

# Healthy Ager Project

## Interprofessional Clinical Learning Experience

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# Aging Population

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- 2000 –
  - 12.6% of US population >65
  - 12.4% of AU population >65
- 2015 –
  - 14.7% of US population >65
  - 15.8% of AU population >65
- 2000 to 2030 increase
  - 108% Australia
  - 102% United States



# Student Nurses' Attitudes Towards Working With Older Patients

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- 160 female & 12 male students at 3 educational institutions in Scotland
- Intended behavior dependent on attitudes and subjective norms
- Positive attitude
  - Greater tolerance of older patients
  - Greater job satisfaction
  - Worried less about growing old

McKinlay and Cowan (2003), *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 43(3), 298-309



# Student Physical Therapists' Attitudes Towards Working With Elderly Patients

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- 190 students from 3 PT programs
- Taking courses does not result in attitudinal change
- Students that scored higher or were more positive towards working in a nursing home had participated in a geriatric clinical experience.
- Use case studies, experiential learning, clinical affiliations that show aging in positive light.

Taylor and Tovin (2000), *Pt and OT in Geriatrics*, 18(2), 21-27



# Initial Year

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- **15 “Healthy Agers”**
  - Center on Aging
- **15 Physical Therapy students**
  - Assessment of physical fitness
  - Exercise sessions
  - Home exercises
- **Add Nursing for future**
  - Disease information
  - Medications



# Second & Third Year

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- **15 “Healthy Agers”**
  - 60-83 years of age
  - Center for Aging
- **Physical Therapy students**
  - Assessment of Physical fitness.
  - 10 exercise sessions
  - Home exercises
- **Nursing students**
  - Health education topics
    - Hypertension,
    - Healthy Diet,
    - Cholesterol,
    - Type 2 Diabetes,
    - Stress reduction



# Fourth Year

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- **15 > 14 “Healthy Ager’s”**
  - 66–79 years of age
  - Center on Aging
- **Nursing & Physical Therapy students**
  - Assessment
  - Exercise sessions
  - Home exercises
  - Health education
- **Social Work**
- **Pharmacy Intern**



# Medical History

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- Total knee replacements
- High cholesterol
- Angioplasty
- Stroke
- Breast cancer
- Diabetes
- Back pain
- Prostate cancer
- ..and on and on!



# Medications

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- Aspirin
- Nitroglycerin
- Lipitor
- Flomax
- Dyazide
- Fosamax
- Lexapro
- Zoloft
- ..and on and on!



# Reasons for Participating

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- **Improve health**
- Regain strength
- Lose weight
- Improve eating habits
- Help students realize the challenges that seniors face
- Want the outer exterior to be as healthy as the spirit



# Assessments

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- Balance Scale (Berg, Wood-Dauphinee, Williams & Gayton)
- Dynamic Gait Index
- Geriatric Depression Scale (Sheikh & Yesavage)
- Health Promoting Lifestyle Profile II (Walker, Sechrist & Pender)
- Exercise Benefits & Barriers (Sechrist, Walker & Pender)
- Cholesterol and Glucose

# Student Attitude

## Description of Geriatric Patient

### Visual analog scale of polar adjectives

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- progressive \_\_\_\_\_ traditional
- consistent \_\_\_\_\_ inconsistent
- secure \_\_\_\_\_ insecure
- active \_\_\_\_\_ passive
- expectant \_\_\_\_\_ resigned
- flexible \_\_\_\_\_ inflexible
- friendly \_\_\_\_\_ unfriendly
- trustful \_\_\_\_\_ suspicious
- self-reliant \_\_\_\_\_ dependent
- aggressive \_\_\_\_\_ defensive
- neat \_\_\_\_\_ untidy

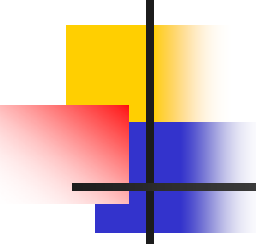
# Student Attitude

## Providing Care for Geriatric Patient

Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree,  
Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

- I will welcome elderly patients into my practice.
- It is too tedious to care for chronically ill older people.
- Understanding elderly patients is valuable to me.
- Elderly patients do exercise programs as prescribed.
- The care of the elderly patient is more time consuming than the care of other patients.
- More training is needed to prepare all health professionals to provide care to elderly patients.

# Results: Description of Geriatric Patient



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|              | Post | Pre  |              |
|--------------|------|------|--------------|
| Progressive  | 3.86 | 5.17 | Traditional  |
| Consistent   | 2.18 | 3.17 | Inconsistent |
| Secure       | 2.32 | 3.80 | Insecure     |
| Active       | 2.71 | 4.80 | Passive      |
| Expectant    | 3.21 | 4.20 | Resigned     |
| Flexible     | 2.93 | 4.97 | Inflexible   |
| Friendly     | 1.32 | 1.77 | Unfriendly   |
| Trustful     | 1.68 | 2.87 | Suspicious   |
| Self-reliant | 2.21 | 4.07 | Dependent    |
| Aggressive   | 3.75 | 4.13 | Defensive    |
| Neat         | 1.86 | 2.63 | Untidy       |

# Results(%): Providing Care for Geriatric Patient

|  | SA    | A     | SWA   | SWD       | D         | SD   |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|------|
| I will welcome elderly patients into my practice.  | 77/89 | 23/11 |       |           |           |      |
| ■ It is tedious to care for chronically ill old people.  | 14/4  | 21/18 | 21/14 | 17/1<br>1 | 21/3<br>6 | 3/18 |
| ■ Elderly patients are able to take care of their own needs.                                       | 3/21  | 30/46 | 53/29 | 10/0      | 0/4       |      |
| ■ Understanding elderly patients is valuable to me.  | 67/68 | 33/32 |       |           |           |      |
| ■ Elderly patients do exercises programs as prescribed.  | 3/25  | 17/50 | 63/21 | 13/4      | 3/0       |      |
| ■ The care of the elderly patient is more time consuming than the care of other patients.          |       | 7/11  | 43/21 | 30/3<br>2 | 10/2<br>1 | 7/14 |
| ■ More training is needed to prepare all health professionals to provide care to elderly patients. | 13/18 | 27/21 | 27/25 | 23/2<br>1 | 10/1<br>4 |      |



# Healthy Ager Responses

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- They did not treat us like old people and they didn't underestimate our capabilities.
- They're not just students; they're also my friends. I had surgery and they came to visit me.
- These students care about us and they care about their profession as a whole.
- ...tailored their ideas to our needs
- We need more students like them to help us because they understand us.



# Student Responses

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- **Experience with Healthy Ager**
  - Ager was open to anything and willing to try, improvements were seen
  - Wasn't expecting to see Ager be as strong as she was
  - Enjoyed interaction, talking, speaking to own Ager and everyone else
  - You think they are passive in talking about stuff but realized that person was very opinionated



# Student Responses

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- **Experience with Physical Therapy/Nursing students**
  - It started off divided and now all came together
  - You get an idea of other profession's knowledge and shared
  - Benefit - communication for future team information
  - More collaboration to get with partner before the client
  - Hated it