NIA and COVID-19: Research Preparedness and Response

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NIA’s Mission

• Support and conduct genetic, biological, clinical, behavioral, social, and economic research on aging

• Foster the development of research and clinician scientists in aging

• Provide research resources

• Disseminate information about aging and advances in research to the public, health care professionals, and the scientific community, among a variety of audiences
COVID-19 Risk Factors Influenced by Race, Income, and Education Disparities Across Age Categories

Racial and Ethnic Minorities Are More Likely to Experience COVID-19-Related Discrimination and Mental Distress

The NIA-funded Understanding America Study surveyed COVID-19-associated discrimination (CAD) and mental distress during the initial coronavirus outbreak (March—April 2020).

CAD was more commonly experienced among:
- Racial and ethnic minorities (especially non-Hispanic Blacks and Asians)
- Immigrants
- Face mask wearers
- Those with COVID-19-related symptoms

CAD was associated with increased mental distress.

Advancing Age, Male Sex Predict Death Among Hospitalized COVID-19 Patients

New research collaboratory designed to spur innovation and improve dementia care

Collaboratory Goals:

• Enhance research development and investigator capacity:
  • Guide pilot Embedded Pragmatic Clinical Trials (ePCTs), support transformation into full-scale ePCTs.
  • Resource for NIA-funded investigators conducting ePCTs in persons with dementia.
  • Support training through career award, workshops, and on-line modules.

• Develop and disseminate technical, policy, and best practices

• Engage stakeholders

Adapted from Bardenheier, B., et al. (2021). Manuscript submitted for publication
No Increase in Short-Term Mortality Following COVID-19 Vaccination Among Frail Older Adults

Mortality per 100,000 residents (Dec 18, 2020 – Jan 1, 2021)

- Real-time data on post-vaccination adverse events across 284 nursing facilities
- Data also used by CDC for adverse event monitoring
- Short-term mortality rates appear unrelated to vaccination for COVID-19 in nursing home residents.

Clinical Trials Pivot to Keep Studies Going

Examples of Shifts to Clinical Trial Protocols in response to COVID-19

• Exercise trials are now using virtual coaching and fitness training

• Trials with intravenous infusions of medication are moving to in-home infusions

• Trials have shifted to remote monitoring and screening of participants

A number of these flexibilities will remain even after trial sites re-open as they present greater options and reduce barriers for participants