinicians to discuss available options and concerns about side effects with patients and family members. Considering individual preferences about depression treatment are strongly associated with treatment adherence and outcomes.

Resources:
The Division of Geriatric Psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine has programs and clinical trials for older adults with treatment resistant depression. To learn more, email Jordan Karp, MD at karpjf@upmc.edu.

Unutzer J, Park M. Older Adults with Severe, Treatment-Resistant Depression: “I got my mother back.” JAMA 2012; 308(9): 909-918.
MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
Pennsylvania Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment
POLST: Doing It Right! Training Course
Tuesday, November 13, 2018
8:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
Jewish Healthcare Foundation
To register on or before November 2, 2018 email Ben Johnson at bjohnston@prhi.org or Marian Kemp at PAPOLST@verizon.net

2019 Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Award Call for Nominations

The Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Award call for nominations will begin October 1st. The award will be presented to two outstanding teachers for their dedication and commitment to geriatrics education.

The annual award will recognize and honor both a physician and a healthcare professional from healthcare disciplines including nursing, advanced practice, physical therapy, pharmacy, occupational therapy, dentistry, audiology, speech-language, pathology, and social work, who have made significant contributions to the education and training of learners in geriatrics and to the progress of geriatrics education across the health professions. Members and non-members of the Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society will be considered.

Eligible nominees will have demonstrated leadership and inspired learners to better the care of older adults and will have contributed to the growth of geriatrics in their professions. Teaching expertise and/or education program development are valued in the selection of the recipient for this honor.

Award eligibility and criteria, along with the nomination form, is available on the society’s website at www.pagswd.org. Nominations must be received before January 4, 2019. Questions regarding the awards or nomination process can be directed to Nadine Popovich, administrator, at npopovich@acms.org or (412) 321-5030.

Awardees will be recognized at the dinner symposium held in conjunction with the 2019 Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine scheduled Thursday, April 25, 2019, at the Pittsburgh Marriott City Center.

Recipients will be honored with a plaque and receive complimentary membership in the society for one year.
AGS News:
Health in Aging Foundation
(The official Foundation of the American Geriatrics Society)

The Health in Aging Foundation brings the discoveries and expertise of the geriatrics field to the public by providing health information to older adults and their informal caregivers.

The Foundation’s flagship initiative is HealthinAging.org. This comprehensive resource presents expert, up-to-date information about how to stay healthy and active as we age, as well as what to do if health problems arise in later life.

The site’s Aging & Health: A to Z section offers information on more than 60 health conditions common among older people, including symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, and lifestyle approaches. “Unique to Older Adults” sections provide additional information about complications that may occur with a given health problem, and what to do if you, or an older adult you care for, has these complications.

In addition to HealthinAging.org, we:

- Work with the media to increase public awareness of health and aging issues.
- Produce educational videos on topics such as Diabetes in Older Adults and Falls Prevention.
- Create guides such as Preventing Medication Interactions and Five Things Physicians and Patients Should Question (part of the national Choosing Wisely® campaign).
- Publish free, up-to-date, easy-to-understand tip sheets and research findings on topics such as caregiving, healthy aging, preventing falls, vaccinations for seniors, and optimal medication use.
- Distribute an e-newsletter and sponsor a Health in Aging Blog about new developments in elder health and care.