



COURSE OUTLINE: GER133 - MENTAL HEALTH

Prepared: MaryAnne P. Shannon, PhD, RN, GCNS-BC

Approved: Bob Chapman, Chair, Health

Course Code: Title	GER133: MENTAL HEALTH OF THE ELDERLY PERSON
Program Number: Name	3041: GERONTOLOGY
Department:	DEAN, HEALTH & COMM. SERV.
Semesters/Terms:	21F, 22W
Course Description:	In this course students will explore mental health and illness disorders which are either more common in the elderly, or have continued to develop in the elderly over time. Various cognition issues including different types of dementia will be studied, and appropriate interventions and care options will be explored. Student will have an opportunity to gain a certificate in the Gentle Persuasive Approach (GPA) to address dementia behaviors.
Total Credits:	3
Hours/Week:	3
Total Hours:	45
Prerequisites:	There are no pre-requisites for this course.
Corequisites:	There are no co-requisites for this course.
Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLO's) addressed in this course:	3041 - GERONTOLOGY VLO 1 Comply with legislation and regulations governing professional practice within the Canadian health care system VLO 2 Apply an evidence based perspective to inform current interventions, senior care plan, navigate and advocate for senior care VLO 3 Consider the availability and effectiveness of community resources and referrals to plan, navigate and advocate for senior care VLO 4 Analyze the strengths and needs of seniors independently or with an inter-professional team to plan, implement and evaluate programs VLO 5 Assess the communicative, mental, physical, emotional and social health of older adults to promote healthy aging VLO 6 Communicate effectively to promote person and family centered care and strengthen inter-professional collaborative practice VLO 7 Appraise the important role of the "elder-advocate" who works pro-actively as an individual or in inter-professional teams and the impact they have on elderly clients' healthy aging
Essential Employability Skills (EES) addressed in this course:	EES 1 Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience. EES 2 Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication. EES 4 Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.

Please refer to program web page for a complete listing of program outcomes where applicable.

In response to public health requirements pertaining to the COVID19 pandemic, course delivery and assessment traditionally delivered in-class, may occur remotely either in whole or in part in the 2021-2022 academic year.



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	EES 5 Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems. EES 6 Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems. EES 7 Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources. EES 8 Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others. EES 9 Interact with others in groups or teams that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals. EES 10 Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects. EES 11 Take responsibility for ones own actions, decisions, and consequences.				
Course Evaluation:	Passing Grade: 50%, D A minimum program GPA of 2.0 or higher where program specific standards exist is required for graduation.				
Other Course Evaluation & Assessment Requirements:	Late assignments will be penalized (10% per day late). there are no make up assignments and submission deadlines are strictly adhered to as they build upon one another in this course. If the student has extenuating circumstances, please advise the course instructor as soon as possible.				
Books and Required Resources:	Miller's Nursing for Wellness in Older Adults with bind in access by Hirst, S., Lane, A., & Miller, C. Publisher: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins Edition: Canadian edition text purchased in GER132 Gentle Persuasive Approaches (GPA) in Dementia Care by GPA Publisher: Advanced Gerontological Education Edition: 4th ISBN: 9780969102083 current scholarly articles as assigned A Concise Introduction to Mental Health in Canada by Goldner Publisher: Canadian Scholars Press Inc. Edition: 2nd ISBN: 9781551309064 eBook 9781551309071				
Course Outcomes and Learning Objectives:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Course Outcome 1</th><th>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 1</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Describe physical age related changes that affect cognitive abilities in older persons.</td><td> 1.1. Examine the impact that sensory changes due to advancing age can have on cognition in older persons. 1.2. Explore the role that polypharmacy can play in the cognition status of older persons. 1.3. Recognize how changes in the structure of the older brain and the connective neurological system of the older person can impact cognitive functioning. 1.4. Understand the importance of maintaining a strong blood flow for maximal oxygen utilization to support cognitive functioning in older persons. </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Course Outcome 1	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 1	1. Describe physical age related changes that affect cognitive abilities in older persons.	1.1. Examine the impact that sensory changes due to advancing age can have on cognition in older persons. 1.2. Explore the role that polypharmacy can play in the cognition status of older persons. 1.3. Recognize how changes in the structure of the older brain and the connective neurological system of the older person can impact cognitive functioning. 1.4. Understand the importance of maintaining a strong blood flow for maximal oxygen utilization to support cognitive functioning in older persons.
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	1.5. Distinguish between fluid and crystalized intelligence when testing elder IQ levels. 1.6. Recognize the role that stress and anxiety can play in cognitive function. 1.7. Identify evidence-based risk factors that can disrupt cognitive wellness. 1.8. Recognize that physical frailty in older adults is associated with a wide range of adverse health outcomes related to cognitive decline. 1.9. Accurately perform a mini-mental (short form) assessment test and interpret the score in relation to cognitive function.
Course Outcome 2	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 2
2. Recognize those mental conditions and their associated behaviors which are commonly observed in older patients with mental illness.	2.1. Distinguish between pathological sourced memory changes and those behaviors of memory impairment more closely associated with advancing age alone. 2.2. Recognize that many mental pathologies presented in older adults may be more chronic and degenerative in nature when compared to those seen in younger adults. 2.3. Identify differences among the three common cognitive illnesses associated with older persons: delirium, depression and dementia. 2.4. Distinguish between mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and mild dementia in older persons. 2.5. Recognize the etiology behind the various types of dementia. 2.6. Utilize evidence-based strategies to assist in safe management when caring for people with dementia. 2.7. Use the Internet to identify support services they offer to those caring for patients with Alzheimer's Disease. 2.8. Explore Parkinson's Disease and its impact on cognitive functioning.
Course Outcome 3	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 3
3. Identify evidence-based risk factors that are known to contribute to poor mental health in older people.	3.1. Explore the social determinants of health for older people in Canada and how these might relate to their risk level for developing for mental illness. 3.2. Review the literature to determine current factors that contribute to poor mental health outcomes in older persons. 3.3. Conduct a psycho-social risk assessment on an older person to determine areas of focus for teaching about harm reduction. 3.4. Complete a mental health genogram of an older person to examine family history and personal lifestyle risk status for developing mental illness. 3.5. Explore past coping strategies for older persons as a component for risk assessment in

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	developing mental illness. 3.6. Utilize evidence-based research in seeking out quality mental health care information for older persons and members of their support team determined to be at risk for mental illness.
Course Outcome 4	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 4
4. Identify factors that contribute to self-destructive health behaviors among older persons.	4.1. Explore the adverse effects of alcohol and other toxic substances that disrupt the nutritional and cognitive status of older persons. 4.2. Identify the cumulative damage that stress, anxiety, and chronic loss can bring to the mind, body and spirit of the older person. 4.3. Identify risk factors for suicide among persons in late life. 4.4. Recognize the role that abuse and neglect can play to erode self-worth in older persons. 4.5. Explore community referral resources available for those elders who demonstrate self-destructive behaviors.
Course Outcome 5	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 5
5. Critically review strategies intended to effectively work with elders who have cognitive needs.	5.1. Identify the important role for all member contributions on the inter-disciplinary support team that case manages elders with mental illness. 5.2. Review the literature for evidence-based best practices provider of care strategies to assist older persons with cognitive needs. 5.3. Explore how the Eden Concept prepares a calm living environment to assist those elders who have cognitive needs. 5.4. Identify community resources that provide such services as memory care and respite for elders with mental illness so family caregivers get the support they need to manage their loved ones at home. 5.5. Identify specialty health services at elder clinics (i.e. SAH Geriatric Clinic) to understand the important role they serve in rural communities. 5.6. Demonstrate evidence-based components of care management programming (i.e. GPA for management of disruptive behaviors) in elders with dementia.
Course Outcome 6	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 6
6. Demonstrate a commitment to protect the mental health and safety rights of older persons.	6.1. Identify legislative rulings that protect those elders with mental illness. 6.2. Develop a listing of community resources that have the responsibility to advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves when it comes to health and safety of elders. 6.3. Identify professional health standards that guide professional health practice to support both mental health and safety of older persons.

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		6.4. Respond to computer scenarios of mentally ill elders in a way that demonstrates professional respect, cultural humility, ethics, sensitivity, and safety when reporting on your plan of action. 6.5. Recognize that the elder with co-morbidities may need additional mental health and safety protections when compared with younger adults who have mental illness.
	Course Outcome 7	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 7
	7. Evaluate community resources that assist in mental health service delivery to elders in the community.	7.1. Use the Internet to determine the number, type, and cost for resources intended to assist in services to the mentally ill older person. 7.2. Identify the appropriate process in our community to manage an older person in immediate need of services due to an acute exacerbation of a mental illness. 7.3. Relate how our community is managing to overcome the stigma associated with mental illness and seeking of treatment for mental illness for older people. 7.4. Provide rationale for your decision on how mental health resources would be best spent given a scenario where you work as an advocate for elders diagnosed with mental illness. 7.5. As an elder advocate, identify those available community resources that are a best-fit for elders in need in relation to elder context of proximity, religion, culture, ethnicity and/or elder orientation as able.
	Course Outcome 8	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 8
	8. Respect both conventional and safe traditional/folk interventions for addressing the mental health needs of older persons in treatment.	8.1. Identify the conventional westernized approaches used for addressing mental illness in older persons in Canada. 8.2. Identify some of the safe traditional/folk treatments individuals may use to treat mental illness in older persons. 8.3. Identify provider bias with older persons who choose to incorporate traditional strategies to meet their mental health care needs. 8.4. Review the literature for assurance that traditional avenues for care do not harm or risk harm to the elders who select those approaches. 8.5. Document all conventional and traditional strategies reported in use by older persons in the treatment of their mental illness. 8.6. Regularly re-evaluate the interventions used for addressing the mental health needs of older persons who are in treatment for mental illness.

Evaluation Process and Grading System:

Evaluation Type	Evaluation Weight
Final exam	40%

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	Four written reflections@5% each	20%
	Midterm exam	40%

Date: December 8, 2021

Addendum: Please refer to the course outline addendum on the Learning Management System for further information.

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