



NATIONAL POLL: Low Cost, Lifesaving Services Missing From Most Seniors' Healthcare

Large majorities of older Americans experience significant and troubling gaps in their primary care, according to a new national survey, "How Does It Feel? The Older Adult Health Care Experience," by the John A. Hartford Foundation, a champion for improved geriatric care.

The poll focuses exclusively on Americans age 65 and older and assesses whether, in the past 12 months, patients received seven important medical services to support healthy aging, including:

- an annual medication review
- a falls risk assessment and history
- depression screening
- referral to community-based health resources
- ability to perform routine daily tasks without help
- falls prevention counseling
- ability to perform personal care tasks (e.g. bathing, dressing)

The type of care suggested by these services supports a healthy aging process by managing and lowering patients' risk of a number of preventable health problems that can be serious enough to erode quality of life, increase healthcare costs, cause disability, and even kill. Yet only a tiny number (7%) of older adults surveyed received all seven recommended services.

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UC Irvine SeniorHealth Center: Good Listening, Great Care

"After months of seeing doctors and getting no answers, it was Dr. Lisa Gibbs who was finally able to successfully diagnose my grandmother's illness. No one else seemed to take her complaints seriously; after all, she was in her 80's. The previous doctors acted like 'you're old and of course you will have issues.' Once we received an accurate diagnosis, we were able to get the proper care for her. Thank you, Dr. Gibbs, for showing care, concern and compassion for your patients, regardless of age." – SUSAN MONTOYA

John B. Parker Successful Aging Series Event

SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

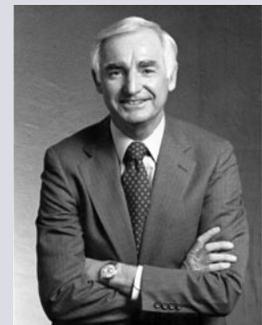


The highly popular *John B. Parker Successful Aging Series* returns on September 20, 2012. Kenneth Brummel-Smith, MD, will speak about *Optimal Aging – Getting the Most Out of Life No Matter What You Are Dealt*, focusing on what seniors need to know to age well and live

fully. Dr. Brummel-Smith holds the Charlotte Edwards Maguire Professorship at Florida State University's College of Medicine, and is the founding chair of the Department of Geriatrics.

Dr. Brummel-Smith is a past president of the American Geriatrics Society, a member of the National Advisory Council on Aging at the National Institute on Aging and a past chair of the Association of Directors of Geriatric Academic Programs. He has been selected by his peers 11 times as one of the Best Doctors in America. A dynamic speaker and innovative thinker, he is sure to entertain and inform.

This series is named after UC Irvine Program in Geriatrics donor and friend John B. Parker. It is designed to help older adults become savvy consumers of medical care. The event will be held at the Sue & Bill Gross Hall on the University of California, Irvine campus.



"Live your life by measuring how much you are giving."

– JOHN B. PARKER

To reserve your seat, email geriinfo@uci.edu or call **714.456.7396**.

Director's Column

In this issue, you'll find the results of a national poll by the Hartford Foundation that documents the need for specialists in the care for older adults. The extra knowledge about how an older adult's medical issues are different from a younger person's is demonstrated to improve the health of older adults. For example, one of the recommended services that many older adults are not receiving is an annual review of all the medications they are taking. In the Hartford poll, when asked if their healthcare provider reviewed all their medications in the past year, one out of three people polled said no.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 100,000 people over age 65 are hospitalized on an emergency basis each year due to dangerous reactions caused by medicine. These adverse drug events affect the elderly disproportionately and can be deadly, yet can be prevented through careful medication review.

Unfortunately, the Hartford poll revealed that frequent doctor visits are no guarantee of an annual medication review either: among those who saw a doctor five or more times in one year, 27 percent still received no medication review. Even of those taking five or more medications, and thus at greater risk of accidental overdose, confusion, or adverse drug interaction, 23 percent still reported no annual review of their medications. Be sure to ask your doctor to review your medications: at our SeniorHealth Center, we ask our patients to bring their medications to every visit and have a pharmacist available most days.

Another important recommended service is screening for depression. Depression is a killer of older adults, who are at greater risk of suicide than any other age group. It is also known to exacerbate other diseases and increase the cost of care for all conditions. Be sure to let your doctor know of any signs of depression, so we can best help you. Older age is not a barrier to successful treatment!

To your good health,

Laura Mosqueda, MD
Director, UC Irvine Program of Geriatrics

National Poll *Continued...*

"Preserving people's ability to do the things that are important to them is the gold standard of geriatric care," said Lisa Gibbs, MD, associate director, UC Irvine Program in Geriatrics. "Interventions such as helping people learn how to avoid falling, screening for and treating depression, and closely tracking their medications can improve a person's quality of life just as much as any test we order or prescription we write," Dr. Gibbs added. "At our SeniorHealth Center, patients see board-certified geriatricians who are tuned into the needs of older adults. This survey demonstrates the need for physicians to have specialized care in treating older adults."

"We feel this survey highlights why expert geriatric care is needed," said Christopher Langston, PhD, program director of the John A. Hartford Foundation, which commissioned the poll. "One of the central truths of geriatrics is that older adults are not just older 40-year-olds, any more than children are just small 40-year-olds. Older people need different care, and when they don't receive these kinds of evidence-based interventions, as many don't, the result is a lot of preventable disability and suffering."

Giving Opportunities

Online:

Make a secure donation on our website
at www.som.uci.edu/geriatrics

Direct:

Call **714.456.7396** to learn how you can contribute

Plan a birthday gift:

Ask friends and family to contribute to
UC Irvine instead of receiving gifts

Designate a memorial gift:

Ask friends and family to contribute to UC Irvine
instead of bringing flowers when a loved one dies

Estate and Planned Giving:

Create a legacy through life income
programs or trust and estate gifts

Volunteer:

Call us at **714.456.7396** to find out how

Student-Senior Partnership Program Connects Students and Seniors

The Student-Senior Partnership Program (SSPP) creates connections between medical students and seniors to give the medical students a close-up experience of the lives of some SeniorHealth Center patients. Participating medical students visit the senior in his or her home, attend a doctor's appointment with the senior, and do one other activity together of the senior's choice. This experience leaves a deep, lasting impression on medical students, as evidenced by these stories and photos written by a few of the participating medical students.

A Soft Handshake

Under weathered, wrinkled hands
Lies
A soft handshake.

Behind thick glasses, gray eyes
Resides
A lilting smile
An inside joke told once upon a time

A trove of stories
Of lessons learned
Of friends, sorrows, triumphs
Of bridges burned

A bittersweet lightness of being
That only he can describe
Carrying something precious
Left behind.

And on he strides,
Steeped in time
Old in history, young in life.

Under weathered, wrinkled hands
Lies
A soft handshake

He smiles with his eyes.

by Hanna Liu, Medical Student



Megan Oakes, first year medical student, had a life-changing experience when she was at the University of Virginia as an undergraduate nursing major. One of the clinical rotations took her group to an adult day care center, which cared for frail seniors and disabled adults. "It ended up being one of my favorite rotations," said Oakes. Once at UC Irvine School of Medicine, Oakes recalls a talk by Dr. Sonia Sehgal, UC Irvine SeniorHealth Center geriatrician. Dr. Sehgal said, "People don't think about the elderly being underserved but they are. It takes someone creative and someone willing to get more involved in their life to be a geriatrician."

Oakes attended the Elder Abuse Forensic Center meetings, which bring together physicians, social workers, law enforcement and adult protective services to identify and prosecute suspected cases of elder mistreatment. "It was great to be part of something that is the first of its kind in the country. Medicine is a great way to serve people and bring about justice."

Oakes also participated in the Student-Senior Partnership Program. She and fellow student Nilasha Ghosh were paired with Franklin Picker. "We meet with our senior partner in our clinical foundations class once a month. We also had the opportunity to accompany the senior to the SeniorHealth Center and to their homes. I thought it would be a great opportunity. Something that stands out about the SeniorHealth Center is that the patients' concerns are heard by somebody. I'm really grateful that the SeniorHealth Center is here because this is one of the top experiences I could get anywhere, to be around these role models."



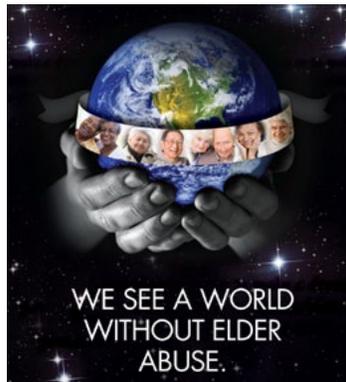
Franklin Picker is a patient, donor and volunteer at the SeniorHealth Center. Picker is an active participant in the Student-Senior Partnership Program. Shown here with Megan Oakes and Nilasha Ghosh, he gives back in many ways. In addition to helping with SSPP, Picker donated his wheelchair to the SeniorHealth Center.



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

JUNE 15

Join us at the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Center of the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering on the University of California, Irvine campus from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Survivors will speak out, footage from the White House's World Elder Abuse Awareness event will be shown, and a national social justice movement – The Ageless Alliance: United Against Elder Abuse – will be launched! The Beckman Center is located at 100 Academy Way, Irvine, CA, 92617. Parking and admission are free. For more information or to RSVP call 714.456.7396.



The Planning to Live Longer and Stronger Series

The Planning to Live Longer and Stronger Series, an educational series designed to say “thank you” to people who have donated to the UC Irvine Program in Geriatrics, begins this fall. Six sessions will cover important aspects of healthy aging, including wellness, healthcare planning, memory and dementia, protecting yourself, charitable giving, caregiving and navigating the healthcare system. Taught by UC Irvine physicians, faculty and senior staff. Exclusively for UC Irvine Program in Geriatrics donors.

Visit our website, www.som.uci.edu/geriatrics, email Linda Haghi at lhaghi@uci.edu or call **714.456.7396** for more information.

PROGRAM IN GERIATRICS

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