



UW-Madison, School of Nursing Older Adult Project

Description: The older adult project was started at the UW-Madison School of Nursing in 2012 by a clinical instructor who wanted to provide students with unique opportunities to learn from and about older people. Initially, nursing students and community volunteers met in person four times over the semester. Now, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these meetings will happen by phone or through secure online platforms. (Since students will conduct health assessments and discuss health issues with volunteers, we will make sure student communications comply with the HIPAA health privacy law.)

The students' learning objectives for this clinical experience are:

- Understand the complex social context in which older adults interact with nurses, including ethical, legal, and financial concerns related to health care for older adults
- Reflect on ageist assumptions they might hold and identify biases related to caring for an older adult population
- Increase confidence in completing standardized assessments and communicating with older adults
- Examine common problems and syndromes occurring in aging and how older adults adapt to maintain independence

If you are interested in helping shape future health care professionals and having the opportunity to receive individualized assessments and health education, this project may be of interest. Questions to ask yourself:

- Are at least 65 years old?
- Do you live in your own home (apartment or house), or in an independent or assisted living community?
- Would like to talk with a nursing undergraduate student, on a monthly basis throughout the fall semester (approximately September 2-December 10)?
- Are comfortable sharing health information and concerns in secure, confidential conversations?
- Are you willing to talk with a student once per month, for 60 – 90 minutes each time?
 - *Alternative:* If you prefer, you may have shorter conversations more frequently with the student. For example, you may talk twice per month, for 30 – 45 minutes at a time.

We are reaching out to various community organizations such as yours in order to recruit approximately 210 older adults for this senior level nursing student experience. Nursing students will be supervised by one of our UW-School of Nursing faculty clinical instructors. The information gathered from the project will be used for educational purposes only. However, should there be any incidental findings (findings related to undiagnosed health issues) UW faculty and students will meet with the older adult to seek permission to share findings with the older adult's primary care provider.

Please contact Dr. Lisa Bratzke if you have any questions or are interested in learning more bratzke@wisc.edu or (608) 884-0122.

School of Nursing