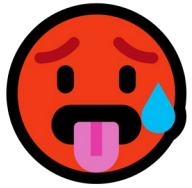


Mentoring Outside Your Comfort Zone



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Mentoring vs Collaboration

- Mentorship
  - You feel personally invested in mentee success
  - Investment of your time not contingent on return
    - You red pen their papers and grants: Even when you have your own deadline
  - Investment of your $$ not contingent on return
  - You actively promote them even when they are not watching
- What does this mean when mentee's science feels distant from yours?
  - Takes a leap of faith

Geriatrics and Transplant Hepatology
HUH? 🤔

- Observation (From the awesome and amazing Dr. Jennifer Lai)
  - I think there may be more to assessing the health of transplant patients than just the lab tests (MELD score)
  - I think that frailty stuff I hear you geriatricians talk about is also going on in my patients
  - Surgeons make a lot of decisions about transplant candidacy based on their instincts (“the eyeball test”). I think this is largely frailty. We could do better if we measured this systematically

Physical Function and Liver Transplant

- Short Physical Performance Battery (SPPB) strongly predicts wait list mortality
  - Survive to transplant: Mean score =11
  - Death/delisting: Mean score =9
  - Risk per SPPB point =1.19 (1.07-1.32) after accounting for MELD
- SPPB strongly predicts in death/delisting in oldest patients after adjusting for MELD
  - Age <65, SPPB >9: RR=1.0
  - Age <65, SPPB $\leq$ 9: RR= 1.40
  - Age >65, SPPB > 9: RR= 1.57
  - Age > 65, SPPB $\leq$ 9: RR= 2.36

- Lai; Liver Transplantation; 21: 1465;
- Lai; Am J Trans 2014:14:1870

Mentoring Out of Your Comfort Zone

- We don’t have to know everything. Our mentees are quite smart and capable
  - They know what the key issues in their field
  - When a young investigator sees something wrong with their field, they are onto something
- We can help mentee understand key concept of our field and how to measure them
  - We can help them sell their idea to our peers

Unexpected Dividends

- I gained a better vision for the wide applicability of geriatric measures
  - Across diseases
  - Across life course
- A more ambitious vision for our Pepper Center
  - Develop the people who will bring Geriatrics into disciplines across medicine

Qualitative Research

- Long-time admirer of qualitative research
  - Awareness of the nuance/why missing from my data driven studies
  - Loved the depth of qualitative science
  - Jane Goodall rocks!
- But the concept of mentoring a qualitative researcher seemed absurd
  - Far removed from methods I used
  - Little expertise with the methods

Older Persons Living Alone With Cognitive Impairment

- Elena Portacolone, PhD
  - Finishing post-doc in Medical Sociology
  - Passionate about improving care for the most socially vulnerable older persons
  - Concerned: Large number of persons struggling with conditions of aging
    - No social support
    - Limited financial resources
  - Deep observation: Understand lives, struggles, values
- UCSF Pepper Center leadership agreed methods were far afield from what we did
- AND this was an individual and work we had to support

Barriers to Care in Older Persons with Cognitive Impairment

- In depth interviews with 76 health professionals
  - Lack of an advocate
  - Incomplete medical history
  - Complexities of isolation
  - Crisis dominated health care system

- Portalone E; 2023: Jama Netw Open

Lessons: Moving Out of Your Comfort Zone

- Dr. Portacolone was already an expert in anthropology, sociology, qualitative methods
- Pepper Center Faculty had a lot to offer
  - We were experts in dementia care
  - We were doing lots of data-based research on dementia care and outcomes and ”knew what we did not know”
  - We knew how to write K awards and frame a scientific argument
  - We knew how to get this work into mainstream medical journals

Unexpected Dividends

- Qualitative Research has become an important part of our Pepper Center
  - Multimethod grant applications have become much common
  - Over half of our K applications have a qualitative aim
- Qualitative research meets intervention research
  - Qualitative methods crucial to the design of the intervention
  - Grant reviewers want to see a qualitative evaluation
- Qualitative Science Meets Quantitative Science
  - Artificial Intelligence is bringing the methods together

Ingredient For Team Based Interdisciplinary Science

- Mentor out of your comfort zone
  - Initially feels like an act of citizenship and benificience
  - Dividends to your work will be huge