

## **ABSTRACT: 2018 ELAM Institutional Action Project**

**Project Title:** Towards a University of Chicago Institute on Aging: Advancing Health for an Aging Society

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**Topic Category:** Research

**Background:** Expert care of vulnerable older adults is necessary for improving the health of the population served by the University of Chicago. While there are multiple individuals engaged in research, education, and clinical care related to aging, there is a lack of unity or infrastructure connecting those with common activities and interests across departments, sections, and schools.

**Purpose/Objectives:** To develop an aging research network that serves as the hub for the geriatrics and aging enterprise in translational research, education and clinical care.

The initial phase of this project involves creating University-wide collaborative partnerships with all aging-related disciplines, specialties, departments and schools.

- 1) Identify existing projects, faculty and interdisciplinary professionals who are engaged in aging-related research activities
- 2) Create a marketing strategy for Section-led geriatrics programs
- 3) Develop individualized scholarship plan for geriatrics faculty that promotes multidisciplinary collaborations
- 4) Generate funding opportunities to support infrastructure and personnel

### **Methods:**

- 1) Identify all potential stakeholders in Geriatrics, Gerontology and Aging
- 2) Embark on listening and advocacy tour with stakeholders
- 3) Create inventory of all university-wide aging programs and resources
- 4) Benchmark national Aging Centers / Institutes via national meetings and conference calls with directors
- 6) Organize and host retreat to bring stakeholders together
- 7) Finalize themes that embody current resources and strengths
- 8) Generate ideas for potential integration of research, education and clinical resources
- 9) Leverage existing resources to vet ideas and identify themes
- 10) Develop short-term and long-term strategic and sustainment plans for funding and philanthropy

**Results:** Over 60 potential stakeholders engaged in aging-related scholarship across the university were identified. One-third attended an inaugural Aging Crossroads Meeting on Frailty, Resiliency and Multisystem Dysregulation. This resulted in the creation of three frailty and resiliency research working groups, the identification of institutional challenges to moving aging research forward within the institution, and the development of three priority strategies to support a long-term aging research network at the University of Chicago. A list of potential aging grant opportunities was established, resulting in the submission of an R25. Philanthropic efforts led to a family gift that will be used to create a series of six pilot awards for Innovations in Multidisciplinary Aging and Vitality. A communications and marketing plan has been outlined which includes patient-centered information on community activities and an Aging Well column. New collaborative clinical programs have been created, including a Geriatric Emergency Room Falls initiative.

**Discussion:** The Section of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine faculty are actively engaged in important and innovative programs that have tremendous potential to grow research collaborations. Methods for measuring productivity and national visibility of faculty will be on-going, including number of grant submissions and awards, publications, presentations, and new team science collaborations. The ultimate goal is to compete for extramural funding for training and center grants.