



MAGEC

MOMENTS!

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The Miami Area Geriatric Education Center (MAGEC) continues to work diligently to enhance the knowledge and skills of SE Florida health professionals by partnering with and conducting local geriatric educational programs.

### **The Past Few Months...**

#### **Intensive Geriatric Training**

July 29-31, 2009

Sheraton Fort Lauderdale Airport

Over 100 health care providers attended the annual Intensive Geriatric Training earning up to 20 continuing education units.

This 3-day training program included presentations from care providers in medicine, pharmacy, nursing, mental health, physical therapy, nutrition, and related disciplines. Presenters identified and discussed the core components of their disciplines and how these fit into the care practice goals of an interdisciplinary team. The program ended with a 2 hour Aging Sensitivity Training.

**As a follow up to the IGT, Intensive Geriatric Training Discipline Specific Modules will be offered for a minimum fee for IGT participants in early 2010.**

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### **Aging Sensitivity Training**

Barry University

MAGEC faculty Drs. Lacey and van Zuilen collaborated this past September when over 15 Barry University students were able to participate in a workshop on aging sensitivity.

Basic learning objectives of this training include:

- Identify common misconceptions about older adults and the aging process.
- Recognize sensory losses associated with aging and their impact on quality of life.
- Appreciate the utility of aging sensitivity training as a tool to effect attitudinal change.

For more information on how to offer Aging Sensitivity Training to employees or students, contact [magec@med.miami.edu](mailto:magec@med.miami.edu).

## The Past Few Months ...

### Fall Prevention Awareness Day

September 22, 2009

Miami-Dade County in partnership with the Alliance for Aging and Citrus Health hosted a "Fall Awareness Day" event on Tuesday, September 22, 2009 at Stephen P. Clarke Building, 111 NW 1st Street, Miami.

The South Florida Fall Prevention Coalition, along with other health care providers, provided fall prevention information to seniors who attended.

Additionally, the Florida Department of Health and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs provided a free, live & interactive Satellite Broadcast and Webinar.

The purpose was to provide an overview of fall prevention for older adults.

Participant materials are now available on the Department of Health, Office of Injury Prevention and the Department of Elder Affairs websites listed below:

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo/InjuryPrevention/>

<http://elderaffairs.state.fl.us/index.php>.

The South Florida Fall Prevention Coalition will continue its efforts to bring awareness, education, and collaboration in the South Florida area in regards to preventing falls.

The next meeting to be held at Memorial Regional Hospital South in Hollywood, FL, on November 3rd from 2-4pm.

Please email [sffallprevention@gmail.com](mailto:sffallprevention@gmail.com) for more information.

## Coming soon....

### Ambulatory Care Forum

October 21-23, 2009 – Miami, FL

The purpose of the 2009 Ambulatory Care Forum is to provide a comprehensive review of pertinent topics in ambulatory care medicine. This conference offers an opportunity to contemplate, discuss and analyze current and future challenges facing the facilitation of primary/ambulatory care services for the VISN 8 population.

For more information, [magec@med.miami.edu](mailto:magec@med.miami.edu).

### Update in Geriatrics

February 4-5, 2010- Palm Beach Gardens, FL

Geriatric care addresses the complex needs of older people, focusing on health promotion and the prevention and treatment of disease and disability in the elderly. This activity will improve the medical knowledge of providers regarding common geriatric conditions and increase confidence on the part of clinicians in the specialty of geriatrics.

For more information: [magec@med.miami.edu](mailto:magec@med.miami.edu).

### Advances in Geriatrics Conference

March 3-5, 2010 – Fort Lauderdale, FL

MAGECs Advances in Geriatrics Conference will target multiple disciplines to improve their understanding of significant issues surrounding the older population including elder abuse, end-of-life issues, cultural sensitivity, and health literacy. Additionally, partnering with the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, attendees will learn about the considerable risks involved in older adults and gambling.

Registration opens January, 2010.

[Http://www.miami.edu/magec](http://www.miami.edu/magec)

In the news...

## ***Gambling May Increase Suicide Risk in Older People***

By Lia Nower, J.D., Ph.D. and

Alex Blaszczynski, Ph.D.

<http://www.selfhelpmagazine.com/article/casino-gambling>

Compared to their younger counterparts, older gamblers who consider themselves to have a gambling problem, compulsive gambling, a gambling addiction and ask casinos to bar them from returning to the gambling casino are three to four times more likely to do so because they fear they will kill themselves if they don't stop betting, according to a psychological study.

Researchers Lia Nower, JD, PhD, of the Rutgers University Center for Gambling Studies, and Alex Blaszczynski, PhD of the University of Sydney, Australia, looked at 1,601 self-described problem gamblers who asked between 2001 and 2003 to be banned from Missouri casinos.

Older adults over age 55 in this study -- reported gambling an average of 17 years before self-exclusion more than twice the length of time reported by younger adults. All participants were asked to cite the main reason or reasons why they sought to be barred from casinos.

**Learn more about compulsive gambling and older adults at the Advances in Geriatrics Conference, 2010**

Younger, middle-aged and older adults all gave as the primary reasons gaining control, needing help and hitting rock bottom. However, nearly 14 percent of older adults surveyed a higher proportion than any other group indicated they sought help because they wanted to prevent themselves from committing suicide.

This is particularly troubling because, irrespective of age, problem gamblers have reported rates of suicidal ideation and/or attempts as high as six times those found in the general population, Nower says. This study is the first to examine age differences in the demographic characteristics and gambling preferences of people who ask to be barred from casinos.

Under these programs, gamblers who believe they have a problem can enter an agreement with a casino and/or state regulators authorizing casino staff to bar them. If they are found on the premises, they agree to be physically removed and possibly charged with trespass.

Exclusion periods can range from six months to an irrevocable lifetime ban. In 1996, Missouri became the first state in the United States to implement an exclusion program. Similar programs now operate in Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi and New Jersey, as well as six Canadian provinces and a handful of other countries, according to the researchers.



Other key differences among demographic groups:

- Compared to younger adults, older adults were more likely to prefer non-strategic games such as slot machines, video poker and lottery tickets. The researchers noted that such preferences may accelerate the onset of gambling problems, particularly in light of the misperceptions of randomness and the probability of winning such games.
- In addition, the older adults in this sample began gambling at a significantly later age than the other two groups. In particular, older women began gambling at about 49 but did not experience serious gambling problems until around the age of 60, the researchers wrote. In contrast, men began gambling more than a decade earlier, at 37, and also self-excluded around age 60.
- Older adults are also less likely to receive mental health treatment, due to factors including inadequate Medicare coverage, under-diagnosis and a lack of physician referrals. This reluctance to access care, combined with the increased potential for suicidal ideation, could increase the risk for self-harm among older adult problem gamblers without targeted interventions to assist them in accessing services, the researchers wrote.

**Article:**

Characteristics of Problem Gamblers 56 Years of Age or Older: A Statewide Study of Casino Self-Excluders, Lia Nower, PhD, JD, Rutgers University Center for Gambling Studies, and Alex Blaszczynski, PhD, University of Sydney; *Psychology and Aging*, Vol. 23, No. 2.

This information was obtained from The American Psychological Association (APA), in Washington, DC.

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**Look for our next issue in January, 2010!**

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