UC Irvine Receives $1.7 Million Federal Grant to be National Center on Elder Abuse

Citing the award-winning Program in Geriatrics, the U.S. Administration on Aging has designated UC Irvine as the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), a clearinghouse for practical information supporting federal, state and local efforts to prevent, identify and effectively respond to elder abuse. The agency will provide funding of $561,000 annually for three years.

The NCEA will be led by Dr. Laura Mosqueda and Mary Twomey, co-directors of UC Irvine’s Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse & Neglect, which offers medical, forensic and victim services to abused and neglected seniors, as well as training, research and technical assistance to law enforcement and social services agencies throughout the country.

“We’re very excited about this opportunity to expand our elder abuse prevention efforts at the national level,” said Mosqueda, chair of UC Irvine’s Department of Family Medicine, director of its Program in Geriatrics, and Ronald Reagan Endowed Chair in Geriatrics. “We look forward to working with many national organizations and individuals, bringing the field together in a major initiative to increase awareness of and find solutions to this significant public health issue.”

Nearly 2 million older Americans are abused each year, according to the Administration on Aging. Orange County agencies receive more than 8,000 reports annually. And for each incident reported, Mosqueda said, at least five more go unreported.

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In Pursuit of Longevity: Toward A Different Kind of Nest Egg A Physician’s Perspective on Healthy Aging

John B. Parker Lecture Series Inaugural Event January 31, 2012

On January 31, Mark Lachs, MD, MPH, will speak about current research, technology and advances related to medical care for older adults that can assist in healthy aging.

Speaker and Visiting Professor Dr. Lachs is a Distinguished Professor of Clinical Medicine and co-chief of the Division of Geriatrics and Gerontology in the Department of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College. He is also the director of the Cornell Center for Aging Research and Clinical Care, which is a multidisciplinary group of scientists, clinicians and educators who seek to speed scientific advances from bench to bedside.

Dr. Lachs advises the Institute of Medicine, the American Medical Association and the World Health Organization. Dr. Lachs is also the author of Treat Me, Not My Age: A Doctor’s Guide to Getting the Best Care as You or A Loved One Gets Older.

If you would like to attend this event, RSVP to 714.456.5530 or email with “RSVP Jan 31” in the subject line to geriinfo@uci.edu.

“Live your life by measuring how much you are giving.”
– JOHN PARKER
Letter from the Director
Home for the Holidays: How to Help Your Older Relatives

For many of us, the holidays offer a once-a-year time to visit with elderly relatives who live at a distance. These holiday visits are a good time to assess what assistance parents or other elderly loved ones might need. There are many things to consider. During your visit, keep an eye out for warning signs of major changes in their medical condition or living situation. Don’t let denial or fear of an awkward conversation keep you from planning that could prevent emergencies. Your elderly relative may need your help. Trained healthcare professionals can help you in learning how to have these conversations in a way that doesn’t threaten their independence and in a manner that treats them with the respect and dignity they deserve.

Make the most of your visits by taking some private time with your loved ones to discuss their health and how to support them in their desire for healthy aging. Seniors may not be aware of a gradual decline and may be reluctant or unable to plan for needed care. Support and guidance from family members can help prevent serious accidents or future health complications. Noticing and correcting problems can help keep seniors safely in their homes. It’s also important to look for signs about how they are treated by caregivers. Unfortunately, elder abuse and neglect does happen more often than people realize. The observant family member can be very helpful in these situations.

We recommend that older people see a geriatrician, if possible. We are specially trained to assess the whole person, their strengths and possible weak areas, to identify medication interactions and to consider all the factors in helping them age in the healthiest and happiest way.

Laura Mosqueda, MD
Director, UC Irvine Program of Geriatrics

It Feels Good to Give: Together, We Can Help Our Seniors Age with Joy

This holiday season consider a gift to UC Irvine Geriatrics. With your help, we can reach more seniors with our compassionate, comprehensive approach to healthy aging; we can teach more medical students about the unique, complex issues seniors face; we can broaden the impact of our innovative, award-winning programs that help seniors age with joy and gusto. If you would like to learn more about our programs and how to support our work, visit us at www.som.uci.edu/geriatrics or send a check in the enclosed envelope. If you would like to talk with a member of our staff, please call Susan Lozano at 714.456.5530 or smlozano@uci.edu.

Holiday Tips for Visiting Aging Relatives

What to Look For

• Does your relative need help with chores or housekeeping?
• Can they still go shopping and prepare their own meals?
• Are they on time paying their bills?
• When was their last doctor’s visit?
• Do they ever get out of the house?
• If they live with a caregiver, is that person an appropriate caregiver?

Things to Do

• Plan ahead – know the local resources
• Introduce yourselves to neighbors and friends and exchange contact information
• Read up on conversation starters and tips to talk with your family members about changes in their condition so you can solve problems together
• Take the time to talk privately with your loved ones about any changes in their condition

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"Elder abuse is wrong. To fight it effectively, we need to build and sustain research, prevention, law enforcement and services," said Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee.

"We’re honored to have been selected to be the National Center on Elder Abuse," said UC Irvine’s Twomey. "None of us ever forgets that this work is about real people who are living in fear, who have had their rights taken from them, and who deserve dignity and respect. We will work to make their lives better."
Meet Mary Maguire

Mary Maguire, of Seal Beach, first met the team at the SeniorHealth Center when she took her mother there for care in spring of 1998. Soon after that, she realized that, because the SeniorHealth Center treats adults as young as 50, she could receive her care there as well. Mary has experienced the uniqueness of UC Irvine’s SeniorHealth Center’s whole person, healthy aging approach. She says, “They help you step by step by step through what you need to know about aging. My experience has been at many other medical offices, the doctors and staff talk with the adult child rather than with their senior patient. At the SeniorHealth Center, they speak directly to the seniors making sure they are involved in their own care. Everyone, patient and family, is treated with respect, patience and dignity.”

Mary is also an active volunteer with the Program in Geriatrics. She joined the Geriatrics Fund Development Advisory Committee. This group assists in raising funds to support UC Irvine Program in Geriatrics’ unique, comprehensive and compassionate programs by arranging special events, hosting receptions and providing a sounding board to staff. Mary has been a steadfast volunteer for the past two years. “I greatly enjoy my volunteer work for UC Irvine Geriatrics,” says Mary. “It gives me a chance to say thank you for all they’ve done for my mother and me. Plus, I really believe more people should know about their incredible work. I know if others knew the SeniorHealth Center like I do, they would want to help them, too.”

If you are interested in joining our Fund Development Advisory Group, please call us at 714.456.5530 or email geriinfo@uci.edu to learn more.

High School Students Volunteer to Help Seniors

From Heads to Hearts

Lisa Gibbs, MD, Director, Geriatrics Medical Education, received funding from the UC Irvine Center for Future Health Professionals to work with 20 students at Anaheim High School. These amazing young people call themselves the “Colonists to the Rescue.” The club was founded by Melissa Serna, a survivor of aplastic anemia. Her vision is to promote awareness about medical issues.

The Colonists reached out to seniors in many ways during the past year: a Mother’s Day visit, cards, karaoke, to name just a few of their activities connecting with seniors. The academic year ended with a moving speech by club president Melissa Serna at the Future Health Professionals banquet; she stated that this experience moved seniors “from their heads to their hearts.” We hope they will be back: The Colonists to the Rescue report that 100 students have signed up to participate this fall!

Resources

- AARP has resources about long-distance caregiving: [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).
- The Eldercare Locator is a nationwide toll-free service provided by U.S. Administration on Aging designed to help older adults and their caregivers find local services for seniors. Visit [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov) or call 1.800.677.1116 during weekday business hours.

Orange County Resources

If you or your older relative is located in Orange County:

- The Aging and Disability Resource Connection offers a free information and referral service within Orange County: [www.ADRCOC.org](http://www.ADRCOC.org) or 1.800.510.2020.
- Become educated about the signs of elder abuse and neglect at [www.centeronelderabuse.org](http://www.centeronelderabuse.org).
- UC Irvine Program in Geriatrics has many services to help: [www.som.uci.edu/geriatrics](http://www.som.uci.edu/geriatrics).
Dr. Mosqueda Wins Ambassador of Peace Award

Dr. Mosqueda received the 2011 Ambassador of Peace Award from the Violence Prevention Coalition of Orange County (VPCOC). Founded in 1996, VPCOC is the only county-wide organization uniting businesses, communities and individuals, devoted to reducing violence by using a public health approach. Dr. Mosqueda was honored for her work in identifying and treating victims of elder abuse.

UC Irvine Professor Recognized

Kerry Burnight, PhD, won a Senior Care Humanitarian award on October 23, 2011, for her work in prevention and treatment of elder abuse.

Inside:
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- Holiday Tips for Visiting Aging Relatives
- And more!