

Centre for Policy on Ageing
Information Service

Selected Readings

Sensory loss in older age

February 2023

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2022

Cost-effectiveness of hearing-screening in older adults: a scoping review; by Amber K Hsu, Sarah M Bassett, Linda C O'Dwyer (et al): Sage, February 2022, pp 186-204.

Research on Aging, vol 44, no 2, February 2022, pp 186-204.

Age is the most common predictor of hearing loss; however, many older adults are not screened. Hearing screening could improve healthcare access, participation and outcomes. Establishing whether hearing screening in older adults is cost-effective could improve its availability and utilisation. The authors searched nine databases in January 2020. Studies with populations aged 50+ that provided data on the cost-effectiveness of hearing screening were included in the review. Five studies met the inclusion criteria; and all found hearing screening programs to be cost-effective compared to no hearing screening, regardless of screening method (i.e., instrument or strategy). The maximum number of repeated screenings, coupled with younger ages, were found the most cost-effective. This review suggests that hearing screening in older adults is cost-effective; however, the evidence is limited. There is pressing need for research focused on economic impacts of hearing healthcare in older people to inform research, policy and practice. (RH)

ISSN: 01640275

From : <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F01640275211008583>

Living the everyday of dementia friendliness: navigating care in public spaces; by Katie Brittain, Cathrine Degnen.

Sociology of Health and Illness, vol 44, no 2, February 2022, pp 416-431.

Dementia friendly communities are a priority for international policymaking aimed at tackling the social exclusion of people living with dementia. However, what constitutes a dementia friendly community is not well defined nor understood. In this article, the authors explore what constitutes the enactment of care in a dementia friendly community, focusing on commercial, leisure public places. The authors use qualitative interviews with carers in North East England to examine how elements of social and material environments shape meaningful everyday practices of care outside the home. Drawing from the literature on materialities of care, they examine three everyday activities: eating out, going to the cinema and shopping. Maintaining such activities in public is part of keeping on with normal family life, but these can also expose individuals to stigmatising judgements by outsiders. Despite this, a complex array of material things, people, places and immaterial qualities such as ambience can come together to make care possible. The authors suggest there is a need to promote a less rigid, more flexible ethos in these public places. Through a recognition of the relational materialities of care, public spaces could do more to become places where people living with dementia can continue to feel connected and included. (OFFPRINT) (RH)

ISSN: 14679566

From : <http://www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal.shil>

Perceived stress predicts subsequent self-reported problems with vision and hearing: longitudinal findings from the German Ageing Survey; by Markus Wettstein, Hans-Werner Wahl, Vera Heyl.: Sage, March-April 2022, pp 286-300.

Research on Aging, vol 44, nos 3-4, March-April 2022, pp 286-300.

Although stress is a risk factor for various diseases in later life, its role for sensory abilities in the second half of life has rarely been empirically addressed. The authors examined if perceived stress at baseline predicts self-reported difficulties with vision and hearing 3 years later. They also explored whether chronological age is a moderator of associations between stress and sensory difficulties. Their sample was derived from the German Ageing Survey and consisted of 5,085 individuals aged 40-95 years (M = 64.01 years, SD = 10.84 years). Controlling for baseline self-reported sensory functioning, socio-demographic indicators, self-rated health and chronic diseases, greater perceived stress at baseline predicted greater self-reported difficulties with vision and hearing 3 years later. The effect of stress did not vary by age. The findings suggest that, from middle adulthood to advanced old age, stress is a risk factor for increases in self-perceived problems with vision and hearing. (RH)

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From : <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F01640275211027304>

2020

Describing the experiences of older persons with visual impairments during COVID-19 in rural Ghana; by Ariel Kwegyir Tsiboe.: Emerald, 2020, pp 371-383.

Journal of Adult Protection, vol 22, no 6, 2020, pp 371-383.

This study aims to describe the lived experiences among older persons with disability during the coronavirus pandemic in rural Ghana. The study is based on a qualitative methodology consistent with a phenomenological

approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participants. Thematic analysis was used for data analysis. During the pandemic, care given to older people with disabilities by their caregivers declined significantly because of the lockdown measures. This caused participants to suffer profoundly from loneliness and hunger, and forced some to have suicidal thoughts. At the same time, those who lived with their family members were kept indoors for several weeks to reduce their chances of contracting the virus. This was because participants' family members had lost confidence in the ability of the Ghanaian health-care system to protect their older relatives.

ISSN: 14668203

From : <https://doi.org/10.1108/JAP-07-2020-0026>

Hearing-impaired population performance and the effect of hearing interventions on Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA): systematic review and meta-analysis; by Nattawan Utoomprurkporn (et al): Wiley, September 2020, pp 962-971.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 35, no 9, September 2020, pp 962-971.

Older adults are at high risk of developing age-related hearing loss (HL) and/or cognitive impairment. However, cognitive screening tools rely on oral administration of instructions and stimuli that may be impacted by HL. This systematic review aims to investigate (a) whether people with HL perform worse than those without HL on the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA), a widely used screening tool for cognitive impairment, and what the effect size of that difference is (b) whether HL treatment mitigates the impact of HL. The authors conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis including studies that reported mean MoCA scores and SDs for individuals with HL. People with HL performed significantly worse on the MoCA (4 studies, N = 533) with a pooled mean difference of -1.66 points (95% confidence interval CI -2.74 to -0.58). There was no significant difference in MoCA score between the pre- vs post-hearing intervention (3 studies, N = 75). However, sensitivity analysis in the cochlear implant studies (2 studies, N = 33) showed improvement of the MoCA score by 1.73 (95% CI 0.18 to 3.28). The study concludes that people with HL score significantly lower than individuals with normal hearing on the standard orally administered MoCA. Clinicians should consider listening conditions when administering the MoCA and report the hearing status of the tested individuals, if known, taking this into account in interpretation or make note of any hearing difficulty during consultations which may warrant onward referral. Cochlear implants may improve the MoCA score of individuals with HL, and more evidence is required on other treatments.

ISSN: 08856230

From : <http://www.orangejournal.org>

How might the cultural significance of storytelling in Deaf communities influence the development of a life-story work intervention for Deaf people with dementia?: A conceptual thematic review; by Alys Young, Emma Ferguson-Coleman, John Keady.: Cambridge University Press, February 2020, pp 262-281.

Ageing and Society, vol 40, no 2, February 2020, pp 262-281.

Although life-story work is an established form of support for people with dementia and their carers, culturally deaf people who are sign language users have been excluded from this practice. There is no evidence base for the cultural coherence of this approach with deaf people who use sign language, nor any prior investigation of the linguistic and cultural adaptation that might be required for life-story work to be effective for sign language users with dementia. Given the lack of empirical work, this conceptual thematic literature review approaches the topic by first investigating the significance of storytelling practices amongst deaf communities across the lifespan. The findings are then used to draw out key implications for the development of life-story work with culturally deaf people who experience dementia and their formal and informal carers (whether deaf or hearing). The reviewed work is presented in three themes: (a) the cultural positioning of self and others; (b) learning to be deaf; and (c) resistance narratives and narratives of resistance. The article concludes that life-story work has the potential to build on lifelong storying practices by Deaf people, the functions of which have included the (re)forming of cultural identity, the combating of ontological insecurity, knowledge transmission, the resistance of false identity attribution, and the celebration of language and culture. (RH)

ISSN: 0144686X

From : <http://www.cambridge.org/aso>

Impact of an intervention to support hearing and vision in dementia: the SENSE-Cog field trial; by Iracema Leroi (et al): Wiley, April 2020, pp 348-357.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 35, no 4, April 2020, pp 348-357.

This article reports the findings of an international open-label field trial, and nested case series, to explore the impact of a 'sensory intervention' (SI) to support hearing and vision in people with dementia (PwD.) A home-based trial was conducted in France, England, and Cyprus. Participants were people with mild-to-moderate dementia and hearing and/or vision impairment (n = 19) and their study partners (unpaid carers; n = 19). The

'basic' SI included a hearing and vision assessment and provision of glasses and/or hearing aids. A subsample received the 'extended' SI with additional weekly visits from a sensory support therapist (SST). Exploratory analyses of dementia-related, health utility and resource utilisation outcomes were performed. Quality of life (QoL) and sensory functional ability improved. Change in QoL exceeded the threshold for a minimum clinically important difference. There was a modest improvement (in absolute terms) post intervention in behavioural disturbance, self-efficacy, and relationship satisfaction. Study partner time assisting instrumental activities of daily living (iADL) and supervision decreased by about 22 and 38 hours per month, respectively, although time for personal ADL support increased. Qualitative data supported effectiveness of the intervention: PwD were more socially engaged, less isolated, less dependent on study partners, and had improved functional ability and communication.

ISSN: 08856230

From : <http://www.orangejournal.org>

The impact of sensory impairment on cognitive performance, quality of life, depression, and loneliness in older adults; by Deepashini Harithasan, Siti Zamratol-Mai, Sarah Mukari, Wan Syafira Ishak, Suzana Shahar, Wong Lai Yeong.: Wiley, April 2020, pp 358-364.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 35, no 4, April 2020, pp 358-364.

The objective of this study was to evaluate the relationship between sensory impairment (hearing loss only, vision loss only, and dual sensory impairment [DSI]) and depression, loneliness, quality of life, and cognitive performance in older adults. A total of 229 community-dwelling older adults aged 60 years or older participated in this study. Variables were measured using the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15), Revised University of California at Los Angeles Loneliness Scale (R-UCLA), Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), and Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE). There was an independent association between DSI and quality of life ($P < .05$) and between DSI and hearing loss alone and cognitive function ($P < .05$) in older adults. In addition, higher education was associated with better quality of life and cognitive function. Conclusions: DSI is a significant factor affecting the quality of life and cognitive function in older adults. Sociodemographic factors such as education play an important role in improving quality of life and cognitive function. Thus, increasing the awareness of this disability is important to ensure that older adults receive the necessary support services and rehabilitation to improve their level of independence.

ISSN: 08856230

From : <https://doi.org/10.1002/gps.5237>

Larger Chinese text spacing and size: effects on older users' experience; by Guanhua Hou, Hua Dong, Weining Ning, Lianghao Hai.: Cambridge University Press, February 2020, pp 389-411.

Ageing and Society, vol 40, no 2, February 2020, pp 389-411.

With declining vision ability, character spacing and size on smartphones designed for the general population are not accessible for older adults. This study explores how larger Chinese character spacing and size affect older adults' user experience (UX). An orthogonal experiment was conducted. The optimal range of font size (FS), word spacing (WS) and line spacing (LS) were proposed, utilising subjective evaluations to investigate the correlation of eye movement data with participants perceived UX. The results showed that improvement in different aspects of UX varied when FS, WS and LS increased. Overall, participants preferred larger FS, WS and LS; however, the larger FS, WS and LS values are more likely to cause errors and slower reading speed. These results suggest that the distinct combination of size and spacing depends on the motivation, needs and situation of older people when reading on a smartphone. These findings will help designers to provide better design for the older people. (RH)

ISSN: 0144686X

From : <http://www.cambridge.org/aso>

The mediating roles of functional limitations and social support on the relationship between vision impairment and depressive symptoms in older adults; by Xiuquan Gong, Zhao Ni, Bei Wu.: Cambridge University Press, March 2020, pp 465-479.

Ageing and Society, vol 40, no 3, March 2020, pp 465-479.

Vision impairment is prevalent and it is strongly associated with depressive symptoms in older adults. Using data from a probability-based sample of 1,093 adults aged 60 and older in Shanghai, China, the authors investigated the mediating roles of functional limitations and social support on this association. Structural equation models were used to examine the structural relationships among sets of variables simultaneously, including vision impairment, activities of daily living (ADLs), instrumental ADLs (IADLs), friends support, family support, relatives support and depressive symptoms. The bootstrapping method and the program PRODCLIN were used to test the indirect effects of these variables. The study found that vision impairment was directly associated with a higher level of depressive symptoms, and the association was partially mediated by

functional limitations (IADLs) and social support (friends support). The study demonstrates that improving social support from friends and enhancing social participation for visually impaired older adults can reduce depressive symptoms. More importantly, this study contributes to the knowledge of mediating mechanisms between vision impairment and depressive symptoms. (RH)

ISSN: 0144686X

From : <http://www.cambridge.org/aso>

2019

Adaptation to loss of visual function: implications for rehabilitation on subtle nuances of communication; by Patrick Emeka Okonji, Catherine Bailey, Monique Uhussier, Mima Cattan.: Taylor and Francis, July-September 2019, pp 169-185.

Activities, Adaptation and Aging, vol 43, no 3, July-September 2019, pp 169-185.

Lack of access to visual cues can cause challenges and sometimes makes social interaction difficult for many visually impaired persons in face-to-face situations. Therefore, loss of vision demands adjustments, not only for the individual's adaptation with sight loss for independent living, but also for communication. In recognizing that older adults with vision impairment face challenges when communicating with others due to inability to perceive visual cues, this study examines the challenges and opportunities presented to them when using a computer to communicate with others. The study employed a case study approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 visually impaired older adults aged 60-87 years in Newcastle upon Tyne. Findings suggest that the lack of visual cues in text-based computer-mediated communications (CMCs) supported their daily social communication. The paper discussed how, within online communication, people with vision impairment compensate for sight loss through CMC. Implications of findings for broader issues that may steer the use of information communication technologies (ICTs) among visually impaired older people are discussed. In highlighting the need for more attentive rehabilitation than the need for circumventing face-to-face interaction, this paper adds new understanding to the field of CMC. (RH)

ISSN: 01924788

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Health and social care practitioners' understanding of the problems of people with dementia-related visual processing impairment; by Anne McIntyre, Emma Harding, Keir X X Yong (et al.): Wiley, July 2019, pp 982-990.

Health and Social Care in the Community, vol 27, no 4, July 2019, pp 982-990.

It has been highlighted that health and social care staff need a greater awareness of the needs and problems of those people with young onset dementia in the UK. Symptoms of Alzheimer's disease are relatively well known (memory loss, disorientation, language difficulties and behavioural problems). However, there is less awareness of dementia-related visual processing impairments in Alzheimer's disease, dementia with Lewy Bodies, or rarer dementia syndromes such as posterior cortical atrophy (PCA), leading to delayed assessment, diagnosis and management. This qualitative study explored health and social care practitioners' opinions of the needs of people with dementia-related visual processing impairment (such as individuals with PCA), and identified any training that these practitioners might need. Social workers, occupational therapists, care home staff, rehabilitation workers (visual impairment), optometrists and admiral nurses participated in focus groups or one-to-one semi-structured interviews. All participants were shown video clips of people with dementia-related visual impairment to facilitate discussion. Sixty-one participants took part in focus groups or interviews between November 2014 and December 2015. Participants' experiences and understanding of dementia were explored and thematic analysis of the data identified two major themes. Theme 1 explores participants' understanding of dementia-related visual impairments. Theme 2 recounts how participants address and support people with dementia-related visual impairment and their families. Participants discussed, reflected and critically analysed the video clips during data collection. Most considered new perspectives of their own clients' difficulties; and those participants working with people with rarer dementias consolidated their experiences. However, some participants seemed hesitant to accept the existence of visual processing impairment arising due to dementia, rationalising novel information to existing understanding of memory loss or behavioural problems. This study highlights that health and social care practitioners want more training and better understanding of less well-recognised symptoms of dementia and rarer syndromes (including PCA) to ensure appropriate, evidence-based assessment and intervention. (RH)

ISSN: 09660410

From : <http://www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/hsc>

Lighting effects on older adults' visual and nonvisual performance: a systematic review; by Xiaojie Lu, Nam-Kyu Park, Sherry Ahrentzen.: Taylor and Francis, July-September 2019, pp 298-324.

Journal of Housing for the Elderly, vol 33, no 3, July-September 2019, pp 298-324.

Lighting plays an important role in daily life. It helps people perform daily activities independently and safely, and also benefits their health. This study assesses the research evidence of lighting's impacts on older adults in four domains: (a) performance of activities of daily living (ADLs) and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs); (b) circadian rhythm; (c) fall prevention and postural stability; and (d) sleep quality. A comprehensive review of lighting studies on older adults' visual and non-visual performance was conducted using a modified PRISMA systematic review process. For the first domain, some older adults had difficulty in using the toilet, preparing meals and doing laundry under lower illumination. For the second domain, brighter and bluish lighting improved older adults' circadian rhythm. For the third domain, low-intensity LED lighting affixed to door frames can help older adults maintain postural stability and prevent falling when moving around during the night. Finally, some studies concluded that receiving outdoor daylight during exercise was beneficial to older adults' sleep quality. This study provides several methodological, theoretical and collaborative suggestions for developing a more conclusive evidence base for lighting standards and strategies for older adults. (RH)

ISSN: 02763893

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Playthings of the brain: phantom visions in Charles Bonnet Syndrome; by Joe Strong.: Taylor and Frances, July 2019, pp 586-596.

Journal of Gerontological Social Work, vol 62, no 5, July 2019, pp 586-596.

Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS) is a condition of the visually impaired, in which hallucinations - or, more appropriately, visions - of geometric patterns, people and objects appear within the visual field. Most people with CBS are older adults, a function of increased likelihood of visual deterioration in later life, but the condition can occur at any age. Diagnostic criteria vary among professions, but generally includes awareness that the visions are not real, the absence of other accompanying sensory hallucinations, and the absence of dementia or other neurological condition. The mechanism by which the phenomenon occurs is not well understood, although some speculation exists that it is akin to phantom limb syndrome. Although there has recently been increasing awareness about the condition, many in the fields of medicine, optometry and social work have not heard of it. As front-line providers for clients, it is important that social workers be well informed about the condition, and to alleviate anxiety that clients may have about expressing their experiences with the condition. This article provides an overview of CBS, from its history to diagnostic criteria. (RH)

ISSN: 01634372

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

2018

Developing best practice guidelines for designing living environments for people with dementia and sight loss; by Alison Bowes, Alison Dawson, Corinne Greasley-Adams, Louise McCabe.: Cambridge University Press, May 2018, pp 900-925.

Ageing and Society, vol 38, no 5, May 2018, pp 900-925.

The paper considers a process of developing evidence-based design guidelines to be used in environments where people with dementia and sight loss are living. The research involved a systematically conducted literature review and a series of consultations with people affected by dementia and/or sight loss who lived or worked in care homes or in domestic settings. Findings from the literature and the consultations were used in an iterative process to develop the guidelines. The process is outlined, providing examples from the guidelines about lighting, colour and contrast. In discussing the research findings and the development process, the authors consider implications of the work, including the weakness of the evidence base, the challenges of improving this, and the need for innovative approaches to understanding the complexities of design for people with dementia and sight loss. The authors highlight the emphasis in the literature on independence for people with sight loss and the focus on control for people with dementia. They argue that this falls short of a genuinely person-centred approach, which recognises the active participation of people with dementia and sight loss. (RH)

ISSN: 0144686X

From : <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X16001409>

Financial inclusion: perceptions of visually impaired older Nigerians; by Patrick Emeka Okonji, Darlington Chukwunalu Ogwezzy.: Emerald, 2018, pp 10-21.

Journal of Enabling Technologies, vol 12, no 1, 2018, pp 10-21.

This paper explores areas of challenge for visually impaired older people in managing personal finances, and critically appraises current structures available in financial institutions for equal access to financial services. The

paper intends to create understanding of the drawbacks to financial inclusion from the perspectives and experiences of older people with vision impairment in Nigeria, as well as highlighting areas where support is/are needed to tackle digital exclusion. The study employed a qualitative approach, interviewing 30 visually impaired older adults, aged 60+. Participants were drawn from a voluntary organisation for people living with vision impairment in Southwest Nigeria. Interview data were transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically using qualitative data analysis software - NVivo (version 11). Results provide clear insight on the nature of the challenges faced by visually impaired older people, particularly with managing finances on computer-enabled platforms. The findings also revealed fears and hopes of this group about the rapid evolution of technologies for managing finances. The study critically explored an understudied population, showing peculiar challenges; it made a case for inclusive designs that are useful for digital inclusion of this population. (RH)

ISSN: 23986263

From : <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/loi/jet>

The relationship between vision impairment and well-being among centenarians: findings from the Georgia Centenarian Study; by Aya Toyoshima, Peter Martin, Shinichi Sato, Leonard W Poon.: Wiley, February 2018, pp 414-422.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 33, no 2, February 2018, pp 414-422.

This study used the data set of the Georgia Centenarian Study including 106 centenarians (18 men and 88 women). It used scores of the Snellen chart for objective vision and self-reports for subjective vision. Social support, depression and loneliness were also assessed. Approximately 75% of the centenarians showed some level of objective visual impairment, and 56% of them reported that they had visual impairment. Objective vision impairment was significantly related to depression. Multiple regression analysis revealed that both variables of visual function were significantly associated with depression, but not loneliness. In the model including depression, a significant interaction was obtained for social support and objective vision. Centenarians reported lower level of depression when they had social support. However centenarians who had low level of visual function tended to report higher depression even if they had social support. These results indicate that vision function was related to centenarians' well-being, especially depression. (JL)

ISSN: 08856230

From : <http://www.orangejournal.org>

The silent impact of hearing loss: using longitudinal data to explore the effects on depression and social activity restriction among older people; by Claudia Campos Andrade, Cicero Roberto Pereira, Pedro Alcantara da Silva.: Cambridge University Press, December 2018, pp 2468-2489.

Ageing and Society, vol 38, no 12, December 2018, pp 2468-2489.

Hearing loss is frequent in old age and has been associated with fewer social activities and depression. However, hearing problems have also been associated with other comorbidities, which prevent more definitive conclusions about their effect on older people's well-being. Moreover, little attention has been paid to the psychological processes through which this relationship occurs. This study aims to investigate the effect of hearing loss on older adults' well-being from a longitudinal perspective. The authors used data from three points in time to investigate the mutual relationship between hearing loss, depression and social activities. Based on longitudinal data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) for ten European countries, the authors conducted the test of competing auto-regressive cross-lagged theoretical models. Results show that hearing loss reduces social activity, which is mediated by depression. The adequacy of this model (versus a model proposing that social activity restriction mediates the relationship between hearing loss and depression) was supported in each of the countries in the sample. Findings showing that hearing loss can contribute to depression and, subsequently, to restriction in social activities have implications for early detection and clinical interventions on hearing loss. (RH)

ISSN: 0144686X

From : <http://www.cambridge.org/aso>

Visual and hearing impairments are associated with cognitive decline in older people; by Asri Maharani, Piers Dawes, James Nazroo (et al.): Oxford University Press, July 2018, pp 575-581.

Age and Ageing, vol 47, no 4, July 2018, pp 575-581.

Hearing and vision sensory impairments among older people may contribute to the risk of cognitive decline and pathological impairments including dementia. This study aimed to determine whether single and dual sensory impairment (hearing and/or vision) are independently associated with cognitive decline among older adults and to describe cognitive trajectories according to their impairment pattern. The research used data from totals of 13,123, 11,417 and 21,265 respondents aged over 50 at baseline from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS), the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) and the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), respectively. The study performed growth curve analysis to identify cognitive trajectories and a joint

model was used to deal with attrition problems in longitudinal ageing surveys. Respondents with a single sensory impairment had lower episodic memory score than those without sensory impairment in all three surveys. The analysis further showed that older adults with dual sensory impairment remembered fewer words compared with those with no sensory impairment. The stronger associations between sensory impairment and lower episodic memory levels were found in the joint model which accounted for attrition. Hearing and/or vision impairments are a marker for the risk of cognitive decline that could inform preventative interventions to maximise cognitive health and longevity. Further studies are needed to investigate how sensory markers could inform strategies to improve cognitive ageing. (JL)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <https://academic.oup.com/ageing>

What happens when I'm gone?; by Colin Anderson, Sarah White, Kate Fitch.: Sense, Spring 2018, pp 20-29.

Talking Sense, vol 63, no 1, Spring 2018, pp 20-29.

Sense's When I'm Gone campaign focuses on fears and concerns of many families about the future care of a disabled loved one when they are no longer around. Such predicament has been exacerbated by tightened social care budgets. This article describes the many barriers that families face, and the impact this has on their lives. It offers examples of families who have been able to find a long-term solution, asks what we can learn from their experiences, and lists tips and tactics for coping with this situation. (RH)

ISSN: 13674604

From : <http://www.sense.org.uk>

2017

Ageing with a unique impairment: a systematically conducted review of older deafblind people's experiences; by Peter Simcock.: Cambridge University Press, September 2017, pp 1703-1742.

Ageing and Society, vol 37, no 8, September 2017, pp 1703-1742.

Little is known about the experiences of people ageing with impairments; social gerontology has largely focused on those ageing into disability, rather than those ageing with disability. This paper synthesises existing knowledge to determine what is known about the experiences of those ageing with deafblindness. A comprehensive literature search was undertaken between April 2013 and May 2014. The review method was informed by systematic review principles. A total of 24 references were identified for inclusion. No studies examining deafblind people's experience of ageing and old age specifically were found, suggesting that those ageing with deafblindness are an under-studied sub-group within the deafblind population. However, deafblind people describe ageing experiences in studies exploring their lives generally, and in personal accounts of living with the impairment. Practitioner-authored material also explores the topic. Similarities in experience were identified between those ageing with deafblindness and those ageing with other impairments: ongoing change and consequent need for adaptation; a particular relationship between ageing and impairment; a sense that whilst one can learn adaptive strategies having lived with impairment for many years, it does not necessarily get easier; and a particular relationship with care and support services. These experiences illustrate the unique nature of ageing with impairment, and challenge gerontologists to engage in further research and theorising in the field of disability in later life. (RH)

ISSN: 0144686X

From : <http://www.cambridge.org/aso>

Dementia and sight loss: a challenging combination; by Paul Ursell, Gemma Jolly.: Hawker Publications, September/October 2017, pp 26-27.

Journal of Dementia Care, vol 25, no 5, September/October 2017, pp 26-27.

Sight loss affects tens of thousands of people with dementia, but with the right understanding, education and awareness, they can be supported to live well. The authors show how one influential committee, Dementia and Sight Loss Interest Committee (DaSLIC) is making a difference. The Committee was formed in 2008 by RNIB, the Alzheimer's Society and Thomas Pocklington Trust as part of VISION 2020 UK. (RH)

ISSN: 13518372

From : <http://www.careinfo.org.uk>

Demonstrating the sensory changes of dementia; by Mark Banham, Luis Soares.: Hawker Publications, May/June 2017, pp 26-29.

Journal of Dementia Care, vol 25, no 3, May/June 2017, pp 26-29.

Dementia can result in sensory impairment, the effects of which are not always understood by care staff. The authors have developed a workshop based on experiential learning which has resulted in changes in practice. They outline ways in which hearing, sight, taste, smell and touch can be impaired, and describe exercises that

have been developed to counter such problems. In the case of taste and smell, for which no such experiential exercise could be offered, participants at the workshop were asked for their observations of changes of taste and smell for the people in their care. (RH)

ISSN: 13518372

From : www.careinfo.org

A randomized feasibility pilot trial of hearing treatment for reducing cognitive decline: results from the Aging and Cognitive Health Evaluation in Elders Pilot Study; by Jennifer A Deal, Marilyn S Albert, Michael Arnold (et al).

Alzheimer's and Dementia: Translational Research and Clinical Interventions, Vol 3, No 3, September 2017, pp 410-415.

Although hearing loss (HL) is prevalent and independently related to cognitive decline and dementia, there has never been a randomised trial to test whether HL treatment could reduce cognitive decline in older adults. A 40-person (aged 70-84 years) pilot study in Washington County, MD, was conducted. Participants were randomised 1:1 to a best practices hearing or successful ageing intervention and followed for 6 months (clinicaltrials.gov Identifier: NCT02412254). The Aging and Cognitive Health Evaluation in Elders Pilot (ACHIEVE-P) Study demonstrated feasibility in recruitment, retention and implementation of interventions, with no treatment-related adverse events. A clear efficacy signal of the hearing intervention was observed in perceived hearing handicap (mean of 0.11 to -1.29 standard deviation [SD] units; lower scores better) and memory (mean of -0.10 SD to 0.38 SD). ACHIEVE-P sets the stage for the full-scale ACHIEVE trial (N = 850, recruitment beginning November 2017), the first randomised trial to determine efficacy of a best practices hearing (vs. successful ageing) intervention on reducing cognitive decline in older adults with HL. (OFFPRINT) (RH)

ISSN: 23528737

From : <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352873717300410>

2016

Age, hearing, and speech comprehension: special issue; by Jonathan E Peelle (ed): Taylor and Francis, January-February 2016, pp 1-127.

Experimental Aging Research, vol 42, no 1, January-February 2016, pp 1-127.

Articles in this special issue of Experimental Aging Research were presented at a symposium at Brandeis University, Massachusetts, in honour of Professor Arthur Wingfield. Topics range from basic speech perception to higher levels of complex interaction, reflecting Wingfield's areas of expertise. Subjects covered in the eight articles include: effects of vocal emotion on memory in younger and older adults; how spoken language comprehension is achieved by older listeners in difficult learning situations; issues concerning word recognition in noise for older adults with hearing loss; age differences in language segmentation; effects of age, acoustic challenge and verbal working memory on recall of narrative speech; and social coordination in older adulthood. (RH)

ISSN: 0361073X

From : www.tandfonline.com

Best practice for providing social care and support to people living with concurrent sight loss and dementia: professional perspectives; by Simon Chester Evans, Jennifer Bray.: Emerald, 2016, pp 86-93.

Working with Older People, vol 20, no 2, 2016, pp 86-93.

Some 100,000 people in the UK aged 75 and over have concurrent dementia and sight loss, but current understanding of their experiences, needs and preferences is limited. This paper reports on a research project that explored the provision of social care and support for older people with both conditions. The project was a collaboration between the universities of York, Worcester, Bournemouth and Cambridge, supported by the Thomas Pocklington Trust and the Housing and Dementia Research Consortium. Data were drawn from focus groups held in 2013 involving 47 professionals across the dementia, sight loss and housing sectors across three geographical regions of England. Thematic analysis identified five main barriers to providing high-quality, cost-effective social care and support: time constraints; financial limitations; insufficient professional knowledge; a lack of joint working; and inconsistency of services. The requirements of dementia and sight loss often conflict, which can limit the usefulness of equipment, aids and adaptations. Support and information needs to address individual needs and preferences. However, unless professionals consider dementia and sight loss together, they are unlikely to think about the impact of both conditions and the potential of their own services to provide effective support for individuals and their informal carers. Failing to consider both conditions together can also limit the availability and accessibility of social care and support services. There are growing numbers of people living with concurrent dementia and sight loss, many of whom wish to remain living in their own homes. There is limited awareness of the experiences and needs of this group, and limited provision of appropriate services

aids/adaptations. Among measures that should be implemented to support independence and well-being for people living with both conditions and their family carers are: increased awareness, improved assessment, more training, and greater joint working. People living with dementia or sight loss are at high risk of social isolation, increasingly so for those with both conditions. Services that take an inclusive approach to both conditions can provide crucial opportunities for social interaction. Extra care housing has the potential to provide a supportive, community-based environment that can help residents to maintain social contact. (RH)

ISSN: 13663666

From : www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/wwop.htm

Challenges experienced at age 100: findings from the Fordham Centenarian Study; by Daniela S Jopp, Kathrin Boerner, Verena Cimarolli (et al.): Routledge, July-September 2016, pp 187-207.

Journal of Aging and Social Policy, vol 28, no 3, July-September 2016, pp 187-207.

The challenges experienced by very old individuals and their consequences for well-being and mental health are examined. In order to capture unique issues experienced in very old age, 75 participants of the population-based Fordham Centenarian Study answered open-ended questions on everyday challenges. Theme-based coding was then used to categorise and quantify responses. The challenges mentioned most often were challenges faced in the functional (e.g. physical health or activities of daily living restrictions, mobility, sensory impairment), psychological (e.g. loss of well-liked activity, dependency, negative emotions, death), and social (e.g. family loss) life domains. Functional challenges were negatively associated with ageing satisfaction and positively associated with loneliness. Psychological challenges were positively linked to ageing satisfaction. Social challenges were marginally related to loneliness. Notably, challenges were not related to depression. In conclusion, the challenges experienced in very old age are multidimensional and multifaceted, unique in nature, and have differential relations to mental health. Functional, psychological and social challenges affect very old individuals' lives, and therefore need to be better understood and addressed. Given their consequences, it is imperative for policy makers to develop an awareness for the different types of challenges faced by centenarians, as there may be unique policy implications related to each. (RH)

ISSN: 08959420

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Happy living in darkness!: Indoor lighting in relation to activities of daily living, visual and general health in 75-year-olds living at home; by Grethe Eilertsen, Gunnar Horgen, Tor Martin Kvikstad, Helle K Falkenbert.: Taylor and Francis, April-June 2016, pp 199-213.

Journal of Housing for the Elderly, vol 30, no 2, April-June 2016, pp 199-213.

Lighting has been identified as a significant environmental attribute for promoting vision and general health among older people, enabling successful ageing at home, but it has received little attention in the literature. Indoor lighting levels, self-reported vision and general health, and activities of daily life were measured in 114 healthy 75-year-old Norwegians. Despite very low levels of indoor lighting, the subjects were happy and healthy. There is a large discrepancy between self-assessed health and recommended lighting levels, and low awareness of the effect of lighting on age-related vision loss or daily living in the future. Knowledge of how to utilise indoor lighting to ensure healthy and safe ageing for those living in their own homes is needed. (RH)

ISSN: 02763893

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

How can innovative technologies improve the quality of life for people suffering from hearing loss?; by Patrick D'Haese.: European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, 2016, pp 37-39.

Eurohealth, vol 22, no 2, 2016, pp 37-39.

In Europe, around 20% of women and 30% of men have a degree of hearing loss by age 70. Untreated hearing loss puts pressures on Europe's already struggling health and social care systems, partly because it risks the onset of other diseases. Innovative technologies such as cochlear implant offer a real solution for the individual with a hearing loss too high to benefit from a hearing aid. Action from European policy-makers is called for to help realise awareness of the condition, facilitate access to these technologies where appropriate, and share best practice amongst Member States. (RH)

ISSN: 13561030

From : <http://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/partners/observatory/publications/eurohealth>

Meeting the needs of visually impaired people living in Lifetime Homes; by Cliona Rooney, Karim Hadjri, Mairin Rooney (et al.): Taylor and Francis, April-June 2016, pp 123-140.

Journal of Housing for the Elderly, vol 30, no 2, April-June 2016, pp 123-140.

The authors explore perceptions on the suitability and effectiveness of Lifetime Homes standards (LTHS) for those with visual impairment in Northern Ireland. LTHS are a series of mandatory United Kingdom public-

sector housing design interventions, providing a model for ensuring accessible and adaptable homes throughout an occupant's life span. An ageing demographic with increasing incidence of diabetes has led to rising numbers of older, visually impaired people wanting to remain in their homes for longer. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 key stakeholders and thematically analysed. Although findings show that employing LTHS offers benefits to visually impaired residents, shortcomings were also identified. Evidence indicates a need for policy makers, health-care professionals and housing associations to modify practices, to better meet the housing needs of visually impaired people. Findings may also be applicable to those with other impairments and disabilities in relation to housing for older residents. (RH)

ISSN: 02763893

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

The needs and aspirations of older people with vision impairment: report for the Thomas Pocklington Trust; by Sheila Peace, Jeanne Katz, Caroline Holland, Rebecca Jones, Faculty of Health and Social Care, Open University; Thomas Pocklington Trust. Milton Keynes; London: Open University; Thomas Pocklington Trust, October 2016, 79 pp.

There is a growing body of national and international literature concerning vision impairment (VI) and growing older. This report summarises the views of older people with vision impairment living in a variety of domestic environments across England. They were recruited through contacts in VI voluntary organisations, including those supporting people from Black and Asian minority ethnic groups. The focus is on the everyday experiences of those with more complex vision impairment alongside other health and welfare issues that can be disabling in later life. The report's findings cover housing and living arrangements (including adaptations to accommodation and use of assistive technology); coping with activities of daily living (ADLs) and spending the day at home; getting out and about and a vision-friendly environment; formal and informal support; health and well-being and quality of life. (RH)

From : http://www.pocklington-trust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Full-Report_Understanding-the-Lives-of-Older-People-with-Vision-Impairment.pdf

Self-reported hearing, vision and quality of life: older people in New Zealand; by Shiran Zhang, Simon Moyes, Chris McLean ... (et al.): Wiley, June 2016, pp 98-105.

Australasian Journal on Ageing, vol 35, no 2, June 2016, pp 98-105.

The aim of this New Zealand study was to establish associations between sensory-related disability and quality of life (QOL). 3,817 people aged 75 years and older, including 173 Maori aged 61 years and older, were surveyed. Measures included: sociodemographic and health factors; World Health Organization quality of life (WHOQOL)-BREF for QOL; and self-rated hearing- and vision-related disability. Hearing disability was reported by 866 (51%) men and 736 (36%) women. A total of 974 (26% of all, 61% of hearing disabled) used hearing aids. A total of 513 (30%) men and 618 (30%) women reported vision disability. Vision and hearing disability were both independently associated with lower QOL, with hearing difficulty affecting physical and social domains more, and the environmental domain least. Vision difficulty impacted the environmental domain most and the social domain least. QOL impact was higher for those with both hearing and visual disability (631, 17%). Overall the study concluded that hearing and vision disability are associated with poorer QOL. (JL)

ISSN: 14406381

From : <http://www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/ajag>

Understanding dementia: effective information access from the deaf community's perspective; by Alys Young, Emma Ferguson-Coleman, John Keady.: Wiley Blackwell, January 2016, pp 39-47.

Health and Social Care in the Community, vol 24, no 1, January 2016, pp 39-47.

This study concerns older Deaf sign language users in the UK. Its aim was to explore how to enable effective information access and promote awareness and understanding of dementia from a culturally Deaf perspective. A purposive sample of 26 Deaf people without dementia participated in one of three focus groups facilitated directly in British Sign Language (BSL) without an intermediate interpreter. The sample was differentiated by age, role in the Deaf community, and diversity of educational attainment and professional experience. A phenomenological approach underpinned the thematic analysis of data. The findings demonstrate: (i) translation into (BSL) is a necessary but not sufficient condition to support understanding. Attention to culturally preferred means of engagement with information is vital; (ii) the content of information is best presented utilising structures and formats which cohere with Deaf people's visual cognitive strengths; and (iii) the importance of cultural values and cultural practices in raising awareness and building understanding of dementia. These include collective rather than individual responsibility for knowledge transfer and the pan-national nature of knowledge transfer among Deaf people(s). The discussion demonstrates how these specific features of effective information access and awareness building have universal implications relevant to public engagement and the promotion of general knowledge consistent with the National Dementia Strategy (England). (RH)

ISSN: 09660410

From : wileyonlinelibrary.com/journals.hsc

Understanding the lives of older people with vision impairment; by Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, October 2016, 8 pp (Research findings, 53).

This Research Findings brief presents the key findings of a study aimed at garnering diverse views from some of the oldest old and those from a variety of cultural backgrounds, showing how everyday lives are personally and socially interdependent. It summarises research commissioned by Thomas Pocklington Trust to investigate the needs and aspirations of older people with various eye conditions living in community settings in England. The research was conducted by Sheila Peace, Jeanne Katz, Caroline Holland and Rebecca L Jones from the Open University. A large print version (14 pp) of this report is also available. (RH)

From : <http://www.pocklington-trust.org.uk/project/understanding-lives-older-people-vision-impairment/>

"Why would I want to go out?": age-related vision loss and social participation; by Debbie Laliberte Rudman ... (et al.): Cambridge University Press, December 2016, pp 465-478.

Canadian Journal on Aging, vol 35, no 4, December 2016, pp 465-478.

Social participation, a key determinant of healthy ageing, is often negatively impacted by age-related vision loss (ARVL). This grounded theory study aimed to understand social participation as a process negotiated in everyday life by older adults with ARVL. Interviews, audio diaries and life space maps were used to collect data with 21 older adults in two Ontario cities. Inductive data analysis resulted in a transactional model of the process of negotiating social participation in context. This model depicted how environmental features and resources, skills and abilities, and risks and vulnerabilities transacted with values and priorities to affect if and how social participation occurred within the context of daily life. The findings pointed to several ways that research and services addressing the social participation of older adults with ARVL need to expand, particularly in relation to environmental features and resources, risk and the prioritisation of independence. (JL)

ISSN: 07149808

From : journals.cambridge.org/cjg

2015

Correlates of attitudes toward personal aging in older assisted living residents; by Nan Sook Park, Yuri Jang, Beom S Lee ... (et al.): Taylor and Francis, April 2015, pp 232-252.

Journal of Gerontological Social Work, vol 58, no 3, April 2015, pp 232-252.

This study explored factors contributing to older adults' self-perceptions about their own ageing in assisted living (AL) communities. Data analysis was completed based on interviews with 150 older residents from 17 AL communities in the United States. The study examined the effect of objective factors (health-related variables/negative life events) and subjective factors (satisfaction with facility/social support) on residents' attitudes toward personal ageing and assessed whether health perception mediated the relationship between health-related variables/negative life events and residents' attitudes toward personal ageing. Multiple regression analyses found that functional disability and hearing impairment negatively affected attitudes toward personal ageing among AL residents, and satisfaction with social support positively influenced attitudes. Health perception mediated attitudes toward personal ageing. Findings suggest the importance of social workers helping older AL residents recognise social support as a means of promoting their positive self-regard. (JL)

ISSN: 01634372

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Dementia friendly communities: supported learning and outreach with the deaf community; by Heather Lundy, Alice Johnston, Gwen Nisbet, Joseph Rowntree Foundation - JRF. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation - JRF, December 2015, pp.

Findings, 3170, December 2015, pp.

There is a strong link between hearing loss and dementia. People with mild hearing loss have nearly twice the chance of going on to develop dementia as people without any hearing loss. Research from the Deaf from Dementia project suggested that awareness of dementia in the deaf community is low, as is the uptake of dementia support. This report focuses on a programme of dementia awareness for deaf people which aimed to break down barriers people in the deaf community face in accessing dementia support. From January 2014 until July 2015, bespoke resources for the deaf community were developed and delivered collaboratively by Alzheimer's Society in Northern Ireland and British Deaf Association. (NH)

ISSN: 09583084

From : <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/dementia-friendly-communities-supported-learning-and-outreach-deaf-community>

A sharper focus on older people; by Sense; University of Chester.: Sense, Spring 2015, pp 32-34.

Talking Sense, vol 60, no 1, Spring 2015, pp 32-34.

New research commissioned by Sense has explored the experiences of older people with failing sight and hearing - and the different ways that they have tried to cope with this. The Late life Acquired Dual Sensory Impairment Project offers many insights and makes timely recommendations for the future. Among recommendations from this qualitative research was the importance of early intervention - that is, receiving help at an early stage. A full summary of this research is also available on the Sense website(see: <https://www.sense.org.uk/content/funded-projects>). (RH)

ISSN: 13674604

From : www.sense.org.uk

2014

Alone in the crowd: loneliness and diversity; by Campaign to End Loneliness; Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. London: Campaign to End Loneliness; Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2014, 52 pp.

Anyone can become lonely, but some circumstances and some characteristics seem to leave us particularly vulnerable to loneliness. There are some common transitions - for example relationship breakdown, redundancy, retirement, or decline in health - which can trigger a sudden change in circumstances and a downward spiral into loneliness. This collection of ten essays is written by the leaders of organisations working with groups who are at increased risk of loneliness: alcoholics; carers; people diagnosed with cancer; older lesbians, gays and bisexuals (LGBs); care home residents; minority ethnic groups; people with dementia or mental health problems; and older disabled people such as those with sight problems. The essays aim to help us understand better who experiences loneliness, what particular challenges they may face, and how the loneliness of these individuals could be alleviated. (RH)

From : Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK, 50 Hoxton Square, London N1 6PB.

Clinical geropsychology: approaches to older adults with disability; by Joann P Reinhardt.: Taylor and Francis, January-February 2014, pp 76-89.

Clinical Gerontologist, vol 37, no 1, January-February 2014, pp 76-89.

With advancing old age comes increased risk of chronic physical or mental impairment and resulting disability, with many potential paths to adaptation. An understanding of the types of resources older adults may utilise to adapt to disability, and how they move through disablement and adjustment processes, can assist professionals as they work with disabled older adults to achieve optimal outcomes. This article reviews characteristics and disability trends in older adults, research and treatment issues in disability, and both clinical and public policy implications regarding disability. The example of dealing with vision loss due to age-related eye disease is used to exemplify chronic impairment, which can be accompanied by comorbid depression with resulting functional disability, and the types of resources available. Disability is considered in the context of older adults' health, personal factors and external factors representing their life circumstances. (JL)

ISSN: 07317115

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Commission on Hearing Loss: final report; by Sally Greengross (Chair), International Longevity Centre UK - ILC-UK. London: International Longevity Centre UK - ILC-UK, July 2014, 38 pp.

For too long, hearing loss has been ignored, overlooked and disregarded, despite the millions of people experiencing hearing loss and the devastating consequences that it can have on individuals, their families and society as a whole. This report presents new data to show not only the predicted growth in the number of people with hearing loss, which is set to account for almost 20% of the total population by 2031, but also highlights a £25 billion loss to the UK economy in potential economic output. The terms of reference of the Commission on Hearing Loss were to consider the extent of the challenges posed by age-related hearing loss in the UK and how it can be tackled. The report considers the rising social cost of hearing loss; makes recommendations on an alternative model of delivering hearing services involving earlier detection of hearing loss by national screening; and looks at ways in which society could become more adaptable to hearing loss. This report has been supported by Boots Hearingcare. (RH)

From : International Longevity Centre UK, 36-37 Albert Embankment, London SE1

7TL.ilcuk.org.uk/index.php/publications/publication_details/commission_on_hearing_loss_final_report

Dementia and the deaf community: knowledge and service access; by Emma Ferguson-Coleman, John Keady, Alys Young.: Taylor and Francis, 2014, pp 674-682.

Aging and Mental Health, vol 18, no 6, 2014, pp 674-682.

This study concerns culturally deaf people in the United Kingdom who use British Sign Language (BSL). It explores how deaf people's knowledge about dementia and access to services is mediated by their seemingly minority cultural-linguistic status. Twenty-six members of the deaf community participated in one of three deaf-led focus groups in BSL corresponding with the sample of: deaf people over the age of 60 without dementia; deaf people aged 18-60 working in professional roles unconnected with dementia services; and ordinary members of the deaf community aged 18-60. Data were subjected to a thematic content analysis. Participants' concerns about their poor levels of knowledge and understanding of dementia were augmented by their awareness that, without sustained social contact in BSL, opportunities for earlier recognition of dementia would be lost. Although primary care services were identified as the first port of call for dementia-related concerns, there was widespread mistrust of their effectiveness because of failures in communication and cultural competence. Confirmed diagnosis of dementia was not viewed as a gateway to services and support, because deaf organisations, dementia-related organisations and mainstream adult services were perceived to be ill-equipped to respond to the needs of Deaf people with dementia. Locating problems of late diagnosis within the deaf community's poor awareness and knowledge of dementia fails to recognise the structural barriers deaf people face in timely access to services and accurate recognition of dementia-related changes. (RH)

ISSN: 13646915

From : <http://tandfonline.com>

Factors that influence intent to adopt a hearing aid among older people in Italy; by Nicola Cobelli, Liz Gill, Fabio Cassia, Marta Ugolini.: Wiley Blackwell, November 2014, pp 612-622.

Health and Social Care in the Community, vol 22, no 6, November 2014, pp 612-622.

Hearing loss is one of the most prevalent health impairments associated with ageing in developed countries, and it can result in social, emotional and communication dysfunction. Hearing loss in Italy is increasing; yet, despite the availability of free hearing aids and access to qualified community-based health professionals specialising in audiology services, their uptake remains low (about 15%-20%). This paper presents an investigation of the possible reasons why older people in Italy resist adopting a hearing aid. The authors used the literature to identify factors influencing people with hearing loss's decision-making, and drew on the theory of reasoned action to create an explanatory model. They applied a cross-sectional design to test their hypotheses. They developed a questionnaire including 13 items related to adopting a hearing aid. Health professionals identified 400 people aged 60-90 who were candidates for a free hearing aid. Those willing to participate were sent a copy of the questionnaire and telephoned between August and September 2009; a total of 243 responded (response rate 60.8%). Linear regression analysis highlighted that a person's intention to adopt a hearing aid was positively related to attitude towards its adoption, but negatively linked to perceived subjective norms. It was found that trust in the health professional does not moderate the relationship between a person's attitude and the intention to adopt a hearing aid. However, trust does mitigate the relationship between the individual's perceived subjective norms and intentions. These findings underline the importance of the potential role that the healthcare professional could play in reducing the uncertainty created by external social pressures. For this purpose, stronger collaboration between the various health professionals involved in hearing aid provision, from diagnosis to fitting, is recommended. (RH)

ISSN: 09660410

From : wileyonlinelibrary.com/journals/hsc

Hearing loss and dementia: an exploratory study of the views of audiologists; by Nicola Wright, Theodore Stickley, Imran Mulla (et al): Emerald, 2014, pp 220-231.

Quality in Ageing and Older Adults, vol 15 no 4, 2014, pp 220-231.

An online survey was distributed to audiologists working in the UK NHS and private sector via their professional organisations in order to explore their views and experiences of working with older adults with dementia. 312 audiologists took part in the survey, which collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Basic descriptive statistics summarised the quantitative responses. The qualitative data were analysed using conventional thematic approaches. The quantitative data demonstrated that the vast majority of audiologists (96%) had treated someone with dementia. Despite this, 65% of respondents did not feel adequately supported to help this service user population. Four overarching themes were used to explain the qualitative data: integrated and individualised care; formal (including training) vs experiential knowledge; the interaction between dementia and hearing; and using the technology. Given the anticipated increase in rates of dementia within the population and the potential for hearing impairment to exacerbate the symptoms, this study highlights the unique role audiologists have. The need for more training and development for this professional group is

also identified. The self-selecting nature of the sample is a limitation which needs to be taken into account when considering the transferability and implications of the findings. (RH)

ISSN: 14717794

From : www.emeraldinsight.com/qaoa.htm

Older people: evidence-based review; by Royal National Institute of Blind People - RNIB. London: RNIB, 2014, 20 pp.

This evidence-based review is one of a series produced by RNIB researchers which brings together key research about blind and partially sighted people of different age groups. This review looks in more detail at the experience of older blind and partially sighted people in the UK. It includes a profile of this group (age 65+), the policies that govern their access to health, social care, and other services, and a commentary on what the evidence tells us. Some of the statistics presented relate to people aged over 85: this is the fastest growing age group in the UK, and the incidence of sight loss significantly increases for people aged over 85. A "Sight loss data tool" (rnib.org.uk/datatool) produced by RNIB provides local and regional facts and figures about blind and partially sighted people and those at risk of sight loss. (RH)

From : Download at:

https://www.rnib.org.uk/sites/default/files/RNIB_Evidence_based_review_older_people.pdf RNIB, 105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE.

Social prescription and the role of participatory arts programmes for older people with sensory impairments; by Nicholas Vogelpoel, Kara Jarrold.: Emerald, 2014, pp 39-50.

Journal of Integrated Care, vol 22, no 2, 2014, pp 39-50.

The purpose of this paper was to describe the benefits of a social prescribing service for older people with sensory impairments experiencing social isolation. The paper drew on the findings from a 12-week programme run by Sense, a voluntary sector organisation, and illustrated how integrated services, combining arts-based participation and voluntary sector support, could create positive health and wellbeing outcomes for older people. The research took a mixed-methodological approach, conducting and analysing data from interviews and dynamic observation proformas with facilitators and quantitative psychological wellbeing scores with participants throughout the course of the programme. Observations and case study data were also collected to complement and contextualise the data sets. The research found that participatory arts programmes could help combat social isolation amongst older people with sensory impairments and could offer an important alliance for social care providers who were required to reach more people under increasing financial pressures. The research also highlighted other benefits for health and wellbeing in the group including increased self-confidence, new friendships, increased mental wellbeing and reduced social isolation. The research was based on a sample size of 12 people with sensory impairments and therefore may lack generalisability. However similar outcomes for people engaging in participatory arts through social prescription are documented elsewhere in the literature. The paper includes implications for existing health and social care services and argues that delivering more integrated services that combine health and social care pathways with arts provision have the potential to create social and medical health benefits without being care/support resource heavy. (JL)

ISSN: 14769018

From : www.emeraldinsight.com/jica.htm

2013

Age-related visual impairments and perceiving linguistic stimuli: the rarity of assessing the visual abilities of older participants in written language research; by Victoria A McGowan, Kevin B Paterson, Timothy R Jordan.: Taylor & Francis, January-February 2013, pp 70-79.

Experimental Aging Research, vol 39, no 1, January-February 2013, pp 70-79.

It is well established that declining visual abilities are widespread amongst older adults (aged 65 years and over) and are known to have profound effects on processing a range of visual stimuli. However, the incidence of assessing the visual abilities of older adults participating in written language research using visually presented linguistic stimuli (text, words, letters) is unknown. The authors examined all 240 articles investigating perception of visually presented linguistic stimuli (text, words, letters) by older participants, published 2000-2010 in the three foremost journals in ageing research: Experimental Aging Research; Journals of Gerontology, Series B; and Psychology and Aging. The majority of articles (68.0%) made no mention at all of participants' visual abilities (59.2%), or relied merely on participants' self-report (8.8%). Other articles (17.9%) reported participants' visual abilities without mentioning any assessment, and only 14.2% reported participants' visual abilities following appropriate assessment. The indications are that appropriate assessments of visual abilities are rarely used in language research investigating perception of visually presented linguistic stimuli by older

participants. Much greater use and reporting of these assessments is needed to help reveal the processes underlying perception of written language in older populations. (RH)

ISSN: 0361073X

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

The assessment of cognition in visually impaired older adults; by Alison Killen, Michael J Firbank, Daniel Collerton ... (et al.): Oxford University Press, January 2013, pp 98-102.

Age and Ageing, vol 42, no 1, January 2013, pp 98-102.

Visual and cognitive impairments are common in later life, however there are very few cognitive screening tests for the visually impaired. The objective of the present study was to screen for cognitive impairment in the visually impaired. The research used a case-control study including 150 older participants with visual impairment and a control group without visual impairment using vision-independent cognitive tests and cognitive screening tests. The tests consisted of MMSEs (mini mental state examinations) and clock drawing tests (CDTs), the latter being in part vision dependent. Results showed that the scoring of the two groups did not differ in the vision-independent cognitive tests. Visually impaired patients performed poorer than controls in the vision-dependent items of the MMSE and CDT. No group difference was found when vision-independent items were added to MMSE and CDT. The test score gain by the use of vision-independent items correlated with the severity of visual impairment. The authors conclude that visually impaired patients benefit from cognitive tests which do not rely on vision. The more visually impaired the greater the benefit. (JL)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://ageing.oxfordjournals.org/http://www.bgs.org.uk/>

Deafblind UK expands operations in Northern Ireland to further reduce isolation and enhance the lives of deafblind people; by Becky Lamont.: Emerald, 2013, pp 164-169.

Working with Older People, vol 17, no 4, 2013, pp 164-169.

The need for services catering for older deafblind people in Northern Ireland (NI) is highlighted, as is how Deafblind UK is responding, supported by funding from the Big Lottery Fund. This paper provides an overview of deafblindness in NI. Supported by research and case studies, it explains the current situation, highlights the issues of this disability, the unique response required, and how Deafblind UK's Connections NI project is meeting these needs. It confirms older deafblind people as a highly vulnerable group; yet there was a severe lack of services in the region catering for their specific needs. Based on work elsewhere in the UK and initial feedback, Deafblind UK's Connections NI project has been designed to support older deafblind people in the region to give them control over their life choices and retain independence as far as possible. The project was only launched in April 2013. Although results have been achieved by Deafblind UK elsewhere in the country, it could take some time for similar results to be seen in NI, particularly when considering the nature of the work. Deafblind UK will work alongside agencies and in the community to raise awareness of deafblindness, helping to create clearer classification of the disability and associated issues, and deliver more targeted services that reach a higher proportion of older deafblind people in the region. (RH)

ISSN: 13663666

From : www.emeraldinsight.com/wwop.htm

How gender and ageing affect the elderly; by Yesim Gokce Kutsal, Dilek Aslan.: International Institute on Ageing, Malta, May 2013, pp 17-23.

Bold, vol 23, no 3, May 2013, pp 17-23.

In the 21st century, ageing is a prominent feature both in developing and developed countries. Challenging social and economic conditions in daily life, and the increase in the number and severity of health problems in older age, this rationale ends with the perception that ageing is a "problematic" phase of life, although it is only a biological process. Among social, economic, cultural, demographic determinants, gender plays a crucial role in the ageing process; and there are many differences in the health/disease patterns between the two sexes. Many indicators easily show the differences between men and women as being due to gender issues. For example, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) shows women's disadvantaged situations in reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. As the development status of a country and its population increases, gender-based inequalities decrease globally. Disease patterns differ according to the country's development status. In developed countries, heart disease and stroke, cancer (lung and breast), diabetes and nutritional problems (anaemia and obesity), chronic disabling conditions (arthritis and osteoporosis), multiple conditions, minor conditions, sensory impairment (hearing loss), mental illness (depression, dementia) are prevalent. In developing countries, heart disease and stroke, cancer (cervical), communicable diseases (tuberculosis and pneumonia), diabetes and nutritional problems (anaemia and obesity), chronic disabling conditions (arthritis and osteoporosis), multiple conditions, minor conditions, sensory impairment (poor vision caused by cataracts), mental illness (depression and dementia) are more frequent. Recommendations of well-being with gender

perspective basically are that national political measures should be developed and applied. These should influence individual, familial and social responsibilities, and the participation of women in working life and decision mechanisms should be supported. Older women must have more freedom and the patriarchal structure of the family should be changed. Education, income and occupation are key factors that determine social position as well as access to and control over power and resources. (RH)

ISSN: 10165177

From : www.inia.org.mt

In sight: a review of the visual impairment sector; by Abigail Rotheroe, Sally Bagwell, Iona Joy, New Philanthropy Capital. London: New Philanthropy Capital, November 2013, 75 pp.

The number of people with sight loss is expected to double by 2050 as the population ages and underlying causes such as diabetes and obesity increase. This report, commissioned by the Clothworkers' Foundation, reviews the visual impairment sector and medical research, considers the main issues for older people, and makes recommendations for funding. An accessible version (134 pp), developed according to RNIB's Clear Print design guidelines, is also available (<http://www.thinknpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/IN-SIGHT-CLEAR-PRINT-REPORT.pdf>). (RH)

From : [http://foundation.clothworkers.co.uk/ClothworkersFoundation/media/Publications/IN-SIGHT-REPORT-FINAL-\(2\).pdf](http://foundation.clothworkers.co.uk/ClothworkersFoundation/media/Publications/IN-SIGHT-REPORT-FINAL-(2).pdf)

Older people's views on what they need to successfully adjust to life with a hearing aid; by Timothy B Kelly, Debbie Tolson, Tracy Day ... (et al.): Wiley Blackwell, May 2013, pp 293-302.

Health and Social Care in the Community, vol 21, no 3, May 2013, pp 293-302.

This article reports a study exploring what older people believe would enable them to adjust to and gain maximum benefit from wearing a hearing aid. A mixed methods approach was employed during 2006 involving interviews with key stakeholders, a survey across three Scottish health board areas and focus groups. Nine key stakeholders from six national and local organisations were interviewed about the needs of older people being fitted with hearing aids. In total, 240 older people with three different types of hearing impairment were surveyed: long-term users of hearing aids, new hearing aid users, and those on a waiting list from urban and rural areas (response rate = 24%). A series of eight follow-up focus groups with 31 audiology patients was held. Study findings revealed that health professionals appear to neglect appropriate provision of information and overly rely on technological interventions. Of 154 older people already fitted with hearing aids, only 52% of hearing aid users reported receiving enough practical help post fitting and only 41% reported receiving enough support. Approximately 40% reported not feeling confident in the use of their aids or their controls. Older people wanted more information than they received both before and after hearing aid fitting. Information provision and attention to the psychosocial aspects of care are key to enabling older people to adjust and optimise hearing aid benefit. (JL)

ISSN: 09660410

From : www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/journals/hsc

2012

Extra care housing for people with sight loss: lighting and design; by Judith Torrington, Alan Lewis, Thomas Pocklington Trust; School of Architecture, University of Sheffield. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2012, 6 pp (Research findings, no 36).

This publication presents findings from research about the design of extra care housing from the perspective of people with sight loss undertaken by Judith Torrington and Alan Lewis the School of Architecture, University of Sheffield. The study asked 44 people living in 11 extra care housing schemes about their experiences of the buildings they lived in, evaluated their homes, and reviewed data from a previous evaluation of 23 extra care housing schemes. The study produced a new tool for evaluating buildings, EVOLVE (Evaluation of Older People's Living Environments), itself the outcome of research funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). The tool comprises electronic checklists that, when completed, create a new profile of how well a building can support residents. The checklists are designed to be used in a walk-through of a housing scheme. The EVOLVE toolkit is available on the Housing LIN website (<http://www.housinglin.org.uk> and search for EVOLVE). (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Hearing-impaired adults are at increased risk of experiencing emotional distress and social engagement restrictions five years later; by Bamini Gopinath, Louise Hickson, Julie Schneider ... (et al). *Age and Ageing*, vol 41, no 5, September 2012, pp 618-623.

The present study aimed to assess both cross-sectional and temporal links between measured hearing impairment and self-perceived hearing disability, and health outcomes. 811 Blue Mountains Hearing Study participants (Sydney, Australia) aged 55 years or over were examined twice, in 1997-99 and 2002-04. Hearing levels were measured with pure-tone audiometry. The shortened version of the hearing handicap inventory (HHIE-S) was administered. Scores of 8 or below defined hearing disability. Results showed that baseline hearing impairment was strongly associated with seven of the ten HHIE-S questions five years later. Individuals with and without hearing impairment at baseline reported that they felt embarrassed and/or frustrated by their hearing problem, and that it hampered their personal/social life five years later. Hearing-impaired, compared with non-hearing-impaired adults had a significantly higher risk of developing moderate or severe hearing disability. Cross-sectionally (at wave 2), hearing disability increased the odds of depressive symptoms and low self-rated health by 80 and 46%, respectively. The authors conclude that older, hearing-impaired adults were significantly more likely to experience emotional distress and social engagement restrictions (self-perceived hearing disability) directly due to their hearing impairment. (JL)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://ageing.oxfordjournals.org/http://www.bgs.org.uk/>

Home modification guidelines as recommended by visually impaired people; by Abbas Riazi, Mei Ying Boon, Catherine Bridge, Stephen J Dain.: Emerald, 2012, pp 270-284.

Journal of Assistive Technologies, vol 6, no 4, 2012, pp 270-284.

The aim of this study was to gather evidence from the perspective of people with visual impairment due to age-related macular degeneration (AMD) about the home modifications they find useful and would recommend to others with similar visual impairment. Based on the belief that people with impairments may not be aware of their own coping strategies until they are asked, the authors took a qualitative approach using semi-structured individual interviews. These were recorded and then transcribed verbatim into text for thematic analysis using Nvivo 8. In total, 31 individuals (mean age 79.1 years) with AMD and no other ocular diseases were recruited in a metropolitan city in Australia. Interviewees had not received any formal home modification assessment from a government provider. Nevertheless 70 per cent of participants said that they has undertaken home modifications themselves or with the assistance of family and friends. They perceived the most important functional modifications as: hand rails, non-slip matting, colour contrasting safety stair nosing, single lever taps, slip resistant flooring, lift chairs and motion sensors that activated pathway lighting. Kitchens, steps and bathrooms were seen as hazardous locations. Most participants had difficulties with reading fine-print material on kitchen appliances, washing machines, microwave ovens and remote controls for electronic devices in the home. (JL)

ISSN: 17549450

From : <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/products/journals/journals.htm?id=jat>

Severity of age-related hearing loss is associated with impaired activities of daily living; by Bamini Gopinath, Julie Schneider, Catherine M McMahon ... (et al).

Age and Ageing, vol 41, no 2, March 2012, pp 195-200.

The study aimed to assess the association between hearing impairment and activity limitations as assessed by the Activities of Daily Living (ADL) scale. 1,952 Blue Mountains Hearing Study participants aged 60 years and above had their hearing levels measured using pure-tone audiometry. A survey instrument with questions on functional status as determined by the Older Americans Resources and Services ADL scale was administered. 164 (10.4%) participants reported ADL difficulty. A higher proportion of hearing impaired than non-impaired adults reported difficulties in performing three out of the seven basic ADL and six out of the seven instrumental ADL tasks. After multivariable adjustment, increased severity of hearing loss was associated with impaired ADL. Subjects with moderate to severe hearing loss had a 2.9-fold increased likelihood of reporting difficulty in ADL, compared with those without. Participants aged under 75 years with hearing loss had a twofold higher odds of impaired ADL compared with those without. Having worn or wearing a hearing aid was also associated with a twofold increased likelihood of impaired ADL. The authors conclude that functional status as measured by a common ADL scale is diminished in older hearing impaired adults. The findings suggest that severely diminished hearing could make the difference between independence and the need for formal support services or placement. (JL)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://ageing.oxfordjournals.org/http://www.bgs.org.uk/>

'There's a hell of a noise': living with a hearing loss in residential care; by Helen Pryce, Rachael Goberman-Hill.

Age and Ageing, vol 41, no 1, January 2012, pp 40-46.

Research with older people in residential care settings has identified a high prevalence of hearing loss and low uptake of hearing aids. Hearing loss in these settings is associated with reduced social engagement. The present study aimed to explore factors affecting communicating with a hearing loss in residential care. An observational study in two residential care homes was carried out including in-depth interviews with 18 residents. Observations explored communication behaviour in everyday interactions, including mealtimes, structured groups and informal group activities. Interviews were informed by the observations and identified reasons for these behaviours and communication preferences. Study findings showed that hearing loss affected whether residents were able to access social opportunities. Two key themes influenced this: (1) contextual issues compounded communication difficulties and (2) environmental noise restricted the residents' communication choices. Problems were observed at every mealtime and during formal and informal group activities. The use of hearing aids and access to hearing services did not improve social engagement. (JL)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://ageing.oxfordjournals.org/http://www.bgs.org.uk/>

2011

Assistive technology: a practical guide to assistive technology in the home; by Ros Levenson, Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2011, 15 pp (Good practice guide, 6).

This good practice guide uses recent research funded by the Thomas Pocklington Trust to examine how assistive technology may be used to support people with sight loss to manage the home and work surroundings more effectively and to live more independently. Case studies illustrate the ways in which people use assistive technology gadgets and equipment. The content and style of this publication has been informed by the experiences of Pocklington's service users and staff. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Deaf with dementia: towards better recognition and services; by Quality Research in Dementia Research Programme (QRD), Alzheimer's Society.: Hawker Publications, May/June 2011, pp 38-39.

Journal of Dementia Care, vol 19, no 3, May/June 2011, pp 38-39.

A 3-year review by the Alzheimer's Society's Quality Research in Dementia (QRD) Research Programme aims to carry out research that will help recognise dementia in deaf people and build culturally relevant service provision and personal support. The Deaf with Dementia project concerns people who use British Sign language (BSL) in the UK.. This article outlines the project's three distinct but interlinked studies: screening and assessment; early experiences; and attitudes and information. (RH)

ISSN: 13518372

From : www.careinfo.org

The effect of productive activities on depressive symptoms among older adults with dual sensory loss; by Michele Capella McDonnall.

Research on Aging, vol 33, no 3, May 2011, pp 234-255.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the ability of three productive activities (paid employment, volunteer work and informal helping) to mitigate the negative effects of dual sensory loss (DSL) on depressive symptoms among older adults. Multilevel modelling was used to analyse longitudinal data from the nationally representative Health and Retirement Study. The sample consisted of 2,688 persons: 1,380 who developed DSL during the study and 1,308 who did not. Although participation in each of the productive activities was associated with fewer depressive symptoms for older adults with DSL, volunteering was also the only variable that moderated the relationship between DSL and depressive symptoms. Persons with a DSL who volunteered exhibited a larger decrease in depressive symptoms compared to persons without sensory loss who volunteered. A volunteer intervention for older adults with DSL may be a viable option to help reduce depression in this population. (JL)

ISSN: 01640275

From : <http://roa.sagepub.com/>

Home safety checks: helping to maintain older people's independence?; by Sue Cooper, David Clancy, Pauline Jas, Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2011, 7 pp (Research discussion paper, no 9).

Home safety is vital for older people who want to live independently. It is estimated that a third of pensioner households live in sub-standard housing. This paper outlines a pilot project conducted by Thomas Pocklington Trust with support from Birmingham City Council to assess the benefits of individual home safety checks for older people with sight loss. It concluded that checks filled a gap in the support available: they were useful, practicable and helped to maintain people's independence. However, the pilot study was too small to evaluate questions regarding the specific needs of those with sight loss. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Specific attentional impairments and complex visual hallucinations in eye disease; by G Graham, J Dean, U P Mosimann ... (et al).

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 26, no 3, March 2011, pp 263-267.

The study aimed to test the prediction by the Perception and Attention Deficit (PAD) model of complex visual hallucinations that cognitive impairment, specifically in visual attention, is a key risk factor for complex hallucinations in eye disease. Two studies of older patients with acquired eye disease investigated the relationship between complex visual hallucinations (CVH) and impairments in general cognition and verbal attention (Study 1) and between CVH, selective visual attention and visual object perception (Study 2). The North East Visual Hallucinations Inventory was used to classify CVH. In Study 1 there was no relationship between CVH and performance on cognitive screening or verbal attention tasks. In Study 2, participants with CVH showed poorer performance on a modified Stroop task, a novel imagery-based attentional task and picture but not silhouette naming tasks. Performance on these tasks correctly classified 83% of the participants as hallucinators or non-hallucinators. The results suggest that, consistent with the PAD model, complex visual hallucinations in people with acquired eye disease are associated with visual attention impairment. (JL)

ISSN: 08856230

From : <http://www.interscience.wiley.com/journal/gps>

2010

21st century welfare: response of the Royal National Institute of Blind People to the Department for Work and Pensions consultation paper; by Geoff Fimister, Royal National Institute of Blind People - RNIB; Department for Work and Pensions - DWP. London: Royal National Institute of Blind People, 14 September 2010, 16 pp (Consultation response).

The RNIB very much welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the debate started by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) consultation paper, '21st century welfare' (Cm 7913), which proposes a major re-shaping of means-tested benefits and tax credits. The RNIB comments on the main substance of the paper and on the twelve questions asked, concluding that it hopes that the Government will "build on the positive aspects of these proposals and meanwhile resist the temptation to find further savings at the expense of the wellbeing of disabled people and others vulnerable to low incomes". Disabled people, not least those with sight loss, tend to have lower incomes than does the general population. They are therefore disproportionately likely to qualify for means-tested assistance with essential living costs, including housing, as well as the extra costs of disability. (RH)

From : Geoff Fimister, Campaigns Officer (Independent Living), RNIB. Tel 020 7391 2124. E-mail: gfimister@rnib.org.uk

Age related macular degeneration; by Usha Chakravarthy, Jennifer Evans, Philip J Rosenfeld.

British Medical Journal, vol 340, no 7745, 6 March 2010, pp 526-530.

Age related macular degeneration affects older people and accounts for about half of all vision impairment or blind registrations in the developed world. This review examines the pathogenesis of age related macular degeneration and recent advances in its management. (RH)

ISSN: 09598138

From : www.bmj.com/doi/10.1136/bmj.c981

All Wales Visual Impairment Database (AWVID); by Barbara Ryan, Tom Margrain, Angela Reidy (et al), Thomas Pocklington Trust; School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, Cardiff University; Epivision. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2010, 7 pp (Research findings, no 28).

Until now, routine information has not been employed to report on the use of services or the social circumstances or the characteristics of people with untreatable sight loss. Thomas Pocklington Trust

commissioned a study to look at those using the community-based Welsh Low Vision Service (WLVS). This publication summarises findings from research conducted by Barbara Ryan and Tom Margrain of the School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, Cardiff University, and Angela Reidy and Darwin Minassian of Epivision. Information was analysed on 5817 adults; about 90 were over pensionable age; and about 85% had visual acuity worse than 6/12. These findings note that following assessment, about a quarter of those assessed in the WLVS were referred to one or more other services. The findings question the value of current registration criteria, which appear to have little relevance in determining the need for provision of statutory rehabilitation services for people with sight loss. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Balancing independence and safety: the challenge of supporting older people with dementia and sight loss; by Vanessa Lawrence, Joanna Murray.

Age and Ageing, vol 39, no 4, July 2010, pp 476-480.

Dementia and visual impairment are common in older adults, and both conditions create a high risk of disability. Care professionals lack evidence on how best to support older adults with both conditions. This study investigated attitudes towards working with older adults with concurrent sight loss and dementia, the challenges involved and suggestions for service development. A qualitative study was conducted comprising 18 in-depth interviews and two focus groups with care professionals within mental health and low vision services. Care professionals were alert to the high levels of risk among patients with joint sight loss and dementia. In-depth interviews revealed that insufficient time and expertise can lead to an overcautious approach that prioritises the reduction of risk rather than the promotion of independence. Focus groups highlighted the role that joint working can play in supporting older adults' valued roles and activities. Barriers to joint working were identified alongside strategies to assist the process. It is essential that care professionals and service providers acknowledge and respond to the complex needs of this population. Joint working was considered key to assessing risks and targeting interventions. The research workshop presented here provides a useful format for improving practice across inter-professional boundaries. (KJ)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://www.ageing.oxfordjournals.org><http://www.bgs.org.uk>[doi:10.1093/ageing/afq054](https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afq054)

Bevacizumab for neovascular age related macular degeneration (ABC Trial): multicentre randomised double masked study; by Adnan Tufail, Praveen J Patel, Catherine Egan (et al).

British Medical Journal, vol 340, no 7761, 26 June 2010, p 1398.

Are intravitreal bevacizumab injections better than standard care at improving vision in patients with neovascular age related macular degeneration (AMD)? This summary of a paper published on bmj.com reports on 131 patients age 50+ (mean age 81) randomised to two intervention groups: 65 eyes of 65 patients to bevacizumab 1.25mg intravitreally and 66 eyes of 66 patients to standard care (pegaptanib sodium, verteporfin, or sham). This study provides the first level 1 evidence supporting use of intravitreal bevacizumab every 6 weeks, resulting in a reduction in hospital visits by a third over conventional monthly dosing while maintaining improvement in vision. (RH)

ISSN: 09598138

From : www.bmj.comBMJ2010;340:c2459

Capacity to Communicate: Sense's three-year project training independent mental capacity advocates in communication skills; by Angela Lee-Foster.

The Journal of Adult Protection, vol 12, no 1, February 2010, pp 32-42.

Sense, the leading national charity that supports and campaigns for children and adults who are deaf-blind, set up the Capacity to Communicate Project in response to the new role of independent mental capacity advocates created by the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (HM Government, 2005). The project provided training and information, harnessing best practice around communication and advocacy for people who lack capacity and who have little or no formal communication, in particular those with a dual sensory loss. As part of the training, advocates were asked to submit a written assignment. These case studies, including some adult protection cases, have given us valuable information about the nature and process of independent mental capacity advocacy and what can be done to improve this relatively new statutory role, in particular developing better understanding, skills and processes around communication in order to represent and protect vulnerable adults. (KJ)

ISSN: 14668203

From : Website: <http://pierprofessional.metapress.com/content/121398/doi:10.5042/jap.2010.0092>

Communicating in a healthcare setting with people who have hearing loss; by Anna Middleton, Alagaratnam Niruban, Gill Girling (et al).

British Medical Journal, vol 341, no 7775, 2 October 2010, pp 726-729.

Many patients with hearing loss find communication in healthcare settings difficult, and this might sometimes affect their care. This article outlines how staff can best communicate with people with hearing loss. It also provides advice and resources on how to meet the communication needs of deaf patients. An increased awareness on the part of healthcare staff of such needs will contribute to improving the quality of care provided to deaf patients. (RH)

ISSN: 09598138

From : www.bmj.comdoi: 10.1136/bmj.c4672

Design guidance for people with dementia and for people with sight loss; by Chris Goodman, Lynn Watson, Thomas Pocklington Trust; Habinteg. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2010, 7 pp (Research findings, no 35).

Habinteg carried out a review focusing on design guidance literature relating to homes and living environments for people with dementia and for people with sight loss. This report summarises the results of the review. The aim was to: assess the degree of convergence between the two sets of guidance; identify areas where they might conflict; and highlight gaps in the scope or context of the guidance. The full project report, 'A comparative review of design guidance for people with dementia and for people with sight loss' is available from Thomas Pocklington Trust. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Good housing design - lighting: a practical guide to improving lighting in existing homes; by Malcolm Fisk, Peter Raynham, Thomas Pocklington Trust; Wilberforce Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2010, 27 pp (Good practice guide, 5).

This good practice guide explains how to improve lighting to meet the needs of people with sight loss. It builds on a previous publication, 'Housing for people with sight loss' (Good practice guide, 4), and is based on research commissioned by Pocklington and the Housing Corporation led by Professor Julianne Hanson (Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, University College London) and Geoff Cook (University of Reading). It shows that simple improvements to lighting in kitchens, bedrooms and living areas, as well as on staircases and in halls and entrance areas can improve the independence and well-being of those with failing sight. Appendices include checklists and information on the performance of different types of lamps and light fittings. The content and style of this publication has been informed by housing, support, rehabilitation, occupational therapy, lighting and research professionals, as well as the views of people with sight loss. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Hearing loss impacts on the use of community and informal supports; by Julie Schneider, Bamini Gopinath, Michael J Karpa (et al).

Age and Ageing, vol 39, no 4, July 2010, pp 458-464.

The aim of this Australian study is to estimate the cross-sectional and longitudinal impact of hearing loss on use of community support services and reliance on non-spouse family/friends among older people. Blue Mountains Hearing Study participants (n = 2,956) were assessed for hearing impairment by audiologists in sound-treated booths. Participants were classified as hearing impaired if PTA0.5-4 kHz >25 dB HL. Use of services and non-spouse family/friend support was assessed cross-sectionally. Incident use was assessed among survivors at the 5-year follow-up (n = 1,457). A significant cross-sectional association between hearing loss and use of community support services was observed after adjusting for age, sex, living status, self-rated poor health, self-reported hospital admissions, disability in walking and best-corrected visual impairment. Participants with hearing loss who never used a hearing aid were twice as likely to use formal supports as participants without hearing loss. Hearing loss increased the incident need for non-spouse family/friend support or community services. After adjusting for confounding factors, hearing impairment negatively impacted on the independence of older persons by increasing reliance on community or family support. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://www.ageing.oxfordjournals.org><http://www.bgs.org.uk>doi:10.1093/ageing/afq051

Hearing, sound and the acoustic environment for people with dementia; by Maria McManus, Clifford McClenaghan, Dementia Services Development Centre - DSDC, University of Stirling. Stirling: Dementia Services Development Centre, University of Stirling, 2010, 43 pp (Dementia design series).

The quality of the acoustic environment is a vital component of good dementia-friendly design. People need to be able to hear well in order to make sense of it, and in order to function at the highest level possible. It is essential that adaptations which simplify and clarify the acoustic environment, and which reduce discomfort and auditory "clutter" are up in place. Good acoustics can actively contribute to ensuring that people with dementia can communicate and remain included within the community within which they live, whether a care home, supported housing scheme or hospital care. This book considers these issues, and is one of a series published by the Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC) to assist providers, architects, commissioners and managers to improve the design of buildings which are used by people with dementia. (RH)

From : Dementia Services Development Centre, Iris Murdoch Building, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA.<http://www.dementia.stir.ac.uk>

'My mum's story': a deaf daughter discusses her deaf mother's experience of dementia; by Jacqueline Parker, Alys Young, Katherine Rogers.

Dementia: the international journal of social research and practice, vol 9, no 1, February 2010, pp 5-20.

The following paper concerns culturally Deaf people, who are Sign Language users, and who develop dementia. A first person narrative account from a Deaf daughter of her Deaf mother's dementia ('My Mum's Story') is the main focus of the paper. It is preceded by a Foreword designed to equip the reader with the background to Sign Language and Deaf culture, in order better to contextualise the significance of dementia and its effects for this community. Both pieces, from different perspectives, focus on: the problematic nature of recognizing dementia amongst Deaf people; the paucity of appropriate diagnostic, care and support services; the different considerations for Deaf people approaching dementia as patient or carer; the challenges to service providers and researchers. The first person account was originally produced in BSL (British Sign Language) and translated for written publication purposes. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 14713012

From : <http://dem.sagepub.com> DOI: 10.1177/1471301209353987

The needs of frail older people with sight loss; by Mima Cattam, Gianfranco Giuntoli, Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2010, 7 pp (Research findings, no 34).

The specific needs and aspirations of frail older people with sight loss were explored and detailed in a short report published as an Occasional paper from Thomas Pocklington Trust. These research findings summarise the results, focusing on living in supported accommodation and service provision. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

The opinions of people with sight loss on visual impairment research: study three; by Paul Duckett, Rebekah Pratt, Rosemary Porteous (et al), Thomas Pocklington Trust; Manchester Metropolitan University; University of Edinburgh.: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2010, 11 pp (Research findings, no 29).

In 1999 and 2000, Thomas Pocklington Trust commissioned a research team at the University of Edinburgh and Manchester Metropolitan University to explore the opinions of people with sight loss on visual impairment. These research findings outline results of a third, more recent study, which asked whether those opinions still had currency. The study was grounded in "disability studies", an approach which addresses social exclusion and promotes the civil and human rights of disabled people. The study was based in Edinburgh and interviewed 30 people (including 6 aged 40-69, and 18 aged 70-98) with sight loss about their opinions on visual impairment research. Participants identified five priority topics: access to the built environment, transport and information; attitudes of those who do and do not have sight loss; daily life and methods of coping; support; and affordability and access to technological aids. They also identified four processes that should be attended to when carrying out research: aims, methods, dissemination, and involvement. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

A pilot study of lighting and low vision in older people; by Bruce Evans, Hannah Sawyerr, Zahra Jessa (et al), Thomas Pocklington Trust; Institute of Optometry. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2010, 6 pp (Research findings, no 31).

Visual impairment is common in older people and major causes include cataract and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Previous research suggests that people with AMD benefit from increased light levels but this may not be the case with cataract, which causes light scatter inside the eye. This publication summarises findings from research commissioned and funded by Thomas Pocklington Trust and carried out at the Institute

of Optometry. The research investigated the influence of lighting on performance of activities of daily living in 24 older people with low vision caused by cataract and/or macular degeneration. The research found that subjects tended to perform better under brighter conditions, but the average results masked large individual variations. It was demonstrated that lighting had a big effect on most participants' performance in at least one task, but the optimal lighting level varied uniquely from one subject to another. The report concludes that the best approach to providing optimal lighting for older people with low vision might be to assess their preference and performance individually at different lighting levels. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

"Quality of life and independence" - why Attendance Allowance is so important to blind and partially sighted people: a briefing based on research undertaken jointly by RNIB and Visionary; by Geoff Fimister, Royal National Institute of Blind People - RNIB; Visionary (formerly: National Association of Local Societies for Visually Impaired People - NALSVI). London: RNIB and Visionary, August 2010, 42 pp.

Attendance Allowance (AA) and similar benefits can make all the difference to whether or not a blind or partially sighted older person can get along in the community with a reasonable quality of life. This briefing is based on responses from 116 blind and partially sighted AA claimants aged 65+ about what they spend their benefit on and how they would be affected if they did not have it. The briefing highlights the vital role that AA plays in allowing older blind and partially sighted people to live independent and fulfilling lives. It brings together for the first time detailed accounts of how this extra costs benefit is used by people with sight loss to support life in the community. AA has been described as the "original personal budget", so that its importance cannot be overstated in the light of possible changes in the social security system. The report details the methodology of the research; characteristics of claimants in the survey; how AA (and DLAC 65+ - Disability Living Allowance care component) were spent; support (if any) from social services; the policy debate; and other research on the topic. (RH)

From : Geoff Fimister, Campaigns Officer (Independent Living), RNIB. Tel 020 7391 2124 E-mail: gfimister@rnib.org.uk

Service use and cost of mental disorder in older adults with intellectual disability; by Andre Strydom, Renee Romeo, Natalia Perez-Achiaga (et al).

British Journal of Psychiatry, vol 196, no 2, February 2010, pp 133-138.

The cost of caring for people with intellectual disability currently makes up a large proportion of healthcare spending in western Europe, and may rise in line with the increasing numbers of people with intellectual disability now living to old age. The aim of this study was to report service use and costs of older people with intellectual disability and explore the influence of sociodemographic and illness-related determinants. The authors collected data on receipt and costs of accommodation, health and personal care, physical as well as mental illness, dementia, sensory impairment and disability in a representative sample of 212 adults with intellectual disability aged 60 years and older. The average weekly cost per older person was £790 (£41,080 per year). Accommodation accounted for 74%. Overall costs were highest for those living in congregate settings. Gender, intellectual disability severity, hearing impairment, physical disorder and mental illness had significant independent relationships with costs. Mental illness was associated with an additional weekly cost of £202. Older adults with intellectual disability comprise about 0.15-0.25% of the population of England but consume up to 5% of the total personal care budget. Interventions that meet needs and might prove to be cost-effective should be sought. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 00071250

From : <http://bjp.rcpsych.org/doi/10.1192/bjp.bp.108.060939>

Social inclusion, social circumstances and the quality of life of visually impaired older people; by James Nazroo, Anna Zimdars, Thomas Pocklington Trust; School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2010, 7 pp (Research findings, no 32).

This publication summarises findings from research in respect of well-being for older people with visual impairment. It uses data from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA), which covers those aged 50+ living in private households. It examines whether the self-reported measures of visual impairment in ELSA are accurate. It analyses the relationship between visual impairment and factors such as health, economic position, and housing circumstances to obtain information about the relationship between visual impairment and well-being. A Thomas Pocklington Trust occasional paper (same title) provides more information. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

2009

The effects of developing a dual sensory loss on depression in older adults: a longitudinal study; by Michele Capella McDonnell.

Journal of Aging and Health, vol 21, no 8, December 2009, pp 1179-1199.

The effect of developing a dual sensory loss (DSL) on depression over time was determined; and the impact of pre-existing single sensory loss on this effect was evaluated. Multilevel modelling was used to analyse data (N = 2,689) from the US Health and Retirement Study (HRS). A significant increase in depression at the first report of DSL occurred; and depression increased at a significantly faster rate following DSL, in a curvilinear pattern. In addition, those who eventually developed DSL began the study with a depression score significantly higher than those who did not experience sensory loss. A pre-existing single sensory loss did not alter the effect of DSL on depression. Two sources of disparity in depression between those with and without DSL were identified: preexisting differences, and differences that occurred due to the DSL. The relationship exhibited between depression and developing a DSL indicated an adjustment process. (RH)

ISSN: 08982643

From : <http://www.sagepublications.com>

Emotional support to people with sight loss; by Margot A Gosney, Christina R Victor, Thomas Pocklington Trust; Institute of Health Sciences, University of Reading. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2009, 6 pp (Research findings, no 26).

Adjustment to acquired sight loss can be challenging. To identify the evidence, Thomas Pocklington Trust commissioned and funded a project at the Institute of Health Sciences, University of Reading, to research the needs of people with sight loss for emotional support and the responses to those needs. The aim was to update the existing evidence base by building on a previous literature review and highlighting areas for future research. This publication summarises the research findings regarding the need for emotional support and on interventions to meet emotional support needs. An Occasional Paper (same title) is also available from the Trust. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

The health impact of a hearing disability on older people in Australia; by Anthony Hogan, Kate O'Loughlin, Peta Miller (et al).

Journal of Aging and Health, vol 21, no 8, December 2009, pp 1098-1111.

A series of studies has proposed that hearing loss has adverse effects for other aspects of health. The health effects associated with self-reported hearing disability on older people (aged 55+) were examined using the 2003 Australian Survey of Disability, Ageing, and Carers (n = 43,233), a weighted population-based survey providing data on self-reported disability and quality of life. Of the estimated 654,113 people reporting hearing disability, 71% experienced limited communication and 60% used hearing aids. Compared with population norms, hearing disability at all levels was associated with poorer physical and mental health scores on the Short Form Health Survey (SF-12) measure, especially for people with severe or profound hearing loss, thus suggesting a threshold effect at advanced levels of disability. The data support emerging literature suggesting a causal relationship between hearing disability and quality of life. Prospective studies to further examine this relationship are indicated. (RH)

ISSN: 08982643

From : <http://www.sagepublications.com>

Housing for people with sight loss: a practical guide to improving existing homes; by Nikki Joule, Ros Levenson, Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2009, 26 pp (Good practice guide, 4).

This good practice guide is a tool to improve the homes of people with sight loss. It aims to support planned maintenance, replacements and refurbishments of the homes of people with sight loss and one-off adaptations in response to individual needs. The importance of involving people with sight loss in decisions about their homes is stressed. Checklists are included on the different areas of the home (and outdoor areas) that have been discussed in the main text. The content and style of this publication has been informed by people with sight loss and by housing and support staff working in: Coventry City Council, the Extra Care Charitable Trust, Hammersmith and Fulham housing and support services, Westside Shepherds Bush Support Services, and the Wilberforce Trust. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

The needs of older people with acquired hearing and sight loss; by Sue Pavey, Graeme Douglas, Liz Hodges (et al), Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, June 2009, 19 pp (Occasional paper, no 20).

Evidence of difficult circumstances is highlighted in this report which presents results from a project funded by Thomas Pocklington Trust entitled 'Experiences of people with hearing and sight loss' carried by researchers at the School of Education, University of Birmingham and the University of Cambridge. The aim was to increase the knowledge base concerning the experiences, needs and goals of older people with both sight and hearing loss, with the focus on acquired loss, and to raise awareness of their needs and those working with them. This report looks at the project's two phases. Phase 1 analysed two pre-existing datasets relating to 609 older people with hearing and sight loss. Phase 2 focused on case studies of 20 older people with hearing and sight loss, and drew out 13 broad themes: vision, hearing and other disabilities and health problems; identification; communication and social interaction; leaving the home and getting out and about; activities within and beyond the home; daily living and sources of support; daily living and independent living skills (ILS); accessing information; access to and participation in medical services; social and emotional needs; residential care homes; views of participants' families; and professionals' views of services. Copies of the two reports that inform this publication are available to download (from: <http://www.education.bham.ac.uk/research/victar/research.shtml>). The reports are: 'Secondary analysis with a focus upon the needs of older people with acquired hearing and sight loss: an analysis of the "Network 1000" and "Cambridge" datasets'; and 'The needs of older people with acquired hearing and sight loss: findings from 20 case studies'. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

The needs of older people with acquired hearing and sight loss: [summary report]; by Sue Pavey, Graeme Douglas, Liz Hodges (et al), Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, June 2009, 7 pp (Research findings, no 23).

This publication summarises findings from a research study funded by Thomas Pocklington Trust entitled 'Experiences of people with hearing and sight loss' carried by researchers at the School of Education, University of Birmingham and the University of Cambridge. The aim was to increase the knowledge base concerning the experiences, needs and goals of older people with both sight and hearing loss, with the focus on acquired loss, and to raise awareness of their needs and those working with them. The project's two phases are outlined. Phase 1 analysed two pre-existing datasets relating to 609 older people with hearing and sight loss. Phase 2 focused on case studies of 20 older people with hearing and sight loss, and drew out 13 broad themes: vision, hearing and other disabilities and health problems; identification; communication and social interaction; leaving the home and getting out and about; activities within and beyond the home; daily living and sources of support; daily living and independent living skills (ILS); accessing information; access to and participation in medical services; social and emotional needs; care homes; views of participants' families; and professionals' views of services. Copies of the two reports that inform this publication are available to download (from: <http://www.education.bham.ac.uk/research/victar/research.shtml>). The reports are: 'Secondary analysis with a focus upon the needs of older people with acquired hearing and sight loss: an analysis of the "Network 1000" and "Cambridge" datasets'; and 'The needs of older people with acquired hearing and sight loss: findings from 20 case studies'. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

"Out of sight, out of mind": a qualitative study of visual impairment and dementia from three perspectives; by Vanessa Lawrence, Joanna Murray, Dominic ffytche (et al).

International Psychogeriatrics, vol 21, no 3, June 2009, pp 511-518.

Dementia and visual impairment are among the most common medical conditions in later life. Almost nothing is known about the experiences and needs of older adults with both conditions. In this qualitative study using in-depth individual interviews, multiple perspectives were sought through a case-study approach. 52 interviews were conducted: 17 with older adults with visual impairment and dementia, 17 with family caregivers, and 18 with care professionals. Impaired memory and a lack of visual cues created profound disorientation and distress, which could be manifested in disruptive behaviour. Visual hallucinations compounded older adults' disorientation, and caregivers were uncertain about how to manage them. Visual impairments reduced the ability of older adults to perform certain activities safely, while dementia impaired their ability to assess the risks accurately. Concerns about safety prompted family members to limit their relatives' activities even in early stages of dementia. Low-vision services perceived themselves to be ill equipped to manage dementia-related needs, whilst visual needs were accorded a low priority by dementia services. A lack of joint working by the two services led to an overcautious approach. The research identified considerable unmet needs and opportunities to improve care. The provision of clear verbal communication and optimised visual inputs is likely to reduce

disorientation, distress and agitated behaviour, while one-to-one contact is needed to overcome feelings of isolation. Family caregivers require additional respite services and advice on managing hallucinations. Increased sharing of information and skills between mental health and low-vision professionals would help maximize older adults' independence. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 10416102

People with dementia and sight loss: a scoping study of models of care; by Ruth Bartlett, Declan McKeefry, Thomas Pocklington Trust; Division of Dementia Studies, University of Bradford; Division of Optometry, University of Bradford. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2009, 7 pp (Research findings, no 25).

The main aim of this scoping study was to assess the extent to which existing models of best practice in dementia care were sensitive to sight loss issues. The study reviewed the literature; reviewed the scientific research on sight loss and people with dementia; examined how sensitive models of dementia care practice are to sight loss issues; and explored how sensitive dementia care providers are to sight loss issues. Data were collected by database searches of the academic literature, interviewing seven practitioners, and auditing working practices on four care homes for older people. Among recommendations are developing and piloting a more integrated sensory model of practice, integrating the elements of the enriched and Nightingale-based models; and seeking to influence implementation of the National Dementia Strategy (NDS) for England. A report in the form of an Occasional Paper (same title) is also available from the Trust. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Visual hallucinations in sight loss and dementia; by Joanna Murray, Dominic ffytche, Kate Briggs, Thomas Pocklington Trust; Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2009, 7 pp (Research findings, no 27).

The Thomas Pocklington Trust report on the experiences of people with sight loss and dementia and their carers highlighted the incidence of visual hallucinations - the vivid experience of seeing something that is not actually there. These hallucinations led to confusion and distress for the individual, and carers felt uncertain about how best to respond to them. This finding led to the present review of medical and social science literature, which found limited knowledge about people with both sight loss and dementia who are affected by hallucinations. 215 articles were found, and this publication summarises the review's findings on: prevalence, risk factors, course and outcome; the experience of hallucinations; clinical and other interventions; and the experience and expertise of health and social care professionals. Recommendations for future research are made. An Occasional Paper (same title) and the full report, 'Visual hallucinations in sight loss and dementia: a review of the literature', are also available on request from the Trust. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Visual impairment following stroke: do stroke patients require vision assessment?; by Fiona Rowe, Darren Brand, Carole A Jackson (et al).

Age and Ageing, vol 38, no 2, March 2009, pp 188-193.

The types of visual impairment following stroke are wide-ranging and encompass low vision, eye movement and visual field abnormalities, and visual perceptual difficulties. This paper presents a 1-year data set, and identifies the type of visual impairment occurring following stroke and their prevalence. A multi-centre prospective observation study was undertaken in 14 acute trust hospitals. Stroke survivors with a suspected visual difficulty were recruited. Standardised screening or referral and investigation forms were employed to document data on visual impairment, specifically assessment of visual acuity, ocular pathology, eye alignment and movement, visual perception (including inattention), and visual field defects. 323 patients were recruited (mean age 69). 68% had eye alignment / movement impairment. 49% had visual field impairment, 26.5% had low vision and 20.5% had perceptual difficulties. Of patients referred with a suspected visual difficulty, only 8% had normal vision status confirmed on examination. 92% had visual impairments of some form confirmed, which is considerably higher than previous publications and probably related to the prospective, standardised investigation offered by specialist orthoptists. However, under-ascertainment of visual problems cannot be ruled out. Supplementary data are available on the Age and Ageing website. (RH)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://www.ageing.oxfordjournals.org>

2008

Addressing the vision challenges of residents at a retirement community: collaborative research with a community partner; by Anne Petrovich.: The Haworth Press, Inc., 2008, pp 162-178.

Journal of Gerontological Social Work, vol 51, issue 1/2, 2008, pp 162-178.

Staff members at a community retirement village were concerned about the demise of a support group for residents with vision loss, and requested help developing effective services for residents with vision challenges. This study explored past barriers to support group participation, as they were perceived by residents, family members, and employees. The community partner worked collaboratively with the researcher in all phases of the study. Questionnaires were designed to elicit demographic data, diagnosed vision problems, level of adjustment to vision loss, well-being, and motivation for attending institutional programmes about vision challenges. Residents responded to standardized vision and depression scales; qualitative questions were posed to all 3 groups concerning motivations for resident participation in programme activities. Results indicated that, although many residents had diagnosed vision conditions, they were, in general, coping well with vision loss and did not report depressive symptoms. Participants considered ongoing personal contact and follow-up, a group design that offered the choice of educational presentations and/or process discussions, and individualized assistance with practical challenges to be critical to an effective program. This case study, utilizing a collaborative research process, generated requests for expanded social work services and an increased valuing of the social work role. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 01634372

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Deafblind people and families' experiences of direct payments: Deafblind Direct consultation report; by Sense. London: Sense, February 2008, 41 pp.

This report presents research into the experiences of deafblind people and families in relation to direct payments. The research was carried out as part of Deafblind Direct, Sense's direct payments project. A consultation with deafblind people and families was carried out from June to November 2007. Detailed information was gathered from those using direct payments or thinking about using them. The research covered particular aspects of direct payments, including some of the key factors that help or hinder the uptake of direct payments with this population group. Respondents had varying experiences of direct payments, making it clear that while some thought they benefited from receiving them, there are a range of challenges to face in using them. The research highlighted cases where it seems that the Department of Health (DH) statutory guidance documents on direct payments (2003) and the Deafblind Guidance (2001) are not being implemented correctly. The research also looked into other relevant initiatives, including Self-directed care initiatives and the Independent Living Fund (ILF). Respondents suggested a range of actions, and the report brings together recommended actions for Sense, other organisations and local and national government. (KJ/RH)

From : Sense, 11-13 Clifton Terrace, Finsbury Park, London N4 3SR.<http://www.sense.org.uk>

Eldercare technology for clinical practitioners; by Majd Alwan, Robin A Felder (eds). Totowa, NJ: Humana Press, 2008, 231 pp (Aging medicine).

According the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), nearly three-quarters of older people suffer from one or more chronic disease, such that they require some degree of formal or informal care. This book considers a range of technologies targeted at the assessment, early detection and mitigation of such conditions, including decline in functional abilities, gait, mobility, sleep disturbance, visual impairment, hearing loss, falls, and cognitive decline. It not only describes the state of embedded and wearable technologies (including those under research), but also focuses on their potential utility. (RH)

Price: \$99.50

From : Humana Press, 999 Riverview Drive, Suite 208, Totowa, New Jersey 07512, USA. Email: humana@humanapr.com

The hazard perception ability of older drivers; by Mark S Horswill, Shelby A Marrington, Cynthia M McCullough (et al).

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 63B, no 4, July 2008, pp P212-P218.

This Australian study investigated the hazard perception ability of older drivers. A sample of 118 older drivers (65 years and older) completed a video-based hazard perception test and an assessment battery designed to measure aspects of cognitive ability, vision, and simple reaction time that might plausibly be linked to hazard perception ability. It was found that hazard perception response times increased significantly with age but that this age-related increase could be accounted for by measures of contrast sensitivity and useful field of view. The

researchers found that contrast sensitivity, useful field of view, and simple reaction time could account for the variance in hazard perception, independent of one another and of individual differences in age. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

The impact of spirituality on health-related quality of life among Chinese older adults with vision impairment; by C-W Wang, C L W Chan, S-M Ng (et al).: Taylor & Francis, March 2008, pp 267-275.

Aging & Mental Health, vol 12, no 2, March 2008, pp 267-275.

A sample of 167 urban older Chinese people with visual problems were interviewed using a structured questionnaire to assess self-reported visual functioning, general health, spirituality, and both generic and vision-specific health-related quality of life (HRQOL). Objective visual function was clinically measured by ophthalmologists in terms of distance visual acuity. This study found that spirituality was positively associated with both general physical health and general mental health, with a higher correlation with personal mental health than that with general physical health. Moreover, spirituality was associated significantly with vision-specific HRQOL, including multiple domains, and that these factors may play an important role in the process of adaptation to age-related vision loss among Chinese older people with vision impairment. (RH)

ISSN: 13607863

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

In Focus: Always change; by Carol Pollington.

Talking Sense, vol 52, no 2, Summer 2008, pp 30-33.

Often the word "transition" is associated only with young people, but everyone goes through significant periods of change all through their lifecourse. This article is the author's experience of having Usher 2, a progressive condition leading to deafblindness which she noticeably developed in her mid-forties. The article is a reflection upon some of the major changes in her life and the challenges of growing older with the condition - an insert of what has helped the author cope is included. (KJ)

ISSN: 13674064

From : <http://www.sense.org.uk/tsarticles>

Responsiveness of the Duke Social Support sub-scales in older women; by Nancy A Pachana, Nadine Smith, Melanie Watson (et al).

Age and Ageing, vol 37, no 6, November 2008, pp 666-672.

An abbreviated form of the Duke Social Support Index (DSSI), as used in the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health, was examined with respect to factors that might be expected to affect social support for older women over time. In this large cohort study, two sub-scales of the DSSI, one describing the size and structure of the social network (4 items) and the other perceiving satisfaction with social support (6 items), were analysed in relation to outcome and explanatory variables. Over a 3-year period, the network score increased among women whose life circumstances meant they were likely to receive more support (e.g. recent widowhood). Likewise, those women at risk of becoming more socially isolated (e.g. those with sensory loss) became less satisfied with their social support. Changes in both measures were tempered by women's mental health and optimism. Although the sub-scales of the DSSI may not fully reflect the complexity of social support paradigms, they are responsive to changes in the lives of older women and can be useful in community-based epidemiological study. (RH)

ISSN: 00020729

From : <http://www.ageing.oupjournals.org>

Self-management education programs for age-related macular degeneration: a systematic review; by Lily Lee, Tanya L Packer, Seok Hun Tang (et al).: Blackwell Publishing, December 2008, pp 170-176.

Australasian Journal on Ageing, vol 27, no 4, December 2008, pp 170-176.

The effectiveness of education programs to improve emotional status, daily living and self-efficacy in people aged 60+ with age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is reviewed. Electronic searches of three databases and manual searches of references lists located randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and quasi-experimental studies. Health education programmes aimed at increasing knowledge of AMD, skills training or behavioural change were included. Data extraction and quality assessment were undertaken by two reviewers. A narrative analysis was possible. Three protocols were reported in four studies (n=532) with three follow-up studies: all contained elements of self-management programmes. Effect sizes for the three outcomes ranged from small to very large (0.14 to 1.21) Self-management programmes appear effective for older people with AMD. Small sample size, use of non-traditional statistics and methodological quality meant only narrative analysis was possible. Future studies with more robust methodology including intent-to-treat analysis are still required. (RH)

ISSN: 14406381

From : <http://www.cota.org.au> / <http://www.blackwellpublishingasia.com>

Social networks and health-related quality of life among Chinese older adults with vision impairment; by Chong-Wen Wang, Cecilia L W Chan, Andy H Y Ho (et al).

Journal of Aging and Health, vol 20, no 7, October 2008, pp 804-823.

167 mainland China urban older adults with visual problems were interviewed using a structured questionnaire to assess self-reported visual functioning, general health, social networks and vision-specific health-related quality of life (HRQOL). Objective visual function was clinically measured by ophthalmologists in terms of distance visual acuity. Findings indicate that age-related vision loss is significantly associated with older people's social networks. Multiple regression analyses show that social networks are mildly related to vision-specific HRQOL, even after controlling for other variables, and that friendship network was a significant predictor, independent of family network, of vision-specific HRQOL. Previous studies have emphasised the importance of family network, whereas this study finds that friendship network correlates more strongly with HRQOL measures in Chinese visually impaired older people. This suggests a need to expand intervention beyond the family system. (RH)

ISSN: 08982643

From : <http://www.sagepublications.com>

Visual attention and self-regulation of driving among older adults; by Ozioma C Okonkwo, Michael Crowe, Virginia G Wadley (et al).

International Psychogeriatrics, vol 20, no 1, February 2008, pp 162-173.

With the number of older drivers increasing, self-regulation of driving has been proposed as a viable means of balancing the autonomy of older adults against the sometimes competing demand of public safety. In this study, the authors investigate self-regulation of driving among a group of older adults with varying functional abilities. Participants in the study comprised 1,543 drivers aged 75 years or older. They completed an objective measure of visual attention from which crash risk was estimated, and self-report measures of driving avoidance, driving exposure, physical functioning, general health status, and vision. Crash records were obtained from the United States State Department of Public Safety. Overall, participants were most likely to avoid driving in bad weather, followed by driving at night, driving on high traffic roads, driving in unfamiliar areas, and making left-hand turns across oncoming traffic. With the exception of driving at night, drivers at higher risk of crashes generally reported greater avoidance of these driving situations than lower risk drivers. However, across all driving situations a significant proportion of higher risk drivers did not restrict their driving. In general, self-regulation of driving did not result in reduced social engagement. Some older drivers with visual attention impairments do not restrict their driving in difficult situations. There is a need for physicians and family members to discuss driving behaviours with older adults routinely to ensure their safety. The association between visual attention and driving restriction has implications for interventions aimed at preserving mobility in the older population. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 10416102

2007

Accessibility for visitors who are blind or partially sighted: how technology can help; by John Gill, Royal National Institute of Blind People - RNIB. London: RNIB, 2007, 29 pp.

A significant number of overseas visitors and UK residents travelling to events and destinations within the UK is likely to be over retirement age or have some kind of disability. So far, most special provision has been access for wheelchairs or the installation of hearing aid loops. New technologies offer possibilities for providing services which can help blind and partially sighted visitors, people with other disabilities, or those needing assistance in other ways. Visitors and tourist need accessible, intelligent information systems, and; machines that are easy to use. The author outlines the potential of a range of such technologies: radio frequency identification devices (RFID); smart card systems; mobile communications; wireless systems; NFC - near field communication devices (that interconnect with mobile phones, for example); biometric systems; accessible web sites; wayfinding; location-based services; and transport information systems. Thus, many technologies could offer significant benefits to disabled visitors, and the author outlines how systems could be made available. (RH)

ISBN: 1860480330

Price: FOC

From : RNIB, 105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE. email: john.gill@rnib.org.uk Detailed guidelines on web at: www.tiresias.org/guidelines

Adaptation to chronic vision impairment: does African American or Caucasian race make a difference?; by Charla A McKinzie, Joann P Reinhardt, Dolores Benn.

Research on Aging, vol 29, no 2, March 2007, pp 144-162.

The purpose of this research was to determine whether race had a significant unique impact on adaptation to a common late-life impairment, age-related vision loss, after accounting for socio-demographic, health, functional disability, and personal and social resource variables. Older visually impaired African American (n=61) and Caucasian (488) applicants for vision rehabilitation service were interviewed in their homes. The results demonstrated that race accounted for unique variability in the domain-specific indicator of adaptation to age-related vision loss. The results support the importance of further work examining race differences in adaptation to specific chronic impairments in later life. (RH)

ISSN: 01640275

Age-related Macular Degeneration Bill: a Bill to make provision for the treatment of age-related macular degeneration; and for connected purposes; by Linda Riordan, John McDonnell, Jeremy Corbyn (et al). London: TSO, 16 January 2007, 7 pp (HC Bill 45 session 2006/07).

Linda Riordan's Private Members' Bill was supported by five other Labour MPs. If enacted, the Bill will require a duty to provide treatment to all patients suffering from age-related macular degeneration (ARMD) free of charge. The Bill had one reading on 16 January 2007 and then was dropped. (KJ/RH)

Price: £1.50

From : TSO, Publications Centre, PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN.

Dual sensory impairment in older people; by Social Care Institute for Excellence - SCIE.

Community Care, issue 1701, 29 November 2007, pp 34-35.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) reviews some research published in the last ten years regarding the effects of dual sensory impairment on older people - that is being deafblind or having vision and hearing impairment. Dual sensory impairment is certain to become increasingly prevalent as people live longer, and therefore will be encountered by non-specialist social care and health workers, carers and family members. Sources of web-based information are also suggested. (RH)

ISSN: 03075508

From : <http://www.communitycare.co.uk>

Examination of the relationship among hearing impairment, linguistic communication, mood and social engagement of residents in complex continuing-care facilities; by Peter Brink, Michael Stones.

The Gerontologist, vol 47, no 5, October 2007, pp 633-641.

Earlier evidence has not been conclusive about whether hearing loss in older people is associated with mood (i.e. depressive symptoms and anhedonia) and social engagement (i.e. reduced psychosocial involvement and reduced activity levels). If hearing impairment results in poor mood and lower levels of social engagement, then remedying hearing impairment might result in higher quality of life. This study aimed to determine whether functional hearing impairment in continuing care residents is associated with mood and social engagement. It included all residents in Ontario admitted to complex continuing care facilities between April 2000 and March 2001. Through the Canadian Institute of Health Information, the authors gathered health information by using the Minimum Data Set 2.0 questionnaire (MDS 2.0). The results were consistent with the hypothesised direct effect of functional hearing impairment on mood. Path analyses showed that hearing impairment impairs linguistic communication and that impaired linguistic communication is related to lower levels of mood and social engagement. This study adds to the literature supporting an association between hearing impairment and mood. The study also suggests that questionnaires used to assess hearing such as the MDS 2.0 are suitable for early detection of hearing problems and may be used to refer residents to audiology services. (RH)

ISSN: 00169013

From : <http://www.geron.org>

An exploration of access to health and social care services by older deaf people in Scotland: report; research carried out in partnership with Deaf Connections, Glasgow; by Caroline Donaldson, Ailsa Cook, Royal Bank of Scotland Centre for the Older Person's Agenda - COPA, Queen Margaret University Edinburgh. Musselburgh: The Royal Bank of Scotland Centre for the Older Person's Agenda, September 2007, 43 pp.

There were some 758000 people in Scotland in 2007 who were either deaf or hard of hearing. This report outlines the methods used in a research project conducted focus groups with 18 older deaf people who were users of Deaf Connections services in the west of Scotland. Findings are presented on the three key issues identified in analysis of the focus group data: communication support, deaf awareness, and specialist services. Among the report's recommendations for policy and practice to improve services for deaf people are: joint partnership working between health and social care service providers and organisations providing specialist

services to older deaf people; deaf awareness training; and increased involvement and participation of deaf people in developing service provision and delivery that meets their needs. The report also makes recommendations on future research to involve service users. (RH)

From : Download (16/9/08)The Royal Bank of Scotland Centre for the Older Person's Agenda, Queen Margaret University Edinburgh, Musselburgh EH21 6UU. E-mail: copa@qmu.ac.uk Website: <http://www.qmu.ac.uk/copa>

Genetic and environmental influences on hearing in older women; by Anne Viljanen, Pertti Era, Jaakko Kaprio (et al).

Journals of Gerontology: Series A, Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences, vol 62A, no 4, April 2007, pp 447-452.

As part of the Finnish Twin Study on Ageing, hearing was measured in 193 monozygotic (MZ) and 114 dizygotic (DZ) female twin pairs aged 63-76. Audiometric measured hearing was tested using standardised methods in soundproof conditions. Self-reported hearing was assessed by a structured question. Quantitative genetic modelling was used for data analysis. No significant difference in age, exposure to noise, hearing aid use, auditory diseases or accidents, or number of self-reported chronic conditions or prescription medicines were observed between MZ and DZ twins. A genetic component in common accounted for 75% of the variance in the better ear's hearing threshold level, and 54% in the better ear's speech recognition threshold level according to a bivariate genetic analysis. In addition, 10% of the variance in the better ear's speech recognition threshold level was explained by its specific genetic component. Individual difference in audiometrically measured air-conducted hearing threshold level (0.5-4kHz) and speech recognition threshold level in the better ear were largely accounted for by genetic differences between individuals. In contrast, self-reported hearing appears to be accounted for solely by environmental factors. (RH)

ISSN: 10795006

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Identification of deafblind dual sensory impairment in older people; by Diane Roberts, Thomas Scharf, Miriam Bernard (et al), Social Care Institute for Excellence - SCIE.

This briefing focuses on issues relating to the identification of people over the age of 60 in the UK who have dual sensory loss in the form of a combined hearing and sight impairment (deafblind). Five key messages are cited which focus on simple interventions that can be effective in improving the quality of life of people with dual sensory impairment. However, a more specialist assessment may be required and the use of the single assessment process as part of this process should be instigated. (KJ/RH)

From : Download from website: <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications>

Impact of spouse vision impairment on partner health and well-being: a longitudinal analysis of couples; by William J Strawbridge, Margaret I Wallhagen, Sarah J Shema.

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 62B, no 5, September 2007, pp S315-S322.

Participants were 418 older people from the Alameda County Study in California. Visual impairment was assessed in 1994 with a 9-point scale assessing difficulty in seeing in everyday situations; outcomes were assessed in 1999. Longitudinal analyses included multivariate statistical models adjusting for paired data and partners' own visual impairment, age, gender, chronic conditions, and financial problems. Results on outcome for partners' own visual impairment are included for comparative purposes. Gender differences were assessed with interaction tests. Spouse visual impairment negatively affected partner depression, physical functioning, well-being, social involvement and marital quality. These effects were not greatly different in magnitude from those associated with partners' own visual impairment. Three of four outcomes with significant gender differences evidenced stronger impacts of husbands' visual impairment on wives' well-being and marital quality than the reverse. Spouses do not live in isolation: characteristics of one affect the other. Both treatment and rehabilitation programmes should include visually impaired patients' spouses and other family members. Why wives appear more sensitive to their husbands' visual impairment is unclear and warrants further study. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

In Focus: Caring for older deafblind people: [three separate articles]; by Jim Lewis, Colin Anderson.

Talking Sense, vol 51, no 2, Summer 2007, pp 20-27.

These three separate articles consider different aspects of deafblindness in older people - the challenges facing family carers; the role of carers who offer residential and domiciliary care; and how Marcelle Holden (a woman of 80 who is deafblind) has adjusted to a new life living with her daughter in a rural village, West Buckland, in Somerset. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 13674064

From : <http://www.sense.org.uk/tsarticles>

Seeing me: guidance on sight and hearing difficulties for staff who care for older people; by Sense. London: Sense, 2007, 25 pp.

This booklet offers information and advice about hearing and sight loss for those working with older people. It explains what dual sensory loss is and how it affects older people. It explains how older people can be supported and helped in residential care and in their own homes. It also includes a list of other information sources, and the Deafblind Manual Alphabet signing and Block Manual Alphabet signing, both of which can be a means of communication with those who are deafblind. (KJ/RH)

From : Sense, 11-13 Clifton Terrace, Finsbury Park, London N4 3SR. <http://www.sense.org.uk/fillinthegaps>

Sensory impairment, use of community support services, and quality of life in aged care clients; by Tien Tay, Jie Jin Wang, Richard Lindley (et al).

Journal of Aging and Health, vol 19, no 2, April 2007, pp 229-241.

The authors sampled 284 frail older people presenting for assessment in Sydney, Australia. Moderate to severe visual impairment was defined as visual acuity <20/80 (better eye) and moderate to severe hearing loss as hearing thresholds >40 decibels (better ear). Community support service use included home-delivered meals, home help, and community nurse visits. After adjusting for age, sex and two or more comorbid conditions, moderate to severe visual impairment, but not moderate to severe hearing loss was significantly associated with increased use of community services. (RH)

ISSN: 08982643

From : <http://www.sagepublications.com>

A twin-study of genetic contributions to hearing acuity in late middle age; by Arthur Wingfield, Mathew Panizzon, Michael D Grant (et al).

Journals of Gerontology: Series A, Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences, vol 62A, no 11, November 2007, pp 1294-1299.

Declines in hearing acuity, especially in the high frequency range, often appear in middle age. This study's aim is to characterise genetic and environmental influences that may underlie this pattern. 179 monozygotic and 150 dizygotic twin pairs aged 52-60 were selected from the Vietnam Era Twin Registry and individually tested for hearing acuity in the frequency range from 500 to 8000 Hz. Biometric modelling was used to quantify genetic and environmental influences. For individuals' better ears, approximately two-thirds of the variance in hearing acuity in middle and high frequency ranges could be accounted for by genetic factors. For individuals' poorer ears, which would be expected to show lower heritability, approximately one half of the variance in the middle and high frequency ranges could be accounted for by genetic influences. Within a given frequency range, the same genetic factors influenced both the better and poorer ears. In contrast, although there was some overlap of genetic influences on the middle and high frequencies within a given ear, there were also some genetic influences that were specific to each frequency. Results suggest that genetic effects play an important role in the level of hearing loss that often appears in late middle age; and factors such as noise exposure and medications with ototoxic properties should be noted in identifying those most vulnerable to such environmental risk factors. (RH)

ISSN: 10795006

From : <http://www.geron.org>

2006

A challenging time: [growing old with dual sensory impairment]; by Francesca Wolf.

Talking Sense, vol 52, no 2, Summer 2006, pp 24-27.

The author has been speaking to a range of older people with sensory impairments to find out about their lives. It emerged that there was little specialised support for such people and that the lack of regular communication with other people leads to frustration and isolation. Three cases are presented, which highlight the work of communicator-guides, who accompany people with sensory impairments for a short time each week to help maintain a level of independence. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 13674064

From : <http://www.sense.org.uk>

Charles Bonnet syndrome: forgotten but important; by Murali Krishna, Peter Decalmer.
Geriatric Medicine, vol 36, no 10, October 2006, pp 27/36.

Visual hallucinations occur in a number of ophthalmological, medical and neuropsychiatric disorders. Charles Bonnet syndrome is less frequently diagnosed but is a rather common cause of visual hallucinations in older adults. In this article, the authors review the history and discuss the assessment and management of this condition.

ISSN: 0268201X

From : <http://www.gerimed.co.uk>

Charles Bonnet Syndrome and the elderly; by Sitara Khan, Jeffrey Lim.

Geriatric Medicine, vol 36, no 4, April 2006, pp 39-42.

Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS) describes the phenomenon of hallucinations in older people with visual impairment. The hallucinations are vivid, complex and well formed. They frequently have no personal meaning, are recognised as being unreal by the patients, and can sometimes be voluntarily terminated by the patient. In this article, the authors discuss the syndrome's clinical course. (RH)

ISSN: 0268201X

From : <http://www.gerimed.co.uk>

Comparative analyses on national measures to combat discrimination outside employment and occupation: mapping study on existing national legislative measures - and their impact in - tackling discrimination outside the field of employment and occupation on the grounds of sex, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation, VT/2005/062; by Aileen McColgan, Jan Niessen, Fiona Palmer, Human European Consultancy; Migration Policy Group. Utrecht: Electronic format, December 2006, 74 pp (includes annex).

This report sets out in brief form the law across EU Member States, Bulgaria and Romania relating to discrimination on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief and age to the extent that such discrimination falls outside the current scope of EC law. The particular focus is on discrimination in access to education, goods and services, and issues around social protection and social advantages. The report is drawn up on the basis of detailed reports in respect of each of the countries surveyed, and a further five "comparator" countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and the US. Much of the report focuses on the law of the existing and prospective EU Member States, but occasional reference is made to the comparator countries. While all the Member States surveyed exceed the EU requirements in at least some respects, and in many the protection provided in excess of EU requirements is significant, the extent of this protection varies considerably. (RH)

From : Download from website (Oct

07):http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/stud/mapstrand1_en.pdf

Deafness and dementia: consulting on the issues; by Kate Allan.

Journal of Dementia Care, vol 14, no 3, May/June 2006, pp 35-38 (Research focus).

The author describes a consultation exercise that looked at the issues for two groups of people with dementia: those with acquired hearing loss, and those who had always been deaf. The consultation exercise was carried out to obtain insight into the important challenges which need to be tackled. The study sought the views of service users, relatives, care practitioners (mostly care assistants) and British Sign Language (BSL) or English interpreters - 43 people in all. Issues covered in this research focus include recognising deafness, social isolation, implications for communication, hearing aids, and the needs of deaf sign language users with dementia. The consultation exercise was undertaken jointly by the Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC), University of Stirling and Deaf Action in Edinburgh. (RH)

ISSN: 13518372

Depression in late-life: shifting the paradigm from treatment to prevention; by Ellen M Whyte, Barry Rovner.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 21, no 8, August 2006, pp 746-751.

Late-life depression is very common and is associated with high rates of morbidity and mortality. While the field of geriatric psychiatry is focused on depression treatment, prevention is an enticing option. Prevention of late-life depression would decrease both emotional suffering and depression-associated morbidity and mortality, and may decrease dependence on non-mental health professionals to detect depression and to initiate a treatment referral. This paper reviews current thinking on prevention research with a particular focus on its application to late-life depression. To illustrate these issues, the authors discuss recent and ongoing clinical trials of interventions to prevent depression in two populations of older people: those with age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and those with cerebrovascular disease. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

From : <http://www.interscience.wiley.com>

Making the Link: ageing and sight loss; by Carol Smith.

Journal of Integrated Care, vol 14, issue 3, June 2006, pp 32-38.

Making the Link is a project being developed by the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) and funded by the Department of Health (DH). The project is aimed at improving health and social care for older people with sight problems, by focusing on some of the standards for the National Service Framework for Older People (NSF), and applying them to older people with sight problems. The project will identify, develop and disseminate good practice by establishing two pilot sites and conducting desk research. This article reports on the project's background and development. (RH)

ISSN: 14769018

From : <http://www.pavpub.com>

Perceived overprotection : support gone bad?: [support for those with visual impairment]; by Verena R Cimaroni, Joann P Reinhardt, Amy Horowitz.

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 61B, no 1, January 2006, pp S18-S23.

Perceived overprotection is a potentially problematic aspect of receiving support on the ability to adjust to a chronic condition, specifically age-related vision loss. Perceived overprotection is an especially crucial issue for this population of chronically ill older people, because of the safety issues associated with visual impairment, and because perceptions on the part of the older person that the support providers may lead to excess disability. Participants were 584 older men and women with age-related vision impairment who applied for services at a vision rehabilitation agency. Path analysis was used to examine the effects of perceived overprotection on two positive indicators of adjustment: vision-specific adaptation and environmental mastery. Moreover, antecedents of perceived overprotection were examined. Higher levels of perceived overprotection were associated with less optimal adjustment to age-related vision loss, with lower scores on measures of vision-specific adaptation and environmental mastery. Higher levels of functional disability and instrumental support received were associated with higher levels of perceived overprotection. Findings indicate that support providers of older people with visual impairment as well as vision rehabilitation service providers need to be aware of the detrimental impact of perceived overprotection. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Psychosocial effects of age-related macular degeneration; by K Berman, H Brodaty.

International Psychogeriatrics, vol 18, no 3, September 2006, pp 415-428.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) affects approximately 10% of people aged 65-74 and 30% of those aged 75+. AMD is a major cause of blindness in old age; it is progressive and irreversible. The authors used MEDLINE, psychINFO and CINAHL from 1966 to 2004 to review the literature on AMD's psychosocial effects. AMD is associated with functional impairment, high rates of depression, anxiety and emotional distress, and increased mortality. Risk factors for depression are not well-defined, except for the degree of functional impairment and impending or actual loss of vision in the second eye. Behavioural and self-management programmes may be effective in managing depression associated with AMD, but few studies have been performed, and none using drugs or multimodal therapy. AMD will become even more prevalent as the population ages. Identification of the risk factors for psychological consequences and of effective interventions remain to be recognised. (RH)

ISSN: 10416102

Registered blind and partially sighted people at 31 March 2006, England; by NHS Information Centre - DH; National Statistics. London: Department of Health - DH, 2006, unnumbered (Personal Social Services CSSR Statistics).

Current triennial report of this renamed Series (formerly A/F 7). The data are compiled from the triennial return SSDA 902 submitted by Local Authorities to the Department of Health. Key points and a historical summary for England is included in this edition. (KJ)

Price: FOC

From : Department of Health, Room 457C, Skipton House, 80 London Road, London SE1 6LH.

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/blindeng06/report/file>

Treating age-related macular degeneration; by James Self, Poorna Abeysiri, Andrew Lotery.
Geriatric Medicine, vol 36, no 4, April 2006, pp 27/34.

Age-related macular degeneration affects approximately one in three of the population by the age of 75. It is the commonest cause of blindness in the Western world, accounting for all cases of registered blindness in people aged 65+. In this article, the authors review the causal factors, the symptoms, how the disease progresses, and they discuss how best to treat the condition. (RH)

ISSN: 0268201X

From : <http://www.gerimed.co.uk>

2005

Cataracts and the aging driver; by Donald W Kline, Wenchen Li.

Ageing International, vol 30, no 2, Spring 2005, pp 105-121.

Progressive age-related declines in vision make everyday tasks more difficult for older people. The consequences of age-related visual change are particularly evident in the presence of serious disorders of the eye such as cataracts. A near-universal visual outcome of ageing, cataracts increase the opacity and light scattering properties of the lens. In turn, these changes impair acuity, contrast sensitivity and colour discrimination, especially under conditions of dim illumination or strong glare. Research shows that the performance, safety, mobility, comfort and driving habits of older drivers are affected adversely by cataract-induced visual loss. Conversely, the striking improvements in sight with surgical replacement of the cataractous lens appear to enhance ageing drivers' performance and safety. However, the relative benefits of treating cataracts unilaterally versus bilaterally have yet to be determined, as do the direct and mobility-mediated effects of cataract and cataract treatment on psychosocial variables that contribute to well-being and quality of life. (RH)

ISSN: 01635158

From : <http://www.transactionpub.com>

The effect of rehabilitation on depression among visually disabled older adults; by A Horowitz, J P Reinhardt, K Boerner.

Aging & Mental Health, vol 9, no 6, November 2005, pp 563-570.

There has been a great deal of interest in identifying the impact of rehabilitation on psychological well-being, as well as functional ability, among older people with disabilities, but empirical data remain limited. This descriptive study of a vision rehabilitation service examines the effect of specific vision rehabilitation services (low vision clinical services, skills training, counselling, optical device use, and adaptive device use) on change in depression in a sample of older people with age-related vision impairments. 95 participants were interviewed at application for services and then about 2 years later. Findings from hierarchical regression analysis indicated that low vision clinical services, counselling, and use of optical devices, in separate models, each significantly contributed to a decline in depression, after controlling for age, health status, vision status, functional disability, as well as baseline depression. When all service variables were entered into the same equation, they explained an additional (10% of the variance) in change in depression. Given the well-documented robust relationship between disability and depression, findings point to the influence of vision rehabilitation interventions on both physical and psychological functioning, and underscore the need for future, controlled research on rehabilitation service models that address mental health issues. (RH)

ISSN: 13607863

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Find the connections: social care research has to take account of the increasing amount of partnership and joint working; by Bob Hudson.

Community Care, no 1556, 20 January 2005, pp 36-37.

The author reports on a Good Practice : Developing an Evidence Base conference held by the Integrated Care Network, to develop effective working in partnership and integration. The need to take a broad interpretation of what constitutes research is emphasised, and three levels of thinking about joint working are identified. Examples of local practitioner-researcher programmes are outlined: Durham access programme for older people and people with a physical or sensory impairment; mental health services for older people in Cumbria; and reorganisation of children's services in Northumberland. (RH)

ISSN: 03075508

From : <http://www.communitycare.co.uk>

"I'm like a tree a million miles from the water's edge": social care and inclusion of older people with visual impairment; by John Percival, Julienne Hanson.

British Journal of Social Work, vol 35, no 2, March 2005, pp 189-206.

The care and support of older people with visual impairment is a neglected public policy issue, despite the growing numbers affected by sight loss in later life. The report, "Housing and support needs of older people with visual impairment: experiences and challenges" (published by the Thomas Pocklington Trust in 2002) is a study of 400 people aged 55+ in Plymouth, Birmingham and London and their experiences of sight loss, coping strategies, support needs, home environments, social contacts and information needs. This paper reports on a prominent concern arising from the research - the connection between unmet social care needs and social exclusion. Discussion focuses on identifying and assessing needs, major problems and priorities mentioned by interviewees, and service initiatives that promote inclusive social care. Conclusions are reached that social workers and other allied professionals can best promote socially inclusive support through inter-agency co-operation. Practical suggestions are presented as to the possible shape and direction of collaborative work. (RH)

ISSN: 00453102

From : <http://bjsw.oupjournals.org>

Living with physical and sensory impairment in rural areas : challenges and responses: Volume 1 : Policy and practice; by John Palmer, Salma Ahmed, Caitriona Carroll, North Harbour Consulting Limited; Housing Corporation. Portsmouth: North Harbour Consulting Limited, 2005, 68 pp (Research summary 6 pp).

Disabled people living in rural areas face multiple disadvantages arising both from their disability and where they live. This research investigated disabled people's experiences of rural housing, the built environment and access to services in five local authority areas: East Lindsay, Lincolnshire; Penwith, Cornwall; Wear Valley, County Durham; South Lakeland, Cumbria; and Shepway, Kent. The emphasis of the research is on the choices available and how these choices are constrained by disability. The research also investigated the care and support received, and the importance of informal family and community-based networks in helping to provide care and sustain independent living. Also examined in the report are rural transport, access to rural services, and disabled people's use of personal computers and the internet. A CD-ROM is also available containing large print versions of the research summary, main research report, and the technical report and working papers for the five study areas. (RH)

From : North Harbour Consulting Limited, 20 Newlyn Way, Port Solent, Portsmouth PO6 4TN. Email: northharbour@btconnect.com

Prevalence and correlates of depression in Chinese oldest old; by Kee-Lee Chou, Iris Chi.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 20, no 1, January 2005, pp 41-50.

In Hong Kong, the oldest-old (age 80 and above) is the fastest growing age group. This article examines cross-sectional data collected from a representative community sample of 1,903 Chinese people aged 60+ in Hong Kong. Respondents were interviewed face-to-face with a structured questionnaire. Using 8 as the cut-off point in the 15-item Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15), the authors found that the prevalence rate was greater for the oldest old (31.1%) than for the young old (2.8%, age 60-69) or the old-old (22.4%, age 70-79). Logistic regression analysis revealed that financial status, poor self-rated health, loneliness, and heart disease were significantly and positively related to depression in the oldest old after gender, marital status, education, living arrangements, functional disability, sensory impairment, cognitive ability and the presence of eight medical conditions were controlled. Interestingly, financial strain, self-rated health and loneliness were found to be significant correlates of depression in the young-old and old-old, too. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

From : <http://www.interscience.wiley.com>

Prevalence and risk factors for self reported visual impairment among middle-aged and older adults; by Amy Horowitz, Mark Brennan, Joann P Reinhardt.

Research on Aging, vol 27, no 3, May 2005, pp 307-326.

Data were collected by telephone interviews from a nationally representative sample of 1,219 Americans aged 45+ for this study on the prevalence of risk factors for self-reported visual impairment. Hierarchical logistic regression examined independent risk factors of self-reported visual impairment. 17% of the sample self-reported visual impairments, increasing to 26.5% of those aged 75+. Greater age, not being Hispanic, in poor or fair self-rated health, and low availability of informal social support were significant risk factors associated with visual impairment. The prevalence of visual problems among adults suggests unmet needs for both basic eye care and vision rehabilitation interventions to reduce functional limitations that can result from visual impairment. Longitudinal research is needed to examine prevalence and incidence of vision loss as a function of population ageing and changing health behaviours. (RH)

ISSN: 01640275

From : <http://www.sagepub.com>

2004

Adaptation to disability among middle-aged and older adults: the role of assimilative and accommodative coping; by Kathrin Boerner.

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 59B, no 1, January 2004, pp P35-P42.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the links between coping, disability and mental health in adults who are confronted with age-related vision loss. Drawing on the model of assimilative and accommodative coping (e.g. Bradstädter, 1999), hierarchical regressions were designed to examine the effects of coping and disability on mental health. Participants were 56 middle-aged and 52 older Americans who had been recruited from a community-based rehabilitation agency. Findings demonstrate a critical role of accommodative coping for adaptation, with beneficial effects on mental health that were more pronounced in the case of high disability for younger participants. Finally, findings suggest that dealing with disability may pose more of a mental health risk in middle than in late adulthood. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

The communication and psychosocial perceptions of older adults with sensory loss: a qualitative study; by Chyrisse Heine, Colette J Browning.

Ageing and Society, vol 24, part 1, January 2004, pp 113-130.

Decreased vision and/or hearing acuity often result in poor communication and psychosocial functioning. This qualitative study aimed to identify communication difficulties and conversational strategies used by subjects, and to explore their perceptions of their social adjustment, quality of life, and physical and mental well-being. Participants were aged 60+ with sensory loss, and attended the Vision Australia Foundation of Victoria. In-depth interviews revealed that participants experienced frequent communication difficulties. They identified the personal, situational and environmental triggers responsible for communication breakdown, and described the compensation and avoidance strategies that they used. They acknowledged that frequent communication breakdown resulted in decreased socialisation. The problems of adjusting to sensory loss, depression, anxiety, lethargy and social dissatisfaction were cited as factors that affected their physical and mental well-being; while being optimistic, coping with their sensory loss, and maintaining social contact contributed to an improved quality of life. All participants expressed interest in being involved in further communication intervention programmes. (RH)

ISSN: 0144686X

From : <http://journals.cambridge.org/>

Elderly and invisible?: [dual sensory impairment]; by Sarah Butler.

Talking Sense, vol 50, no 3, Autumn/Winter 2004, pp 31-35.

The vast majority of people with a dual sensory impairment are aged over 65, and this article outlines the main causes. The author uses case studies of unmet need, and showing that those whose work is with older sensorily impaired people have had no training in sensory impairment - even though organisations such as RNIB and Sense can provide such training. (RH)

ISSN: 13674064

From : <http://www.sense.org.uk>

Health information needs of visually impaired people: a systematic review of the literature; by C A Beverley, P A Bath, A Booth.

Health & Social Care in the Community, vol 12, no 1, January 2004, pp 1-24.

While access to, and provision of, information is key to reducing inequalities in health and social care, it does not always meet the needs of groups such as the visually impaired. Out of 1114 references identified in this systematic review on the health information needs of visually impaired people, only 16 met inclusion criteria, and quality of reporting of the literature was poor. Most of the studies were concerned with information for healthy living, while the remaining focus was on information about, or coping with, visual impairment, and about accessing health services (e.g. medication labels, appointment letters). Most of the studies conducted to date relate to format of the information, while surprisingly few empirical studies have examined the health information needs of the group. Gaps identified in the literature include: types of health information; non-format aspects (e.g. content and timing); sources of health and social care information; treating visually impaired

people as a heterogeneous group; and recognising the value of actively involving visually impaired people in the research process. Thus, the paucity of evidence places a heavier onus on future research. (RH)

ISSN: 09660410

From : www.blackwellpublishing.com/hsc

Hearing and the elderly: a simple cure; by Angela King.

Geriatric Medicine, vol 34, no 6, June 2004, pp 9/15.

A simple cure", a new report from the RNID reports that the one in seven patients who is deaf or hard of hearing has experienced communication failures with healthcare professionals. The prevalence of deafness is much higher in older people: more than 50% of people aged 60+ have some loss of hearing. The author, who is Senior Audiology Specialist at RNID, discusses the survey results and recommendations for communication improvement, for example widening the use of existing technology, such as visual alert displays and loop systems. (RH)

ISSN: 0268201X

From : www.gerimed.co.uk

Impact of self-assessed hearing loss on a spouse: a longitudinal analysis of couples; by Margaret I Wallhagen, William J Strawbridge, Sarah J Shema (et al).

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 59B, no 3, May 2004, pp S190-S196.

Hearing loss is increasingly common in older people and is negatively associated with health and well-being. This study analyses the relationship between a spouse's self-assessed hearing loss and his or her partner's physical, psychological and social well-being 5 years later. Subjects were 438 older married couples from the Almeida County Study in California. Hearing loss and adjustment variables were assessed in 1994 and outcomes in 1999. Longitudinal analyses included multivariate statistical models using generalised estimating equations to adjust for paired data and partners' hearing loss, age, gender, chronic conditions and financial problems. Spouse hearing loss increased the likelihood of subsequent poorer physical, psychological and social well-being in partners. The negative impact of husbands' hearing loss on wives' well-being appears stronger than the reverse. Findings suggest that early diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss constitute important clinical strategies to enhance the well-being of both hearing-impaired individuals and their spouses. The findings also lend support to policy change to cover hearing devices by insurance. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Older people with schizophrenia: a community study in a rural catchment area; by Silvia Rodriguez-Ferrera, Christopher A Vassilas, Sayeed Haque.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 19, no 12, December 2004, pp 1181-1187.

An increasing number of older people with schizophrenia are living in the community. In the largely rural area of West Suffolk, patients aged 60+ with a primary diagnosis of non-affective psychotic disorder and known to health services were interviewed with the Present State Examination and other standardised interview instruments. Of the 72 included in the study, 46 had first become ill before age 60, and 26 after (the very late onset group, VLO). 80% were women, 26% had never married, 87% lived in their own homes, and 51% alone. In the preceding month, 41% of the sample had experienced psychotic symptoms and 15% depressive symptoms. 27% were cognitively impaired. The earlier onset group had significantly higher rates of tardive dyskinesia and negative symptoms of schizophrenia and were treated with higher doses of neuroleptics. The VLO group had higher rates of hearing impairment (54% vs 15%) and of partial or no sight (93% vs 55%). Despite significant differences in presentation, older patients with schizophrenia and very late onset schizophrenia-like psychosis have much in common. Both groups are vulnerable with high levels of psychopathology, poor insight, sensory impairment and social isolation. The needs of older people with schizophrenia must be taken into account when services for older people are planned. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

From : <http://www.interscience.wiley.com>

People registered as deaf or hard of hearing, year ending 31 March, England: editions in stock: 1998, 2001, 2004; by Kate Anderson, Ann-Marie Brown (eds), Department of Health - DH; Government Statistical Service - GSS. London: Department of Health, 2004, 27 pp (Personal Social Services CSSR Statistics).

Under Section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948, Councils are required to compile and maintain classified registers of people who are deaf, blind and hard of hearing. Current triennial report of the return SSDA 910 (formerly series A/F 20), which contains detailed statistics on persons registered with local authority social

service departments in England, as being deaf or hard of hearing. Registration is not compulsory, so the figures do not provide a complete picture. (KJ)

Price: FOC

From : Department of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH.

<http://www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/deafandhardofhearing2004.htm>

Problems with vision associated with limitations or avoidance of driving in older populations; by William A Satariano, Kara E MacLeod, Theodore E Cohn (et al).

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 59B, no 5, September 2004, pp S281-S286.

The role of disease processes that affect vision is examined, along with reported troubles with vision, physical symptoms affecting the eyes, and the objective measures in reported driving limitation due to problems with eyesight among older drivers. The study uses data from 1,840 participants in the Study of Physical Performance and Age-Related Changes in Sonomans (SPPARCS), a California community-based longitudinal study of ageing and physical performance affecting performance in people aged 55+. Each of 16 visual conditions was assessed for impact on reported driving, and significant associations were reported for all 16 conditions. "Avoiding physical activity due to vision" and "trouble seeing steps up or down stairs" had the strongest associations. However, "glasses or contact lenses required for driving" and "trouble with glare from sunlight" had the highest attributable risks. Addressing specific problems attributable to vision should substantially reduce driving limitations due to eyesight. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Reasons given by older people for limitation or avoidance of driving; by David R Ragland, William A Satariano, Kara E MacLeod.

The Gerontologist, vol 44, no 2, April 2004, pp 237-244.

Data from the Study of Physical Performance and Age-Related Changes in Sonomans (SPPARCS) in California are used in this study. 2,046 participants aged 55+ reported whether or not they limited or avoided driving. 21 medical and non-medical reasons for limiting or avoiding driving were examined by age and gender. The study finds that while most older people continue to drive, many - especially older women - report one or more reasons to limit or avoid driving. Among medical reasons, problems with eyesight are cited most often; no other health problem was identified as a major limitation. Among non-medical reasons, being concerned about an accident or crime, and having no reason to drive were often cited. Important predictors of reported driving limitations were low income, limited functional status and self-report of poor vision. Understanding factors that affect older people's driving patterns - including medical and non-medical reasons - will assist in developing both enhancements to extend safe driving years and responses to the consequences of driving reduction. (RH)

ISSN: 00169013

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Stability and change in social negativity in later life: reducing received while maintaining initiated negativity; by Kathrin Boerner, Joann P Reinhardt, Tenko Raykov (et al).

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 59B, no 4, July 2004, pp S230-S237.

Participants, 570 older Americans with chronic visual impairment, were interviewed three times over an 18-month period. Analyses focused on family relationships, because social negativity needs to be more persistent in family compared with non-kin relationships. Social negativity received and initiated are addressed separately to determine whether or not they show similar patterns and links to instrumental support over time. Social negativity received showed a decrease over time, whereas levels of social negativity initiated remained more stable. Links with instrumental support were positive but stronger for received compared with initiated social negativity. The differential pattern of stability and change over time in received versus initiated social negativity and their links to instrumental support suggest different origins for the initiation versus receipt of social negativity. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Vision impairment and combined vision and hearing impairment predict cognitive and functional decline in older women; by Michael Y Lin, Peter R Gutierrez, Katie L Stone (et al), Study of Osteoporotic Fractures Research Group (United States).

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol 52, no 12, December 2004, pp 1996-2002.

Of 6,112 women aged 69+ participating in the US Study of Osteoporotic Fractures (SOF) between 1992 and 1994, 5,345 participants had their hearing measured, 1,668 had visual acuity measured, and 1,634 had both measured. Participants completed the modified Mini Mental State Examination (MMSE) and/or a functional status assessment at baseline and follow-up. About one-sixth (15.7%) of the sample had cognitive decline; 10.1% had functional decline. In multivariate models adjusted for sociodemographic characteristics and chronic conditions, vision impairment at baseline was associated with cognitive and functional decline. Hearing impairment was not associated with cognitive or functional decline. Combined impairment was associated with the greatest odds for functional and cognitive decline. Sensory impairment is associated with cognitive and functional decline in older women. Studies are needed to determine whether treatment of vision and hearing impairment can decrease the risk for cognitive and functional decline. (RH)

ISSN: 00028614

From : <http://www.americangeriatrics.org><http://www.blackwellpublishing.com>

Visual impairments, functional and health status, and life satisfaction among elderly Bedouins in Israel; by Esther Iecovich, Richard E Isralowitz.

Ageing International, vol 29, no 1, Winter 2004, pp 71-87.

Age-related visual impairment is a major cause of functional limitations. It often affects social, emotional, mental and physical well-being, as well as everyday functioning ability. This study examines the impact of visual impairment on daily functioning and subjective well-being on older Bedouins. Participants were 88 Bedouins aged 60+ at a day centre in a Bedouin town in southern Israel. Most of the respondents had visual impairments in terms of close and distance sight. Visual impairment was found significantly correlated with perceived daily functioning and health status as well as a sense of life satisfaction. Those having visual impairment reported more problems with performing activities of daily living (ADLs), their health status is more deteriorated and their life satisfaction is lower compared with those not having visual problems. A discussion of the findings is provided in terms of policy and service provision for older people. (RH)

ISSN: 01635158

From : <http://www.transactionpub.com>

2003

Delivering home improvement agency services to visually impaired people; by Foundations - National Co-ordinating Body for Home Improvement Agencies; Thomas Pocklington Trust; Centre for Housing Policy - CHP, University of York. Glossop, Derbyshire: Foundations - National Co-ordinating Body for Home Improvement Agencies, 2003, 51 pp (Good practice guide).

Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) play an important role in promoting independence for vulnerable people, particularly those living in private sector housing. This guide draws on the experience of six HIAs involved in a good practice research project jointly undertaken by Foundations and the the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York, the latter commissioned by the Thomas Pocklington Trust. The aim was to investigate key issues that would lead to improved HIA services for visually impaired people. Coverage includes: raising awareness of visual impairment; carrying out assessments that meet users' needs; technical assistance and adaptation guidance; working with contractors; and ensuring client satisfaction. (RH)

ISBN: 0954545702

Price: £9.95

From : Foundations, Bleaklow House, Howard Town Mill, Glossop, SK13 8HT.

<http://www-foundations-uk-com>

Developing integrated support for deafblind people: social services going it alone?; by Michael Wood, Janet Leece.

Journal of Integrated Care, vol 11, issue 5, October 2003, pp 39-45.

This paper considers recent guidance on social care for deafblind adults and children issued to local authorities in March 2001 by the Department of Health (DH) under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. It uses Staffordshire Social Services Department's response to the guidance as a case study to identify areas of good practice, and makes practical suggestions for implementation. The guidance places the responsibility for improving provision to deafblind people squarely on social services, rather than including other agencies such as health and education. The paper argues that this may be hindering the development of integrated services. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 14769018

The effects of improving hearing in dementia; by N Harry Allen, Alistair Burns, Valerie Newton (et al).
Age and Ageing, vol 32, no 2, March 2003, pp 189-193.

The presence of dementia should not preclude assessment for a hearing aid, and all patients with hearing impairment require thorough examination. This Greater Manchester study monitored the effects of hearing aids on people with hearing loss and dementia. Almost half of the mildly hearing impaired patients with dementia in the sample improved when hearing loss was restored. The study notes that people with dementia can tolerate routine audiological procedures. 10% of the patients with dementia and hearing loss also benefited from removal of ear wax. Whilst hearing does not improve cognitive function or reduce behavioural or psychiatric symptoms, there is evidence that patients improved on global measures of change. (RH)

ISSN: 00020729

Giving while in need: support provided by disabled older adults; by Kathrin Boerner, Joann P Reinhardt.
Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 58B, no 5, September 2003, pp S297-S304.

The ability to provide support to others may become an especially critical issue for those who are dealing with a progressive, chronic impairment that typically results in increased functional disability, and thus places them in greater need of support. This multilevel analysis examined change in support provision over time, as well as the degree to which sociodemographic, health, functional disability, use of rehabilitation services, and the receipt of support predicted support provision. Participants, 440 older people with a progressive, chronic visual impairment, were interviewed three times over an 18-month period. Affective and incremental support provided to family and friends each showed a decrease over time. Age, gender and education emerged as predictors of support provided at baseline. Receipt of support was positively related to support provision at all three time points, both within and across support types. Findings indicate there may be feasible ways of providing support, even by older people who are in need of support themselves. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Hearing and vision impairment and the social networks of older Australians; by Christopher Lind, Louise Hickson, Linda Worrall (et al).

Australasian Journal on Ageing, vol 22.1, March 2003, pp 20-25.

A group of 240 self-selected, community based older Australians (aged 60 to 93) were tested for vision and hearing acuity, and reported on their hearing and vision difficulties and social networks. Participants had an average of 16 people in their social networks, which typically included a spouse and four other members of the immediate family. Dual sensory loss (i.e. some degree of hearing and visual impairment) was evident in 19% of the participants. Those with dual sensory loss had more intense networks; however, they had a reduced quality of social networks compared to others in the sample. (RH)

ISSN: 14406381

The impact of hearing loss on quality of life in older adults; by Dayna S Dalton, Karen J Cruickshanks, Barbara E K Klein (et al).

The Gerontologist, vol 43, no 5, October 2003, pp 661-668.

The impact of hearing loss on hearing handicap, communication difficulties, function and health-related quality of life is investigated. Data are for 2,688 people aged 53-97 (42% male) from a 5-year follow-up Epidemiology of Hearing Loss Study, a population-based longitudinal study conducted in Beaver Dam, WI. Difficulties with communication were assessed by using the Hearing Handicap for the Elderly - Screening Version (HEE-S), with additional questions regarding communication difficulties in specific situations. Health-related quality of life was assessed using measures of activities of daily living (ADLs), Instrumental ADLs (IADLs) and the Short Form 36 Health Survey (SF-36). Hearing loss measured by audiometry was categorised on the basis of the pure tone hearing thresholds at 0.5, 1, 2 and 4 kHz. 28% of the participants had a mild hearing loss; 24% had a moderate to severe hearing loss. Severity of hearing loss was significantly associated with having a hearing handicap and with self-reported communication difficulties. Individuals with moderate to severe hearing loss were more likely than those without hearing loss to have impaired ADLs and IADLs. Severity of hearing loss was significantly associated with decreased function in both the Mental Component Summary score and the Physical Component Summary score of the SF-36 as well as with six of the eight individual domain scores. Severity of hearing loss is thus associated with reduced quality of life in older people. (RH)

ISSN: 00169013

From : <http://www.geron.org>

Improving older people's services: an overview of performance; by Ian Bainbridge, Allan Ricketts, Social Services Inspectorate - SSI, Department of Health - DH. London: Department of Health, November 2003, 65 pp (CI(2003)14).

The 1998 White Paper, "Modernising social services" (Cm 4169) established a new framework for the provision of social services. This report uses information from inspections of social care services for older people in 15 councils during 2002-03. It outlines the policy context, and reports and analyses inspection and monitoring information on themes as follows: promoting independence; care management and quality of services; access to services; commissioning services; and organisation, management and delivering change. The report cites examples of good practice from individual councils, and provides a checklist to help councils review their progress. While a number of achievements are noted, inspection and performance information showed that users' and carers' experience often falls short, as is the case with minority ethnic groups and older people with dementia, functional mental illnesses and sensory impairment. Appendices on the following are available only on the website version: inspection standards and criteria; inspection method; councils inspected and where to obtain reports; contact details for good practice examples; performance assessment framework; and matrix of inspection judgements. (RH)

Price: FOC

From : Department of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH. NHS Responseline: 08701 555 455. Website: www.doh.gov.uk/ssi/olderpeople03.htm

Independence matters: an overview of the performance of social care services for physically and sensory disabled people; by Jan Clark, Social Services Inspectorate - SSI, Department of Health - DH. London: Department of Health, December 2003, 68 pp (CI(2003)15) (summary also available).

Between February and November 2002, the SSI inspected disability services in eight local councils with social services responsibilities: Bolton, Bromley, Dorset, Gateshead, Liverpool, Redcar & Cleveland, Solihull and Tameside. 'Independence matters' takes as its value base the social model of disability, which recognises that social and environmental barriers limit opportunities for disabled people to take part in society on an equal basis with other people. Examples of good practice illustrate the findings which are presented on these four key themes: independence at home; identity and belonging; active citizenship; and systems and processes (that is, the way councils work). The short summary gives the main points on the four key themes. Appendices C-G of the main report are available only on the report's website, as is a British Sign Language version of the summary. (RH)

Price: FOC

From : Department of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH. NHS Responseline: 08701 555 455. Website: www.doh.gov.uk/ssi/independencematters03.htm

The influence of health, social support quality and rehabilitation on depression among disabled elders; by A Horowitz, J P Reinhardt, K Boerner (et al).

Aging & Mental Health, vol 7, no 5, September 2003, pp 342-350.

Participants were 95 visually impaired older Americans (age 65+) seeking visual rehabilitation services, who were interviewed at application and some 2 years later. Hierarchical regression analyses focused first on concurrent relationships at baseline, and then used baseline health and social support variables, along with indicators of change in vision and use of rehabilitation services, in order to predict change in depression over time. Findings indicate that being unmarried, in poorer health, having lower quality of relationships with family, and lower stability in friendships were significant independent risk factors for initial depression, explaining 50% of the variance. Decline in depression over time was predicted by younger age, better self-rated health, stability of friendships, and use of rehabilitation services that, along with baseline depression, explained 61% of variance in depressive symptomatology at 2-year follow-up. The importance of qualitative aspects of social support for older disabled people is highlighted, as is the distinction that needs to be made between factors predicting concurrent mental health status and those predicting change in status over time. (RH)

ISSN: 13607863

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Loss of vision in later life: a different perspective; by Martin S Yablonski. New York, NY: Lighthouse International, Spring 2003, pp 6-7, 11.

Aging & Vision, vol 15, no 1, Spring 2003, pp 6-7, 11.

Vision loss in later life can contribute to deterioration of confidence in the older person, in addition to its impact on safety. Vision rehabilitation strategies, in particular orientation and mobility techniques, can play an important role in restoring feelings of confidence, comfort and safety. (RH)

Lost from view: [gaps in services for visually impaired people]; by John Percival.
Community Care, no 1454, 9 January 2003, pp 38-39.

Wide gaps in services for visually impaired people have emerged in a new study of 400 participants aged 55+ living in various types of housing in Plymouth, Birmingham and London. They included individuals who were in touch with specialist services, as well as those who were not. The author discusses the results, which are variously published by the Thomas Pocklington Trust as an Occasional paper, Research findings and a full report, "The housing and support needs of older people with visual impairment". (RH)
ISSN: 03075508

Older people with a sensory impairment: the assessment and management of care; by Catherine Robinson, Diane Seddon, Vanessa Webb (et al).

Quality in Ageing, vol 4, no 1, April 2003, pp 22-31.

The findings of a recent study about the assessment and management of care for older people who may have a sensory impairment are explored. Using qualitative research methods, the work focused on non-specialist practitioners who are responsible for the assessment and management of care for older people and their carers. The findings are based on the analysis of in-depth interviews with non-specialist practitioners, specialist workers, and managers from statutory and voluntary sector agencies. Older people with a hearing or visual impairment are not a homogeneous group of people with a single set of needs or service support networks. It is the existence of non-specialist practitioners, carrying out the assessment and management of care for older people that draw together in one study the three areas of visual, hearing and dual impairments. The findings relate to practitioners' awareness of sensory impairment in their local community; how practitioners assess and manage care; access to services; staff training and development; and information strategies. The interface between non-specialists and practitioners with particular expertise in sensory impairment is also examined. (RH)
ISSN: 14717794

Screening older people for impaired vision in primary care: cluster randomised trial; by Liam Smeeth, Astrid E Fletcher, Smita Hanciles (et al).

British Medical Journal, vol 327, no 7422, 1 November 2003, pp 1027-1030.

To determine the effectiveness of screening for visual impairment, 4,340 people aged 75+ (excluding those resident in hospitals or nursing homes) were randomly sampled from 20 general practices, which were part of the MRC trial of assessment and management of older people in the community. Universal screening (assessment and visual acuity testing) was compared with targeted screening, in which only participants with a range of health related problems were offered an assessment that included acuity screening. The study found that including a vision screening component by a practice nurse in a pragmatic trial of multidimensional screening for older people did not lead to improved visual outcomes. (RH)
ISSN: 09598138

Vision and driving self-restriction in older adults; by Catherine G West, Ginny Gildengorin, Gunilla Haegerstrom-Portnoy (et al).

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol 51, no 10, October 2003, pp 1348-1355.

Subjects were participants in the Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute (SKI) Vision Study, and comprised 629 current drivers aged 55+ who had their driving behaviour, health and physical function assessed and vision function tested in 1993-95. These subjects completed a vision-related questionnaire and a battery of vision tests designed to assess visual performance under commonly encountered conditions of variable lighting and contrast. Even if they do not acknowledge the visual impairment as the cause for restricting their driving, older people with early changes in spatial visual function and depth perception appear to recognise their limitations and restrict their driving. Poor visual attention, a risk factor for crashes, may not be recognised. Additional studies of driving self-restriction in relation to risk factors for crashes in older people may help refine this strategy of reducing driving-related injury and death. (RH)
ISSN: 00028614

Vision screening for older people: the barriers and the solutions; by Anthony Carnicelli, Jill Keefe, Kerri Martin (et al).

Australasian Journal on Ageing, vol 22.4, December 2003, pp 179-185.

The need for detection of vision impairment in older people has been well-established. This study aimed to facilitate access to vision screening for people aged 65+ in Whitehorse, Melbourne, Australia, through aged care, health and community services. 147 people within these organisations were trained to use a vision screening kit. However, it was estimated that only 20% of participants used the kit, citing a number of barriers, the main ones being time restraints, conflict with other duties, and wanting an outside organisation to perform testing. Overall, out of 510 people, 442 (87%) could be tested and 169 (38%) were detected with vision

impairment. Of these, 40 (24%) were under care, and 129 (76%) were referred for further examination. As a result of this study, the authors recommended that vision screening be integrated into provision of care services to older people and patients as part of a holistic approach to health. (RH)

ISSN: 14406381

From : <http://www.cota.org.au>

Visual factors should be assessed in older people presenting with falls or hip fracture; by Ahmed H Abdelhafiz, Christopher A Austin.

Age and Ageing, vol 32, no 1, January 2003, pp 26-30.

Visual impairment - although not routinely assessed - is an important risk factor for falls and hip fracture in older people. Impaired vision is highly prevalent and commonly unreported in the older population, particularly in women and those living in nursing homes. Measurement of visual functions such as visual acuity, contrast sensitivity, and depth perception may identify older people at risk of falls and hip fracture. Visual loss in older people is correctable in most cases. Intervention strategies - for example, change of glasses or cataract extraction - may have the potential of improving visual function and preventing falls in older people. The authors explore the relationship between visual impairment and risk factors for falls and hip fractures through a MEDLINE review of relevant literature since 1966. (RH)

ISSN: 00020729

Visual impairment among elderly Israelis; by Esther Iecovich.: International Institute on Ageing (United Nations - Malta), May 2003, pp 9-18.

BOLD, vol 13, no 3, May 2003, pp 9-18.

Age-related visual impairment is a major cause of functional limitations in mobility and independent living. Research findings suggest that social, emotional, mental and subjective well-being are affected likewise. This study of a sample of 152 Jewish older people aged 60+ in the southern region of Israel examines the relation between ethnicity and visual problems - that is, whether Jewish older people from various ethnic origins differ in terms of their perceived visual status and use of spectacles to improve their eyesight. The study also examines the extent to which visual problems affect the ability to perform activities of daily life (ADLs) and people's subjective well-being. The findings show ethnicity to be associated with perceived visual status, type of visual problems, spectacles usage, and reasons for not using spectacles whenever their use was necessary. Visual impairment was also found to significantly affect ability to perform ADL and instrumental activity of daily living (IADL) functions in older people from Asian-African countries, and to affect life satisfaction among older people from European-American countries only. Study findings are discussed in terms of policy and service provision. (RH)

ISSN: 10165177

2002

Aging effects on the identification of digitally blurred text, scenes and faces: evidence for optical compensation for everyday tasks in the senescent eye; by Paul R Bartel, Donald W Kline.

Ageing International, vol 27, no 2, Spring 2002, pp 56-72.

When older observers are de-focused optically to the same reduced acuity levels as their younger adult counterparts, they are better able to read distant text. This study sought to determine if this ability extended to intrinsically blurred (i.e. image-processed) stimuli of different types. 12 young (aged 20 to 27) and 12 older (aged 61 to 73) healthy community-dwelling adult observers with excellent acuity were compared on their ability to identify low-pass filtered real words, nonsense words, scenes and faces arranged in a sequence of decreasingly blurred images. Young observers were able to identify the images correctly earlier in the blur sequence than their older counterparts. This finding suggests that compensatory changes in the eye's optical media rather than the older observer's greater experience with blur accounts for their superior legibility performance with optically de-focused text. While the image-enhancing effects of the age-related decline in pupil size (senile miosis) may be involved, further research is needed to clarify the mechanism(s) underlying this ability. (RH)

ISSN: 01635158

The association of hearing impairment and chronic diseases with psychosocial health status in older age; by Sophia E Kramer, Theo S Kapteyn, Dirk J Kuik (et al).

Journal of Aging and Health, vol 14, no 1, February 2002, pp 122-137.

This study examines the association of hearing impairment and chronic diseases (diabetes mellitus, lung disease, cardiac disease, stroke, cancer, peripheral artery disease, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis) with psychosocial status (depression, self-efficacy, mastery, loneliness, social network size) in older people. The sample consists

of 3,107 people aged 55 to 85 participating in the Longitudinal Aging Study Amsterdam (LASA). The findings emphasize the negative effect of hearing impairment on quality of life. (KJ/RH)
ISSN: 08982643

Combined hearing and visual impairment and depression in a population aged 75 years and older; by Taia Lupsakko, Maija Mäntyjärvi, Hanna Kautiainen (et al).

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 17, no 9, September 2002, pp 808-813.

Depression is associated with both visual and hearing impairment. The aim of this Finnish population-based study was to investigate the association between functional sensory impairment, especially combined sensory impairment and depressive symptoms and depression diagnosed according DSM-IV criteria. Of the 470 people aged 75+ in the study group, 72 (15%) had depression according to DSM-IV criteria. 12% in the Functional Hearing Impairment (FHI) group, 20% in the Functional Visual Impairment (FVI) group, 18% in the Combined Sensory Impairment (CSI) group, and 15% in the Adequate Sensory Function (ASF) group suffered major depression. Although depressive symptoms were common in those with double sensory impairment, major depression was not experienced more often than by others aged 75+. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

Hearing and vision loss within residential care facilities: the need for improved service delivery; by Mark C Flynn, Esther J Kennedy, Julianne Johns (et al).

Australasian Journal on Ageing, vol 21.3, September 2002, pp 141-151.

Functional assessments of speech understanding could provide a quick and simple assessment of the required level of assistance for each of the 178 residents participating in this New Zealand project. Despite 87.1% of the sample having a significant hearing impairment, only 43.3% currently wore hearing aids. Linked to poor hearing aid use was the fact that 43.9% of hearing aids required some degree of maintenance. Otoscopic examinations revealed 42.1% of ear canals to be occluded with cerumen to a degree that medical intervention was required. Sentence identification revealed the importance of aiding and access to contextual and visual cues (lip-reading) for this population. The study confirms the high prevalence of hearing impairment in older people, and makes a case for rehabilitation services being directed towards this population, particularly in the areas of hearing and maintenance, cerumen removal, and provision of communication skills training to residential care workers. (RH)

ISSN: 14406381

The housing and support needs of older people with visual impairment; by Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2002, unnumbered (Research findings issue 1).

Visual impairment is one of the most prevalent and disabling conditions that arises in later life, and yet very little research has been conducted that could inform the development of appropriate services. Thomas Pocklington Trust engaged researchers from University College London (UCL) and the University of Bristol to examine the housing and support needs of 400 visually impaired people aged 55+. This summarises the report's main findings, which also highlights needs with regard to social contact and inclusion, and for more accessible information. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

The housing and support needs of older people with visual impairment: experiences and challenges; by Julienne Hanson, John Percival, Reem Zako (et al), Thomas Pocklington Trust. London: Thomas Pocklington Trust, 2002, 19 pp (Occasional paper).

Sight loss in later life has significant emotional consequences (e.g. depression), and its aftermath commonly includes diminution of valued skills and interests. A range of methods of enquiry was used in this 18-month study - which was commissioned by the Thomas Pocklington Trust - on the needs of older people with sight loss. The study investigated strategic issues of interest to Pocklington, particularly with regard to housing: the comparative merits of specialist and mainstream housing; the home environment, and size and layout of accommodation; community care and home support needs; preferences for specialist accommodation such as sheltered housing; and attitudes to moving and "home for life". Researchers from University College London (UCL) and the University of Bristol worked on the project. Interviews were conducted with 400 participants aged 55+ across three areas, Plymouth, Birmingham and London. The research provides evidence that older people with visual impairment are less able than their sighted peers to carry out activities of daily living (ADLs) independently or with as much confidence. (RH)

From : Thomas Pocklington Trust, Pier House, 90 Strand on the Green, London W4 3NN. www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Is it contagious?: affect similarity among spouses; by C R Goodman, R A Shippy.
Aging & Mental Health, vol 6, no 3, August 2002, pp 266-274.

Theories of emotional contagion suggest that spouses mutually experience affective or emotional states. However, empirical support for this theory is limited. This study uses a dyadic approach to examine affect similarity of depressive symptoms between 123 elders dealing with a recent vision loss and their spouses. Guided by a stress predictor model, hierarchical regression analyses of predictors of spouse depressive symptoms revealed that the spouse's race, health, care-giving appraisal, self-efficacy, conflict with other family members regarding their partner, and their partner's depressive symptoms significantly predicted spouse depression. Specifically, spouses who were white, in poorer health, experienced more care-giver burden, had more family conflict, and poorer self-efficacy, were more likely to be depressed. (RH)

ISSN: 13607863

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

LP font: a large print typeface specially designed for people with low vision; by John Gill, Scientific Research Unit, Royal National Institute for the Blind - RNIB. London: RNIB, 2002, unnumbered folded brochure.

Reading information from electronic screens now used by banks, transport systems and the like can be difficult, particularly for older people and those with low vision. This foldout brochure provides updated information about the Tiresias LPfont, a typeface designed to maximise character definition and legibility on screens, labelling and signage. The font was developed by the author together with other experts in the field of ophthalmology. The brochure outlines the effects of ageing on eyesight. The Tiresias typeface was originally designed in response to the need for improving the text for television subtitling. (KJ/RH)

From : RNIB Scientific Research Unit, Falcon Park, Neasden Lane, London NW10 1RN. Website: www.tiresias.org/lpfont

National care standards; by Angus Skinner (Chair), National Care Standards Committee, Scottish Executive. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2001-2002, 11 vols.

In Scotland, the National Care Standards Committee (NCSC) has published standards covering the following: care homes for older people; care homes for people with mental health problems; care homes for people with learning disabilities; care homes for people with physical and sensory impairment; care at home; independent hospitals; hospice care; short breaks and respite care services for adults; support services (i.e. "day care"); nurse agencies; and services for people in criminal justice supported accommodation. These standards have been developed with the help of working groups which included both service users and providers. The standards describe what the service user can expect from the service provider, and focus on his or her experience of quality of life. (RH)

Price: £5.00 ea

From : The Stationery Office Bookshop, 71 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH3 9AZ.

www.scotland.gov.uk/government/rcp

The prevalence and phenomenology of auditory hallucinations among elderly subjects attending an audiology clinic; by Martin G Cole, Lorna Dowson, Nandini Dendukuri (et al).

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 17, no 5, May 2002, pp 444-452.

Auditory hallucinations may be defined as auditory perceptions without an acoustic stimulus. In this cross-sectional Canadian study of 125 men and women aged 65+ referred to an audiology clinic, the prevalence of auditory hallucinations was 32.8%, and included humming or buzzing, shushing, beating or tapping, ringing, other individual sounds, multiples sounds, voices or music. Those with any type of hallucination tended to be younger and had poorer discrimination scores in the left ear and impaired binaural discrimination with lip-reading. Auditory hallucinations are frequent in older people with hearing impairment, and seem to be associated with younger age and asymmetrical hearing. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

Reduced hearing, ownership, and use of hearing aids in elderly people in the UK: the MRC Trial of the Assessment and Management of Older People in the Community: a cross-cultural survey; by Liam Smeeth, Astrid Fletcher, Edmond Siu-Woon Ng (et al).

The Lancet, vol 359, no 9316, 27 April 2002, pp 1466-1470.

Reduced hearing in older people is important because it is disabling and potentially treatable. In a cross-sectional survey of 32,656 people aged 75+ in 108 UK family practices, 2,537 (8%) reported a lot of difficulty with hearing and 13,630 (42%) a little or a lot of difficulty. 3,795 (26%) of 14,877 participants who completed a whispered voice test failed the test, the proportion rising sharply with age. Following wax removal, 343 passed a retest. 998 (46%) of the 2189 people wearing a hearing aid at the time of testing failed the whispered voice test. More than half those who failed the test did not own a hearing aid. 2,200 (60%) of 3,846 people who owned a

hearing aid said they used it regularly. Level of use was strongly related to perceived benefit. Reduced hearing is common and provision of hearing aids for older people is inadequate. Many people who own a hearing aid do not use it regularly, and even when wearing their aid, many still have socially disabling levels of hearing loss. A major source of morbidity in older people could be alleviated by improvements in detection and management of reduced hearing. (RH)

ISSN: 01406736

Visugate: all you need to know about visual impairment - in one place on the web; by Visugate - National Library for the Blind. 1st ed: National Library for the Blind, October 2002, A5 leaflet.

This leaflet promotes the service of Visugate, an online information gateway, which offers a flexible search service for anyone with an interest in visual impairment. The site is a research tool for people who are blind, partially sighted or deaf-blind, as well as professionals in the field, employers and policy-makers. Over 20 organisations and charities have contributed to the service. (KJ/RH)

Price: FOC

From : www.visugate.org

2001

The "common cause hypothesis" of cognitive aging: evidence for not only a common factor but also specific associations of age with vision and grip strength in a cross-sectional analysis; by Helen Christensen, Andrew J Mackinnon, Ailsa Korten (et al).

Psychology and Aging, vol 16, no 4, December 2001, pp 588-599.

A prominent hypothesis in cognitive ageing is the existence of a common factor that is responsible for age-related deterioration in cognitive and non-cognitive processes. A multiple indicators, multiple causes model was used to examine the nature of this common factor and its relationship to age, gender and the apolipoprotein E (apoE) genotype. The common factor was modelled by using 10 indicator variables with 374 participants aged between 77.4 and 98.7 years. A latent factor was identified, with all indicators except blood pressure loading significantly. This factor could be identified in two age strata within the sample. After controlling for the effects of gender, apoE was significantly associated with memory but not with the common factor. The findings suggest that a number of specific processes may operate concurrently with any common cause factor. (RH)

ISSN: 08827974

Anxiety in older persons waiting for cataract surgery: investigating the contributing factors; by Heather D Hadjistavropoulos, Bonnie S Snider, Thomas Hadjistavropoulos.

Canadian Journal on Aging, vol 20, no 1, Spring 2001, pp 97-112.

Cataract surgery is one of the most frequent surgical procedures experienced by older people, but in Canada, long waiting lists are common. The Beck Anxiety Inventory was used in a systematic study of anxiety in 50 older people waiting for the operation. More than a third reported anxiety within the range reported for panic disorder patients. Increased anxiety was found among those with a general tendency to worry about their health, poorer visual functioning and a greater use of palliative coping strategies. These results highlight the importance of assessing anxiety while patients wait for surgery, and for designing interventions and providing assistance to those with elevated levels of anxiety. (RH)

ISSN: 07149808

The BT guide for people who are older or disabled 2001/02: the latest products and services; by British Telecom. London: British Telecom, 2001, 56 pp.

A guide to BT products for those who have problems with hearing, speech, sight, mobility or dexterity, and including information on alarm systems and a list of useful addresses. Guide is also available in braille, large print and on audio tape. (KJ)

Price: FOC

From : BT freephone 0800 800 150 Age and Disability Manager.

Community screening for visual impairment in older people; by Andrew G Lee.

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol 49, no 5, May 2001, pp 673-675.

The question, "What is the effect on vision of visual screening in older patients?" is considered in a review of studies traced using on-line databases such as EMBASE and MEDLINE. All randomised trials of visual or multicomponent screening in unselected people aged 65+ in a community setting were independently reviewed by two reviewers. Of 2,862 citations and abstracts screened, 154 full text articles were reviewed, and five trials met final inclusion criteria. Implications for future geriatric research are discussed briefly. (RH)

ISSN: 00028614

Comparative impact of hearing and vision impairment on subsequent functioning; by Margaret I Wallhagen, William J Strawbridge, Sarah J Shema (et al).

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol 49, no 8, August 2001, pp 1086-1092.

Hearing and vision impairments of 2,442 community-dwelling men and women aged 50 to 102 from the Almeida County Study (California) were assessed in 1994. Outcomes, measured in 1995, included physical disability (activities of daily living, instrumental ADLs, physical performance, mobility and lack of participation in activities), mental health (self-assessed, major depressive episode), and social functioning (feeling left out or lonely, hard to feel close to others, inability to pay attention). Both impairments had strong independent impacts on subsequent functioning. Visual impairment exerted a more wide-ranging impact on functional status, ranging from physical disability to social functioning. However, the results also highlighted the importance of hearing impairment, even when mild. These impairments can be partially ameliorated through prevention, assessment, and treatment strategies, and requires greater attention by all concerned. (RH)

ISSN: 00028614

Coping-with-hearing-loss model for older adults; by Rowena G Gomez, Scott F Madey.

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 56B, no 4, July 2001, pp P223-P225.

A model is proposed that explains how hearing loss, psychological factors (i.e. attitudes about ageing, personal adjustment to hearing loss, and perceived social support), and perceived strategy effectiveness affect the use of adaptive and non-adaptive strategies. Adjustive strategies are behaviours that improve communication (i.e. asking others to repeat). Maladaptive strategies are coping behaviours that do not promote communication (i.e. pretending to understand a conversation). Non-audiological variables were more important than physical hearing loss (as measured in audiological examination) in predicting coping behaviours for hearing loss. The use of adaptive strategies was predicted to perceived effectiveness of the strategies to cope with hearing loss in daily life, poor adjustment to hearing loss, and poor social support. The results suggest that psychosocial issues may need to be addressed when older people have difficulties coping with their hearing loss. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

Draft national care standards [on care at home, and care of people with learning disabilities, physical and sensory impairment, drug and alcohol misuse problems]: second tranche: a consultation paper; by Angus Skinner (chairman), National Care Standards Committee, Social Work Services Inspectorate, Scottish Executive. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, April 2001, 131 pp.

The White Paper "Aiming for excellence: modernising social work services in Scotland" (March 1999) set out proposals for National Care Standards for a wide range of social care provision. The National Care Standards Committee (NCSC) set up Working Groups to draft these standards (the Care at Home Working Group chaired by Mary Marshall, the Learning Disabilities Working Group chaired by James Hogg, the Physical and Sensory Impairment Working Group chaired by Etienne d'Aboville, and the Drugs and Alcohol Working Group chaired by Netta Maciver). Care standards for care at home focus on the quality of the experience of those using the service. Standards of care for people with learning disabilities concern rights and responsibilities, where they want to live, feeling safe and being accepted, personal development, support, and health. Key issues in standards for people with physical and sensory impairment include: choice and empowerment; privacy and dignity; living one's own life; communication; health and well-being; and safety and risk. For alcohol and drug problems, core common standards are identified with regard to access, buildings and infrastructure, services, and staffing. (RH)

ISBN: 0755900243

From : Jane McEwan, Regulation of Care Project, Scottish Executive, Room 24, James Craig Walk, Edinburgh EH1 3BA. e-mail: jane.mcewan@scotland.gsi.gov.uk Website: www.scotland.gov.uk/government/rcp

Effect of increasing age on cataract surgery outcomes in very elderly patients; by Tien Yin Wong.

British Medical Journal, vol 322, no 7294, 5 May 2001, pp 1104-1106.

Cataract surgery is both safe and effective for most of those who need it, but the benefits and risks for those aged 85+ are less clear. In these patients - especially those with concomitant cardiovascular diseases - a cautious approach is advised, because of higher risk of systemic complications during surgery. A higher prevalence of pre-existing ocular diseases - for example, age-related maculopathy - may affect cataract surgery outcomes in older patients. Independent of pre-existing ocular diseases, increasing age is associated with poorer cataract surgery outcomes. (RH)

ISSN: 09598138

Effects of hearing impairment on use of health services among the elderly; by Carla A Green, Clyde R Pope.
Journal of Aging and Health, vol 13, no 3, August 2001, pp 315-328.

Diagnoses of hearing impairment, depression and chronic illnesses were used in hierarchical regression procedures to predict the volume and probability of any service use by 1,436 randomly selected 65-year-old health maintenance organisation (HMO) members. Hearing impairment substantially increased the likelihood of making at least one visit to a health care provider. For those who make such visits, however, hearing impairment did not lead to use of additional services, despite expectations to the contrary. (RH)

ISSN: 08982643

Food-related concerns of older adults with macular degeneration; by Georgia W Crews, Carol Ann Holcomb.
Journal of Nutrition for the Elderly, vol 21, no 1, 2001, pp 23-38.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the primary cause of low vision and irreversible blindness in over 65s in the US. This study aimed to identify the food-related concerns of older adults with macular degeneration. Interviews and focus groups were conducted in 16 geographic locations. Concerns were not significantly associated with age, education or sex of participants. Similar concerns were expressed in both focus groups and interviews, but potentially embarrassing issues were mentioned more often during interviews. While there are strengths and weaknesses for each method, use of both interviews and focus groups increased the likelihood that the appropriate content area for the development of a questionnaire was captured. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 01639366

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Genetic and environmental influences on self-reported reduced hearing in the old and the oldest old; by Kaare Christensen, Henrik Frederiksen, Howard J Hoffman.

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol 49, no 11, November 2001, pp 1512-1517.

Interviews conducted in 1995 with 77% of the 3,099 twin individuals aged 75+ from the Danish Twin Registry were contacted again in 1997 and 1999, along with a further 2,778 twins age 70-76 regarding genetic factors in reduced hearing. The authors found that genetic factors play an important role in self-reported reduced hearing in both men and women aged 70+. Because self-reports of reduced hearing involve misclassification, this estimate of the genetic influence on hearing disabilities is probably conservative. Hence, genetic and environmental factors play a substantial role in reduced hearing in the old and oldest-old. This suggests that clinical epidemiological studies of age-related hearing loss should include not only information on environmental exposures, but also on family history of hearing loss, and, if possible, biological samples for future studies of candidate genes for hearing loss. (RH)

ISSN: 00028614

In their own words: strategies developed by visually impaired elders to cope with vision loss; by Mark Brennan, Amy Horowitz, Joann P Reinhardt (et al).

Journal of Gerontological Social Work, vol 35, no 1, 2001, pp 63-85.

The present study developed a typology of self-reported coping strategies used by older people in adapting to visual impairment using qualitative analyses. Narrative data were examined from three previous quantitative studies of adaptation to vision loss. Major themes in coping with vision loss included difficulty in balancing norms of independence with the functional losses resulting from eye disease, and the importance of the informal social network. Importantly, a number of coping mechanisms that have not been examined in previous quantitative work were identified for the present qualitative analyses. (RH)

ISSN: 01634372

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Interactive effect of support from family and friends in visually impaired elders; by Jessica M McIlvane, Joann P Reinhardt.

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 56B, no 6, November 2001, pp P374-P382.

The interactive relationship of high and low family and friend support for adaptation to chronic vision impairment was examined in 241 men and women using two analyses of covariance models. Women with high support from both family and friends had better psychological well-being, whereas men with high support from both friends and family, or just from family had better psychological well-being. Those with high qualitative friend support and high quantitative family support had better adaptation to vision loss. The complexity of measuring and understanding relationships between social support, well-being, and domain specific adaptation to chronic impairment is demonstrated. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

Keeping step?: scientific and technological research for visually impaired people; by John Gill, Scientific Research Unit, Royal National Institute for the Blind - RNIB. London: RNIB, 2001, 29 pp.

As well as having products specifically designed for them, blind people also increasingly need to be able to use equipment designed for the general public (e.g banking services). This report outlines some of the scientific and technological research which has been done to alleviate their problems, with special emphasis on projects involving the RNIB Scientific Research Unit. Issues covered include: daily living; mobility and orientation; access to information; and multiple impairment. Many visually impaired older people have had very little benefit from advances in assistive technology, which future research may well rectify. (RH)

ISBN: 186048025X

Price: £5.00

From : RNIB, 224 Great Portland Street, London W1W 5AA.www.tiresias.org

Music and increasing age: a study of the approach to music by members of the University of the Third Age; by Vernon Pickles.

Generations Review, vol 11, no 4, December 2001, pp 17-18.

Although the study involved co-operation of members of the University of the Third Age (U3A), it was the author's personal objective to survey the factors that either impede or improve our enjoyment of music with increasing age. This article outlines development of a survey among members of the four U3A music groups in Sheffield, which covered musical taste, equipment, and problems with hearing. (RH)

ISSN: 09652000

National care standards - care homes for people with physical and sensory impairment; by Angus Skinner (Chair), National Care Standards Committee, Scottish Executive. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2001, 72 pp.

As a result of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, there are now no legal differences between residential and nursing homes in Scotland: they are all care homes. The National Care Standards Committee (NCSC) has developed these standards with the help of working groups which included both service users and providers. The standards describe what the service user can expect from the service provider, and focus on his or her experience of quality of life. Standards are grouped under headings which follow a person's journey through the service: before moving in; settling in; day-to-day life; and moving on. The standards are based on a set of principles that recognise the person's rights, as well as physical and sensory impairment, as follows: dignity, privacy, choice, safety, realising potential, and equality and diversity. Reference is also made to the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (which will register and inspect services), and the Scottish Social Services Council (with responsibility for promoting high standards of conduct and practice for social service workers); both have been set up under the Act, and both will have headquarters in Dundee. (RH)

ISBN: 0755903300

Price: £5.00

From : The Stationery Office Bookshop, 71 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH3 9AZ.

www.scotland.gov.uk/government/rcp

The relationships among personality and vision-specific function among older people with impaired vision; by Robin J Casten, Barry W Rovner, Susan E Edmonds.

Journal of Mental Health and Aging, vol 7, no 3, Fall 2001, pp 325-334.

93 visually impaired older people seeking services at a low vision clinic were interviewed immediately following their low vision evaluations. Most data was self-reported, except visual acuity, which was determined by an optometrist. Personality was evaluated with the NEO Five-Factor Inventory, and vision-specific function was measured by 15 items measuring ability to carry out vision-related tasks. Vision-related function was significantly related to acuity, conscientiousness and depressive symptoms. (RH)

ISSN: 10784470

Sense and audibility: hearing loss and hearing aids; by D N Brooks.

Ageing & Health: the Journal of the Institute of Ageing and Health (West Midlands), no 7, 2001, pp 35-37.

Hearing impairment is an inevitable accompaniment to increasing age, and gives rise to progressive hearing difficulty such that by the age of 70, one person in two has difficulty in social communication. The deficit in hearing manifests itself in the frequency of requests for information to be repeated, in raising the volume level on the television and radio, and in the oft-repeated complaint that others do not speak clearly but mutter. (RH)

ISSN: 13649752

Sensory impairments and subjective well-being among aged African American persons; by Mohsen Bazargan, Richard S Baker, Shahrzad H Bazargan.

Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 56B, no 5, September 2001, pp P268-P278.

The reported prevalence rates of vision and hearing impairments found in this study of nearly 1,000 older African Americans (36.5% and 26% respectively) are considerably higher than rates previously documented in comparable studies of older White populations. Although 84% of these study participants attempted to improve their vision by using glasses, only 4.3% who described their hearing as poor reported using hearing aids. Both poor vision and poor hearing are known to be associated with lower levels of psychological well-being, indicating the need for visual and audiological rehabilitation. (RH)

ISSN: 10795014

Social care for deafblind children and adults; by Department of Health - DH. London: Department of Health, March 2001, 13 pp (Local authority circular LAC (2001)8).

At least 40 people per 100,000 are deafblind; and many are not known to their local social services authority. This guidance is issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, and responds to concerns highlighted by the Department of Health (DH) deafblindness consultation exercise. It includes policy guidance of relevance to all local authority social services staff, including those who provide services under contract. Further information on deafblindness is available on the DH website (see <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/Deliveringadultsocialcare/index.htm> for relevant links). (RH)

From : Department of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH. Website:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/index.htm>

Visual problems and falls; by Rowan H Harwood.

Age and Ageing, vol 30, supplement 4, November 2001, pp 13-18.

Visual impairment is a risk factor for falls, on average approximately doubling falls risk in a wide variety of studies. Falls risk increases as visual impairment worsens. This article reviews studies on the role of the balance system; and considers visual acuity, depth perception, contrast sensitivity and visual problems. Visual impairment is remediable for 70% or more of older people with relatively simple interventions such as correcting refractive errors and cataract surgery. However, no intervention has yet been proven to reduce falls risk in a randomised controlled trial (RCT). (RH)

ISSN: 00020729

2000

Are changes in sensory disability, reaction time, and grip strength associated with changes in memory and crystallized intelligence?: a longitudinal analysis in an elderly community sample; by H Christensen, A E Korten, A J MacKinnon (et al).

Gerontology, vol 46, no 5, 2000, pp 276-292.

Sensory disability, grip strength, and speed of processing have been established as associates of cognitive performance in cross-sectional studies. However, it is not known whether changes in these predictor variables are associated with changes in cognitive functioning. This Australian study examined the relationship between initial level of three predictor variables - speed of processing, sensory disability and grip strength - and changes in memory and crystallized intelligence (CIQ). It also examined the relationships between change in grip strength, cognitive speed and sensory disability and changes in memory and CIQ; and investigated these relationships with the effects of age and sex statistically removed. Results showed that initial levels of reaction time or grip strength did not predict rate of change on memory tasks. Changes in grip strength, speed and memory correlated moderately, suggesting that these variables have some tendency to move together over time. Sensory disability correlated with age, but not with change in speed, grip, memory or CIQ. These relationships held across the age range studied, after adjustment for age and sex. (KJ/RH)

ISSN: 0304324X

Binocular vision in older people with adventitious visual impairment: sometimes one eye is better than two; by Jocelyn Faubert, Olga Overbury.

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol 48, no 4, April 2000, pp 375-380.

The study examined the effect of adventitious visual impairment (low vision) on monocular and binocular spatial contrast sensitivity in older people. Participants were 59 older adults aged 50-96 recruited at the McGill Low Vision Center, Montreal; 49 of them had age-related macular degeneration (AMD). In almost half of those with AMD, the sensitivity to spatial information, as measured by spatial contrast sensitivity, is worse when both eyes are used than when the stimuli are viewed with only one eye. This "binocular inhibition" is not related to

the contrast sensitivity of the better eye or to acuities. Furthermore, this inhibition process is reflected primarily in images with medium to low spatial frequency components (medium to large size bars). These results have important implications for understanding the functional impact of low vision in older people. They suggest that almost half of older people with AMD view the world best using only one of their eyes, whereas for the other half, there is an advantage to using binocular vision for certain visual tasks. (RH)

ISSN: 00028614

Contrast sensitivity and visual acuity in patients with Alzheimer's disease; by Francesca K Cormack, Martin Tovee, Clive Ballard.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 15, no 7, July 2000, pp 614-620.

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is a disorder which is typified by a deterioration in cognition and a range of behavioural problems which result in a loss of functional ability often necessitating transfer to residential care. This article looks at a growing body of research which is revealing the presence of changes in vision, particularly contrast sensitivity and acuity. The authors discuss the possible pathological basis for such deficits, and examine the possibility that such changes in vision may impact on the behavioural and functional outcomes of the demented individual. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

Correctable visual impairment in stroke rehabilitation patients; by Andrew J Lotery, M Ivan Wiggam, A Jonathan Jackson (et al).

Age and Ageing, vol 29, no 3, May 2000, pp 221-222.

After stroke, poor vision may exacerbate the effects of other impairments on overall disability. In this series of 77 patients in a stroke rehabilitation unit of a Belfast teaching hospital, 25% did not have their glasses in hospital, and 23% had glasses which were unacceptably dirty, scratched or damaged. With existing glasses, 25% of patients had visual impairment (visual acuity 6/12 or worse); over half of these benefited from refractive correction. Professionals should routinely enquire about patients' glasses and inspect their condition. Visual acuity should be measured in all patients after stroke. Patients with visual impairment, in the absence of refractive disease, should be referred for refractive correction. (RH)

ISSN: 00020729

Depression in institutionalised older people with impaired vision; by Shirley P S Ip, Y F Leung, W P Mak.

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 15, no 12, December 2000, pp 1120-1124.

The prevalence of depressive symptoms in visually impaired nursing home residents is high, and screening with a standardised instrument - the Geriatric Depression Scale, GDS - may be useful. In a Hong Kong nursing home designed for people with impaired vision, the residents' duration of blindness appears to have no correlation with depression. People with sensory impairment are more prone to depression when adapting to changes in the social environment, as in the event of institutionalisation. After controlling for socio-demographic factors such as age, duration of institutionalisation and duration of blindness, functional disability is an independent predictor of depression. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

Development of a shorter version of the Geriatric Depression Scale for visually impaired older patients; by Irfan I Galaria, Robin J Casten, Barry W Rovner.

International Psychogeriatrics, vol 12, no 4, December 2000, pp 435-444.

Clinical diagnosis of major depression was used as the dependent variable, with four items from the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) to form the GDS-Abbreviated (GDS-A) scale. Endorsing any two these four items - dissatisfied with life, feeling helpless, reporting problems with memory, and lost activities and interest - yielded the best results. The GDS-A's short format and strong discriminating ability makes it an effective, convenient tool for screening visually impaired, older patients for depression. (RH)

ISSN: 10416102

Effective management of the elderly hearing impaired - a review; by Barbara Hanratty, Deborah A Lawlor.

Journal of Public Health Medicine, vol 22, no 4, December 2000, pp 512-517.

More than 2.5 million people over 70 in the UK are thought to have hearing impairment that would benefit from a hearing aid. Only one third of these will possess one, and as many as 10% probably never use their aid. Although it is important to examine the relative merits of different aids, there is also a need to look at how audiological services might reduce unmet need that results in underuse of aids. This review examines the question of "what is the most effective way of providing hearing aids for older people affected by presbycusis?" A literature search found little evidence to guide audiology practice. In particular, there is little consensus on the best outcome measures for evaluating audiological rehabilitation or hearing aid fitting.

Audiological services for older people are an example of an area for funding research and development, rather than continuing to commission services that are variable and poorly evaluated. (RH)

Functional status and hearing impairments in women at midlife; by Sandra K Pope, MaryFran Sowers.
Journals of Gerontology: Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, vol 55B, no 3, May 2000, pp S190-S194.

The prevalence is examined of clinically assessed high-frequency hearing impairment (HFHI) and self-reported hearing impairment (SRHI), also the association of these hearing assessments with physical and mental functioning in African American and Caucasian women at mid-life. The sample included 467 women who participated in the Michigan Functioning Substudy of Women's Health Across the Nation (SWAN). Outcomes examined were physical and mental functioning from the Medical Outcomes Trust SF-12 Health Survey. HFHI was defined as threshold averages of 25dB or greater over 4000, 6000 and 8000 Hz. Prevalence of unilateral HFHI was 26.6% (n=68), and of bilateral HFHI was 12% (n=56). Prevalence of SRHI was 16.7% (n=78), with minimal overlap between HFHI and SRHI (n=36). In multiple variable logistic regression analyses, HFHI in one ear only was not associated with physical or mental functioning and bilateral HFHI was associated with limited mental functioning only. SRHI was associated with limited physical and mental functioning. Poor correlation of HFHI and SRHI in this population, combined with the significant association of SRHI with both measures of functioning indicates that the two methods may be measuring different aspects of impairment. SRHI may facilitate early identification of individuals with hearing and functional limitations. (RH)
ISSN: 10795014

Hearing and aging; by Jane Scheuerle.
Educational Gerontology, vol 26, no 3, April-May 2000, pp 237-248.

Although changes in hearing acuity are expected to occur with ageing, the impact of that sensory loss is frequently obscure, often discounted, and not appreciated. However, significant elements of communication comprising a complex matrix of sounds often are lost or distorted as individuals age. Across the many types of auditory differences among the ageing, an appreciation of the effect of reduced access to meaningful sounds can help both the student and practitioner of gerontology gain insight into clients' response behaviours that are socially adequate but insufficient, or those that seem off-target, out of place, or even unacceptable. Such knowledge can give gerontologists an advantage in handling otherwise stressful situations. Additionally, they can gain the ability to assess the need for changes in communication patterns or for professional consultation to ensure the quality of life of those ageing individuals in their care. (RH)
ISSN: 03601277

The incidence of delirium immediately following cataract removal surgery: a prospective study in the elderly; by A Milstein, Y Barak, G Kleinman (et al).

Ageing & Mental Health, vol 4, no 2, May 2000, pp 178-181.

Delirium is a syndrome affecting the central nervous system (CNS) characterised by a rapid development of disturbances in cognition and consciousness. In older people, delirium is frequently observed in clinical practice, especially in medical and surgical wards. This Israeli study used the Confusion Rating Scale (CRS) to evaluate the incidence of delirium immediately following cataract surgery in older people living in the community. Of 197 patients fulfilling inclusion criteria, 10 (5.1%) had suffered from post-operative delirium. The two variables that significantly differentiated between patients with and without delirium were older age, and more frequent use of benzodiazepine pre-medication. These findings suggest that changes in pre-medication and a longer observation period, particularly in the very old, may be beneficial. (RH)

ISSN: 13607863

From : <http://www.tandfonline.com>

Insights: services for visually impaired people in Scotland; by Graham M Lomas, Royal National Institute for the Blind - RNIB; RNIB Scotland. London: Royal National Institute for the Blind, 2000, 221 pp.

The number of visually impaired people known to services in Scotland has trebled in the last 20 years; but estimates suggest that the real level of visual impairment is more than double again. The present report ranges over the whole spectrum of special support for visually impaired people in Scotland. The aim is to show how organisations have responded to their needs, the level of interplay between related services, gaps and opportunities for service development, and scope for a Scotland-wide view of the future evolution of support. The emphasis is on measuring whether real progress is being made in meeting need, and identifying action required in the future. Appendices provide details of agencies and organisations offering support, complemented by statistical data, which RNIB Scotland will seek to update periodically. (RH)

From : Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6AA.

Investigation of the use of the CAMCOG in the visually impaired elderly; by Jennifer Anne Hartman.
International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 15, no 9, September 2000, pp 863-869.

Cataract is a common cause of visual impairment in older people, but the effect of cataract on tests of cognitive function is unknown. 42 patients (mean age 74.8, age range 65-96), from the Birmingham and Midland Eye Hospital's precautionary surgery assessment clinic completed the Cambridge Cognitive Examination (CAMCOG), and the visual acuity for each eye was assessed. There was a significant correlation between visual acuity and the CAMCOG score, which was abolished when simple modifications were made to the CAMCOG. Visual impairment has a significant effect on the scoring of the CAMCOG. However, the effect may not only be due to decreased visual acuity, but also to other factors such as contrast sensitivity, which may be affected by cataract. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

Moderate alcohol consumption and hearing loss: a protective effect; by Michael M Popelka, Karen J Cruickshanks, Terry L Wiley (et al).

Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol 48, no 10, October 2000, pp 1273-1278.

The protective effect of moderate alcohol consumption has been well-documented. The present study of data from the Epidemiology of Hearing Loss Study (EHLS) and the Beaver Dam Eye Study (BDES). More than 3,500 residents of Beaver Dam, WI aged 43 to 87 in 1987-88 had their hearing thresholds measured, along with information regarding alcohol consumption and other health and lifestyle factors. There is evidence of a modest protective association of alcohol consumption and hearing loss in these cross-sectional data. This finding is in agreement with a small body of evidence suggesting that hearing loss is not an inevitable component of the ageing process. (RH)

ISSN: 00028614

Negative consequences of hearing impairment in old age: a longitudinal analysis; by William J Strawbridge, Margaret I Wallhagen, Sarah J Shema (et al).

The Gerontologist, vol 40, no 3, June 2000, pp 320-326.

To determine whether functional and psychosocial outcomes associated with hearing impairment are a direct result or stem from prevalent comorbidity, the authors analysed the impact of two levels of reported hearing impairment on health and psychosocial functioning one year later with adjustments for baseline chronic conditions. Participants were from the Almeida County Study, California, a longitudinal study of factors related to health and mortality. Physical functioning, mental health and social functioning decreased in a dose-response pattern for those with progressive levels of hearing impairment compared with those reporting no impairment. The results demonstrate an independent impact of hearing impairment on functional outcomes, reveal increasing problems with higher levels of impairment, and support the importance of preventing and treating this highly prevalent condition. (RH)

ISSN: 00169013

Older people [and social exclusion]; by Jill Manthorpe.

Research Matters, special issue, August 2000, pp 30-32.

The link between growing old and declining income is well documented. But there are other factors that can increase older people's poverty and feelings of social exclusion that are less well documented. First, ethnicity is examined in two reviews: "Ethnic inequality in later life: variation in financial circumstances by gender and ethnic group" by Jay Ginn and Sarah Arber (in: Education and Ageing, 2000); and "Health and social care needs in minority communities" by Ken Blakemore (in: Health and Social Care in the Community, 2000). A second cause of inequality is discussed in the Audit Commission's "Charging with care", which notes disparities in local authorities' levels of charging for services. Disability, another reason for exclusion, is discussed in "Losing sight in Ryedale: routes to rehabilitation" by J Crookes and colleagues (1999). Other examples of social exclusion discussed are the older homeless, prisoners, and consequences of elder abuse. (RH)

ISSN: 13631015

Predictors of perceived support quality in visually impaired elders; by Joann P Reinhardt, Rosemary Blieszner.

Journal of Applied Gerontology, vol 19, no 3, September 2000, pp 345-362.

Although there is a strong empirical link between support quality and health in later life, research on the predictors of support quality is lacking. Significant predictors of components of kin and non-kin perceived support quality were identified and compared in 241 visually impaired older people reporting to their closest friend and closest family member. Results revealed differential patterns of predictors of family and friend support components. Having a spouse as closest family member was associated with higher perceived affective and instrumental family support. Significant interactions for family relationship type and gender showed that for men, but not women, having a spouse as closest family member was associated with lower perceived affective

and informational friendship support. Participant age was positively associated with instrumental family support. Overall, functional disability had a negative association with support quality. Strategies for increasing support quality are discussed. (RH)
ISSN: 07334648

Prevalence, risk factors and self-reported medical causes of seeing and hearing related disabilities among older adults; by Parminder Raina, Micheline Wong, Steven Dukeshire (et al).

Canadian Journal on Aging, vol 19, no 2, Summer 2000, pp 260-278.

Data for non-institutionalised over-55s from the Canadian Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS) for 1986 and 1991 indicate that over 65s are more likely than 56-64 year olds to experience a sensory disability. Men are more likely than women to report having hearing disabilities, while women were more likely to report sight problems than men. Increased age and lower total household incomes were associated with a greater likelihood of having a sensory disability. Cataracts and deafness were reported most often as the cause of seeing and hearing activities of daily living (ADL) restrictions in both age groups. Public health initiatives should focus on hearing and seeing disabilities, particularly among older people, women, and those on low incomes. (RH)

ISSN: 07149808

Psychopathology at initial diagnosis in dementia with Lewy bodies versus Alzheimer disease: comparison of matched groups with autopsy-confirmed diagnosis; by Enid Rockwell, Jayant Choure, Douglas Galasko (et al).

International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, vol 15, no 9, September 2000, pp 819-823.

Dementia with Lewy body (DLB) has been reported to account for 10-15% of all cases of dementia, and is associated with an increase in psychopathology. The authors searched the database of the University of California, San Diego SOCARE (Seniors Only Care) outpatients programme. There were 26 autopsy-confirmed cases of DLB. These were matched individually with 26 autopsy-confirmed cases of "pure" Alzheimer's disease (AD) on gender, ethnicity, and Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) score at baseline evaluation. Comparison of the two groups on psychopathological measures and possible risk factors indicated that five psychiatric symptoms - hallucinations, delusions, anxiety, anhedonia, and loss of energy - were significantly more common in DLB than AD patients. DLB patients were significantly younger at initial evaluation and death compared to AD patients, but there was no difference in age at onset of dementia, level of education, or family or past history of any major neuropsychiatric disorder, prescription of psychotropic medication, or sensory impairment. (RH)

ISSN: 08856230

Tiresias: a family of typefaces designed for legibility on screens, signs and labels; by John Gill, Scientific Research Unit, Royal National Institute for the Blind - RNIB. London: RNIB, 2000, unnumbered folded brochure.

Reading information from electronic screens now used by banks, transport systems and the like can be difficult, particularly for older people and those with low vision. This foldout brochure provides information about and examples of the various forms of Tiresias fonts, a range of typefaces designed to maximise legibility on screens, labelling and signage. The fonts were developed by the author together with Janet Silver (former Principal Optometrist, Moorfields Eye Hospital), Christopher Sharville (Creative Director, Laker Sharville Design Associates), and Peter O'Donnell (type consultant). The Tiresias typeface was originally designed in response to the need for improving the text for television subtitling. (RH)

From : RNIB Scientific Research Unit, 224 Great Portland Street, London W1W 5AA.

The use of pre-existing and novel coping strategies in adapting to age-related vision loss; by Mark Brennan, Gina Cardinali.

The Gerontologist, vol 40, no 3, June 2000, pp 327-334.

Research has proposed that when faced with a stressor, individuals test novel coping strategies when pre-existing strategies fail to reduce a perceived threat. However, using novel coping strategies has received scant empirical attention. This study presents data in the form of spontaneous comments or responses to open-ended questions from three previous quantitative studies (of 155, 93, and 343 participants) of adaptation to age-related vision loss. Self-reported coping strategies were identified using a "grounded theory" approach (i.e. the codes for the coping strategies had not been constructed previously). These were then examined for evidence of whether the strategy was recently used (novel) or whether it had been used prior to vision loss (pre-existing). Results supported the use of novel coping strategies in the process of adaptation to a chronic impairment among older people. Overall, the use novel coping strategies was found to be associated with better adaptational outcomes, emphasising the importance of novel coping in response to stressful life circumstances. (RH)

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Which button?: designing user interfaces for people with visual impairments; by John Gill, Royal National Institute for the Blind - RNIB. London: Royal National Institute for the Blind, 2000, 26 pp.

The buttons, switches and controls of most devices are designed to be looked at whilst operating them, which makes things difficult for people who are blind or have low vision. This makes for problems both in using equipment in the home, and with telecommunications and computer technologies. In the UK, where the government's "Information for All" initiative intends that all people will have easy access to social and healthcare information, it will not be acceptable for significant sections of the population to be excluded from using these technologies for lack of consideration of the user interface design. This publication is not a guide to all types of controls, but it attempts to indicate aspects to be considered by designers, if the controls are to be operated by people with a visual impairment. Visual examples of the effects of some common impairment conditions illustrate the problems which need to be tackled in improving the design of user interfaces, and which would make a significant difference. (RH)

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