What We Can Do To Address The Global Gap In Geriatric Needs
By Barbara Kamholz, MD, Member of CUGH Capacity Building Subcommittee of the Education Committee. bakamholz@gmail.com

3/10/23

THE URGENT NEEDS OF OLDER PERSONS IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

Elderly populations in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) are growing at least twice as fast as those in wealthier countries. Fertility is declining in most areas of the world, which runs counter to the advances in age span and numbers of elderly. There will be increasingly fewer younger and healthier people to support the aging population, whose medical needs are quite distinct from those of younger persons. The risk of isolation of older persons is also significant, as worldwide trends are for the migration of younger people to urban areas for work and education.

In many LMIC, access to medical care, especially specialized care for the distinct needs of older people, is quite limited, especially in rural areas where most of the population lives. In many LMIC, elderly persons with a history of hard work and little medical care are frail, a condition that implies instability and vulnerability to acute decompensation. Unless good preventive care and social support are given routinely to aging populations, the burden on healthcare systems and on individual families will become unsustainable.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF OLDER POPULATIONS IN LMIC?

**Capacity building is foremost.**

[Evaluation of global health **capacity** **building** initiatives in **low**-and **middle**-**income** **countries**: A systematic review.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33110574/)

Naal H, El Koussa M, El Hamouch M, Hneiny L, Saleh S.J Glob Health. 2020 Dec;10(2):020412. doi: 10.7189/jogh.10.020412.PMID: 33110574

[Human resources for health interventions in high- and **middle**-**income** **countries**: findings of an evidence review.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32513184/)

Witter S, Hamza MM, Alazemi N, Alluhidan M, Alghaith T, Herbst CH.Hum Resour Health. 2020 Jun 8;18(1):43. doi: 10.1186/s12960-020-00484-w.PMID: 32513184

 [Let'**s** Take it to the Clouds: The Potential of Educational Innovations, Including Blended Learning, for **Capacity** **Building** in **Developing** **Countries**.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26340485/) Marrinan H, Firth S, Hipgrave D, Jimenez-Soto E.Int J Health Policy Manag. 2015 Jun 27;4(9):571-3. doi: 10.15171/ijhpm.2015.121.PMID: 26340485

[Capacity building in low- and middle-income countries: The essentials of sustainable education programs.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35877146/)Silvers R, Watters R, Van Meter J.Nurse Pract. 2022 Aug 1;47(8):32-40. doi: 10.1097/01.NPR.0000841940.71824.f6.PMID: 3587714

[Handbook on monitoring and evaluation of human resources for health : with special applications for low- and middle-income countries](https://search.library.ucsf.edu/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991001425539706536&context=L&vid=01UCS_SAF:UCSF&lang=en&search_scope=DN_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any%2Ccontains%2Cpreventive%20medical%20management%20in%20low%20and%20middle%20income%20countries&pcAvailability=false)

Poz, Mario Roberto Dal.; World Health Organization.; World Bank.; United States. Agency for International Development.

**The Critical Role of Frailty in LMIC**

[Frailty and the prediction of dependence and mortality in low- and middle-income countries: a 10/66 population-based cohort study.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26063168/)

At J, et al. BMC Med. 2015. PMID: 26063168

Potential nonpharmacological interventions to prevent frailty among elderly in low- and middleincome countries: A protocol for systematic review. Ara R, Monisha UK, Nova TJ, Chowdhury S, Nabi MH, Hawlader MD. Medicine. 2022;101:4(e28708).42021290417 1

**Dementia**

Two thirds of people with dementia reside in LMIC, where geriatric resources are almost never found. Meeting the needs of persons with dementia, and of families with relatives with dementia, is a huge challenge in LMIC.

 Stoner, Charlotte R. et al. “Psychosocial Interventions for Dementia in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs): a Systematic Review of Effectiveness and Implementation Readiness.” Aging & mental health 25.3 (2021): 408–419. Web.

 Mattap, Siti Maisarah et al. “The Economic Burden of Dementia in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs): a Systematic Review.” BMJ global health 7.4 (2022): e007409–. Web.

**Developing Research Capacity**

 [**Building** a 'Virtual Library': continuing a global collaboration to strengthen research **capacity** within Nepal and other **low**- and **middle**-**income** **countries**.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36200469/)

Elmore CE, Acharya SC, Dulal S, Enneking-Norton F, Hamal PK, Kattel R, Maurer MA, Paudel D, Paudel BD, Shilpakar R, Shrestha DS, Thapa U, Wilson DT, LeBaron V.Glob Health Action. 2022 Dec 31;15(1):2112415. doi: 10.1080/16549716.2022.2112415.PMID: 36200469

[Research Capacity Strengthening in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Ethical Explorations.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28661286/)

Hyder AA, Rattani A, Pratt B.J Law Med Ethics. 2017 Mar;45(1):129-137. doi: 10.1177/1073110517703106.PMID: 28661286

**Working with Global Resources**

 [The Global Cohort of Doctoral Students: **Building** Shared Global Health **Research** **Capacity** in High-**Income** and **Low**- and **Middle**-**Income** **Countries**.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33569284/)

Abdelmenan S, Andersen CT, Getnet F, Iyer HS, Molebatsi K, Passarelli S, Sauer SM, Semakula M.Ann Glob Health. 2021 Jan 25;87(1):10. doi: 10.5334/aogh.3160.PMID: 33569284