



Medical School Hotline

Center on Aging John A. Burns School of Medicine

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Never before in human history have so many individuals lived so long. This phenomenon has implications for individuals who experience a greater range of biological, psychological and social changes over a lengthening life span. It also has implications for families, communities, and societies that are influenced by, and must adjust to, a growing number and proportion of older adults.

The Center on Aging (COA) at the University of Hawaii is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for Hawaii's adults and elders. We accomplish this through: 1) undergraduate and graduate education; 2) continuing education for professionals and paraprofessionals; 3) research and evaluation; 4) organizational assistance with program and policy development; and 5) individual, community, and workplace education and outreach.

The COA was established in 1988 by the U.H. Board of Regents, which recognized the need for an interdisciplinary, campus-wide program for training students and facilitating education, research, and service in gerontology. Among its first achievements were the establishment of undergraduate and graduate certificates in aging and the production of a nationally distributed and acclaimed 13-hour telecourse on aging, called *Growing Old in a New Age* (1993). This video series is available at the Sinclair Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa.

In 1993, the COA was transferred to the School of Public Health and, with the demise of that school, integrated into the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) in 2000. Since its inception, the COA has realized a number of accomplishments in each of its five activity areas.

Undergraduate and Graduate Education

- 44 students have been awarded an Advanced Certificate in Gerontology.
- 16 students have been awarded an Undergraduate Certificate in Aging.
- The Masters in Public Health (MPH) in gerontology was approved in 2001. Two students are graduating in 2002.
- Student research projects are funded through annual Lenzer-Goodfriend awards.
- The local chapter of Sigma Phi Omega, the National Gerontology Honor Society, is sponsored by the Center.

Continuing Education for Professionals and Paraprofessionals

- Staff serves as co-trainers of Educating Physicians in End-of-Life Care (EPEC).
- Staff provides training in end-of-life care for nursing home personnel, community-based service providers, and paraprofessional workers on Oahu and the Big Island.

- COA sponsors gerontology study tours to other countries and organizes study tours for professionals visiting Hawaii.
- Staff works with Papa Ola Lokahi to mentor Native Hawaiians who want to pursue research careers.

Research and Evaluation

- Our focus is on Asian and Pacific Islander aging, end-of-life care, family caregiving, successful aging, and Hawaiian health.
- Skills includes community-based participatory research, qualitative methods, developing and testing educational materials, and program evaluation.
- Since 1995, COA staff collaborated on and published 2 books, *Teaching Students Geriatric Research* with Peggy Perkinson, and *Cultural Issues in End-of-Life Decision Making* with Jim Pietsch (UH School of Law) Patricia Blanchette (JABSOM), 8 book chapters, 50 journal articles, 16 technical reports, and the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th editions of the study and faculty guides for *Growing Old in a New Age*.
- Staff has secured more than \$2,000,000 in extramural funds.

Organizational Assistance with Program and Policy Development

- Staff assists governmental and non-governmental agencies with needs assessments, grant writing, policy development, program evaluation, and health communications.
- COA initiates contracts to implement programs of Hawaii's Executive Office on Aging related to population aging, client satisfaction, data management, elder abuse prevention, end-of-life care, family caregiving, and self-determination.
- We assist other UH units and several non-UH agencies in securing their own grant funds, including the Executive Office on Aging, the Hawaiian Islands Hospice Organization, Papa Ola Lokahi, and the Hawaii Intergenerational Network.

Individual, Community, and Workplace Education and Outreach

- Publication of a semi-annual newsletter for faculty, students, alumni, and interested community members.
- Public training programs in advance directives, the aging process, care of the dying, care of the bereaved, coping with caregiver stress, cultural issues in caregiving and help-seeking, end-of-life decision making, and funeral planning.

Two of COA's current projects include the End-of-Life Care for Hawaii's Ohana (ECHO) and the Paraprofessionals in Aging Project (PAP). The purpose of the ECHO project is to explore the impact of group-targeted messages and individually tailored support on end-of-life planning by multi-ethnic caregivers of elders receiving long-term care services. To fit the needs of caregivers, ECHO uses the seven stages of caregiving outlined by Montgomery and Kosloski (2000) to design tailored, culturally sensitive end-of-life care messages for targeted groups of caregivers. This three-year project (funded by the Administration on Aging's National Family Caregiver Support Program) includes the following community partners: Hawaii Meals on Wheels, Honolulu Gerontology Program, Kokuia Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services, Maluhia Foundation, and Project Dana. The PAP is a 30-hour educational workshop

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intended to provide paraprofessionals working in elder care with background information about aging. The workshop for home health aides, care aides and adult day care assistants on the Big Island includes the following five training modules: the aging process, health and wellness, illness and disability, basic caregiving skills, and death, dying and bereavement.

In 2002, the COA embarked on a strategic planning process to determine how to better serve the Center's constituents. The primary commitment is to serve the University of Hawaii system, including students, staff, and faculty. As academics, the staff creates and disseminates new knowledge. As a state-supported educational unit, however, it is responsible to state and local agencies to improve the quality of life for adults and elders, as well as to recognize and help meet the needs of the aging public.

For more information on the Center on Aging, call 956-5001 or visit the web site at www.hawaii.edu/aging.

References

1. *Growing Old in a New Age*. (1993). Video Series 1 - 13. University of Hawaii at Manoa. Honolulu, Hawaii.
2. Montgomery, R.J. & Kosloski, K. D. (2000). *Family care giving: Change, continuity, and diversity*. In Lawton, P. & Rubenstein, L. (Eds.). (2000). *Interventions in dementia care*. New York: Spring Publishing.

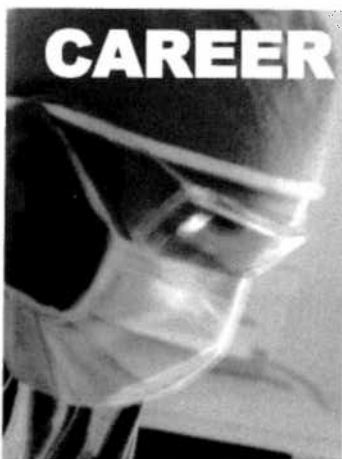
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tion. (Additional eligibility criteria may be obtained by contacting the study site.) Participants will receive either 200 mcg of selenium, 400 mg of vitamin E, both, or placebos for up to 12 years. Blood samples and toenail clippings will be requested from all participants. Participants will also be asked to take part in the PREADVISE. However, declining to provide samples or to take part in the PREADVISE will not affect their participation in SELECT.

For more information in Hawaii, contact the Clinical Trials Unit, (808)586-2979. For information on study sites outside of Hawaii, call the Cancer Information Service of Hawaii at 1-800-4-CANCER. In Canada, call the Canadian Cancer Society's Cancer Information Service at 1-888-939-3333.

References

1. American Cancer Society: Cancer Facts and Figures-2002. Atlanta, GA: American Cancer Society, 2002.
2. Thompson IM, Coltman CA, Brawley OW, et al. Chemoprevention of prostate cancer. *Seminars in Urology* XIII, No. 2: 122-129, 1995.
3. Clark LC, Combs GF Jr, Turnbull BW, et al. Effects of selenium supplementation for cancer prevention in patients with carcinoma of the skin. A randomized controlled trial. Nutritional Prevention of Cancer Study Group. *JAMA* 276:1957-1963, 1996.
4. Heinonen OP, Albanes D, Huttunen JK, et al. Prostate cancer and supplementation with alpha-tocopherol and betacarotene: incidence and mortality in a controlled trial. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 90:440-6, 1998.



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