

Ohio Association of Gerontology and Education Research Forum

*Presented at the 49th OAGE Annual Conference
The Ohio State University*

*Thursday, April 16, 2026
11:15AM – 12:45PM*

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Sponsored by [Benjamin Rose](#)



Executive Summary

The second annual OAGE Research Forum brought together researchers, practitioners, and community partners from across Ohio to highlight emerging aging-related research and foster collaboration across the state's growing research network. Featuring 16 poster presentations, the Forum created a space for attendees to share innovative approaches and explore opportunities to strengthen Ohio's aging services through research, evaluation, and cross institutional partnerships.

The overarching goal of the Forum was to encourage collaboration among Ohio's research and aging networks—both regionally and nationally—to support data-informed decisions and increase funded research that improve the lives of older adults. Presentations reflected a broad range of disciplines and perspectives, while collectively reinforcing the importance of coordinated, person-centered, and evidence-based approaches to aging services and supports.

Several themes emerged throughout the Forum.

- A strong emphasis on **person-centered aging and lived experience** highlighted a growing shift toward more holistic frameworks for understanding aging. Research explored topics such as social connection, identity, and leisure motivation, underscoring the importance of mental, social, and emotional well-being alongside physical health.
- Another key theme focused on **caregiving, dementia, and elder protection**. Presentations addressed proactive interventions related to elder mistreatment, financial exploitation, caregiver support, and dementia awareness initiatives in both traditional and nontraditional settings. Collectively, these projects reflected a broader movement toward prevention-oriented models using cross-sector collaboration among healthcare providers, legal systems, social services, and aging networks.
- Research related to **care coordination** emphasized the need for more accessible, responsive, and integrated systems of care. Several projects explored care navigation, referral systems, and client experience data as mechanisms for improving service delivery. Presenters highlighted the importance of scalable and replicable models that can address the unique needs of Ohio's diverse communities.
- The Forum also underscored the urgent need for **workforce development** strategies that support Ohio's aging-in-place initiatives. Research focused on caregiver education, workforce retention, and organizational partnerships aimed at building stronger regional pipelines for direct care professionals and home health workers.

Together, the OAGE Research Forum highlighted the depth and breadth of aging-related research occurring across Ohio while identifying meaningful opportunities for future collaboration, innovation, and funding. The session reinforced a shared commitment to building a stronger, more connected aging network that supports older adults, caregivers, and communities through evidence-based practice and collaborative action.

The remainder of this booklet includes a complete list of Research Forum presentations, along with digital copies of poster presentations shared during the Forum. These materials are intended to support continued learning, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing. Please note that all poster content remains the intellectual property of the individual author(s) and presenter(s). Materials included in this booklet may not be reproduced, distributed, or used without appropriate citation and/or permission from the original author(s).

The breadth of innovation, collaboration, and emerging scholarship represented throughout this year's Research Forum reflects the continued momentum of aging-related research across Ohio. We are energized by the work presented, encourage you to collaborate across institutions, and look forward to seeing the ideas, partnerships, and presentations that emerge at the 2027 OAGE Annual Conference.

--OAGE Research Forum Committee

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Reflection of Motivation Behind Leisure Activities Throughout the Life Span: A Case Study

Abigail C. Aultz, MS; Julie Brown, PhD
aa425625@ohio.edu; brownj14@ohio.edu
College of Health Sciences and Professionals,
Ohio University, Athens, OH

Keywords: Motivation, Life-span, Leisure Activities

Project Status: In-Progress

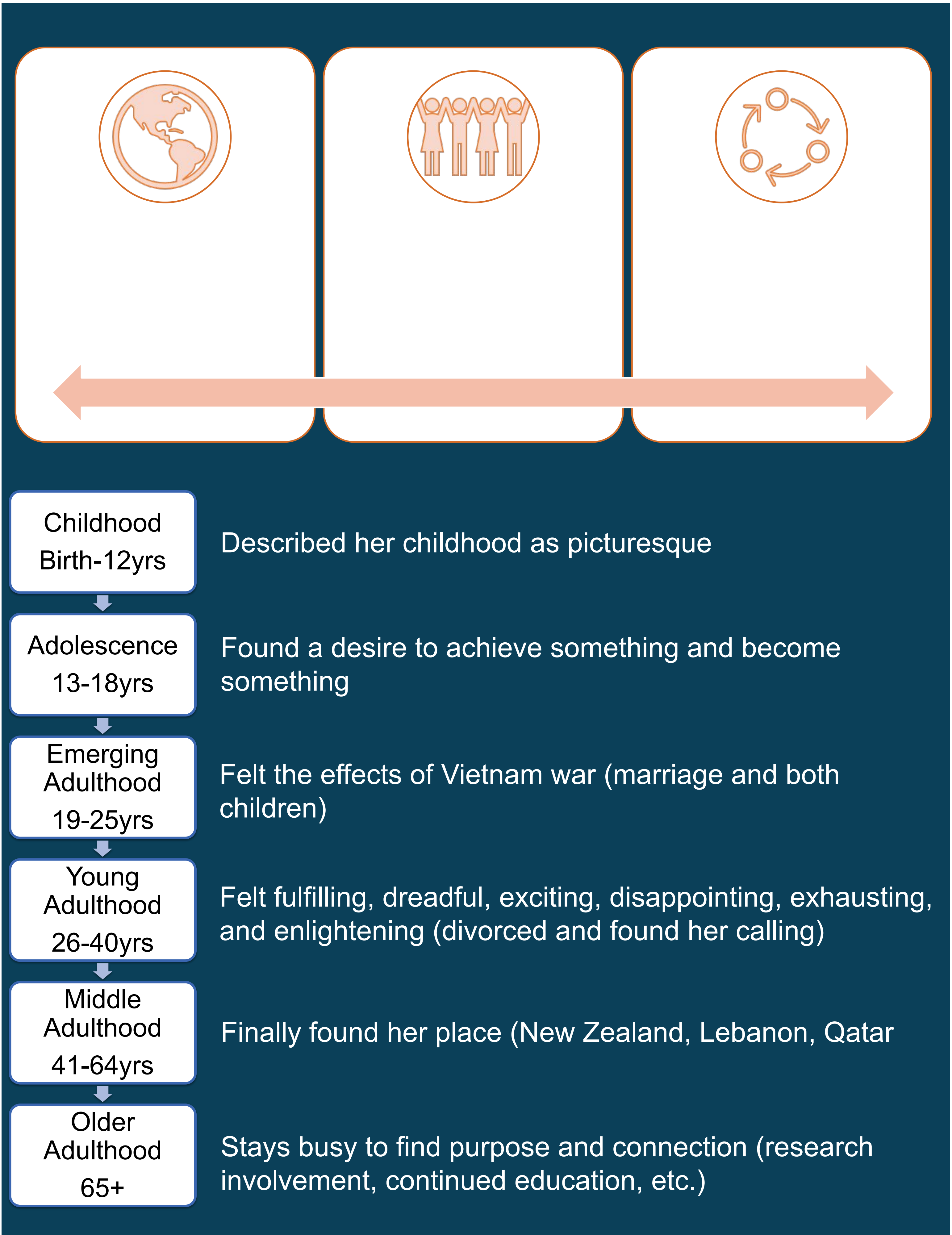
Seeking Project Partners: Yes

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Through a retrospective examination of motivational factors that may have impacted selection of leisure activities, both indoor and outdoor, throughout the life span, this case study identified three themes that were consistent motivators for leisure activity throughout the lifespan of an individual.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what environmental, social, and economic variables existed within each stage of life.
2. Determine what leisure activities were selected during each stages of life
3. Retrospectively address motivation behind each activity for indoor and outdoor leisure activities.



PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

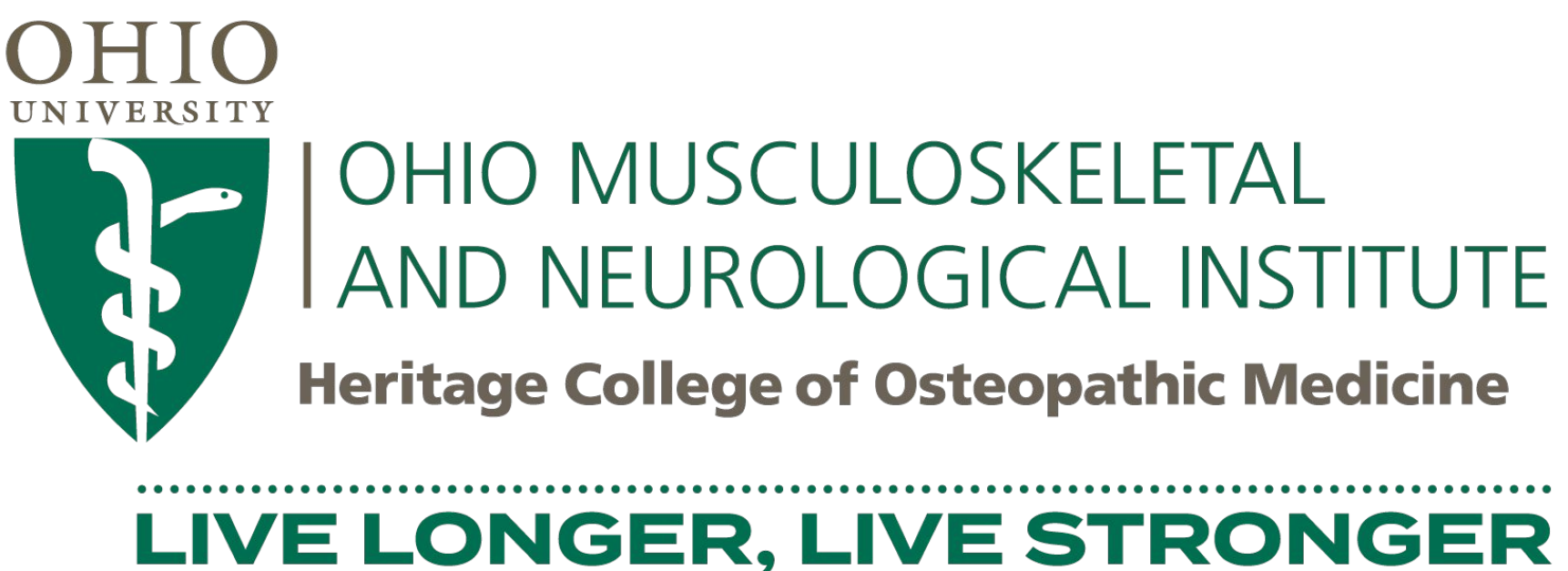
- 78 yrs old (year of birth: 1947)
- Born in Pittsfield, MA
- Experienced affects of Vietnam war
- 2 children and 2 grandchildren
- Taught design around the world

MAIN CONCLUSION

Cultural, Social, and life purpose were related to leisure activity decisions.

KEY REFERENCE POINTS

- Life story of my participant
- Impact of environmental, social, and economic variables on leisure activities
- Impact of this project on my own future research
- Connection of categories with health span, longevity dividends, and social networking



Strengthening Community Response To Financial Exploitation: A Cross-Sector Interagency Initiative For Early Intervention, Improved Outcomes, and Systemic Capacity Building

Cara Pannell, MS, cpannell@benrose.org,
Samantha E. Tuft, PhD, stuft@benrose.org, &
Jessica Bibbo, PhD, jbibbo@benrose.org
Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging

Keywords: financial exploitation, cross-sector
interagency programing, Adult Protective
Services (APS), Cuyahoga County Financial
Exploitation Task Force (CCFE TF)

Project Status: Recently Funded

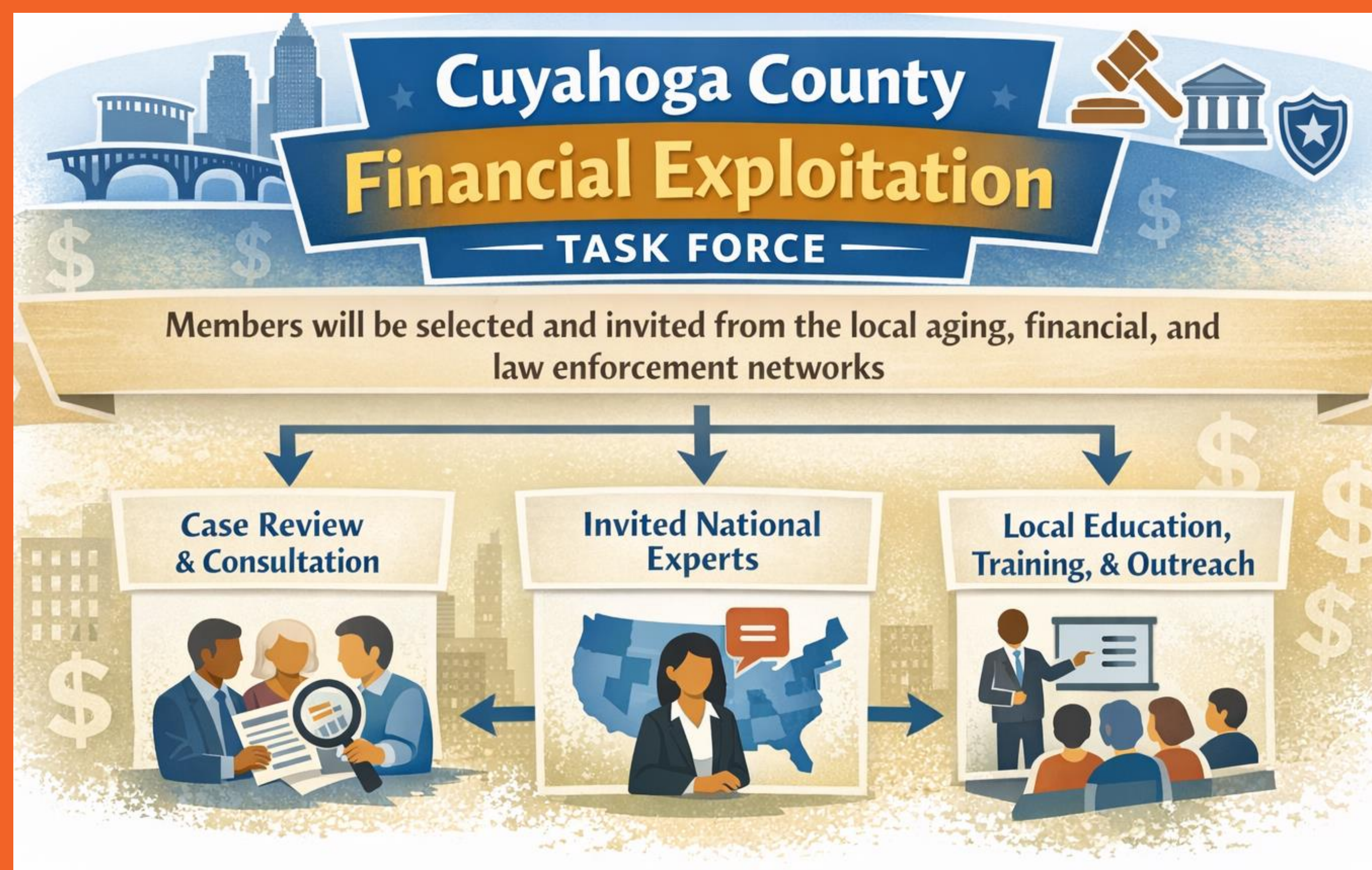
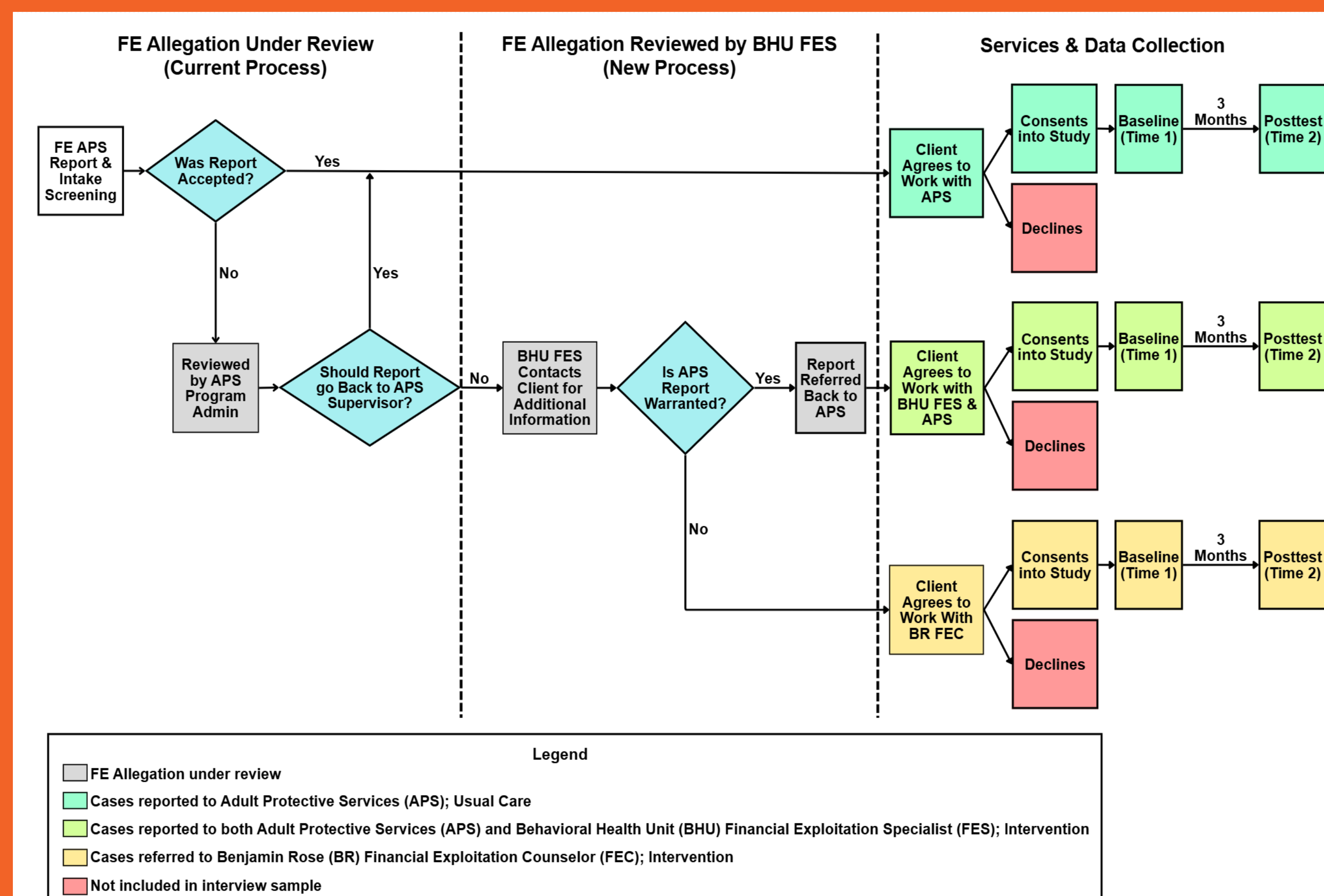
Seeking Project Partners: Yes

Purpose Statement: To develop and evaluate a
cross-sector interagency program to strengthen
the response to financial exploitation and
improve outcomes for older adults experiencing,
or at risk of experiencing, financial exploitation.

Project Objectives:

1. Establish and implement a collaborative
project between Benjamin Rose, Cuyahoga
County Division of Senior and Adult Services
(DSAS), and Cuyahoga County Sheriff's
Department.
2. Develop a cross-sector interagency program
to address financial exploitation.
3. Implement and measure effectiveness of
cross-sector interagency program to serve
individuals at risk for or experiencing financial
exploitation.
4. Disseminate findings locally and nationally.

Approach:



Questions For You:

1. What statewide and local personnel could be a part of the CCFE TF?
 ➤ Bankers
 ➤ Legal professionals
 ➤ Health department workers
 ➤ Government workers
 ➤ Government agencies
 ➤ Senior center employees
2. What deliverables should members of CCFE TF expect?
 ➤ Increased community engagement
 ➤ Increased number of referrals from agencies
 ➤ Improved confidence in identifying financial exploitation

Partner Organizations:

**BENJAMIN
ROSE**
Let's rethink aging.



Cuyahoga County
Division of Senior and Adult Services
Safe. Supported. Independent.

An Examination of the Relationships between Mandatory Reporters and Adult Protective Services

Daniel J. Van Dussen Professor, Jacquelyn Harker, Physical Therapy Student Youngstown State

Key Words: Services; Elder Abuse; Interprofessional Communication, Adult Protective Services

Project Status: In-Development

Seeking Project Partners: Yes

Purpose Statement: This project aims to investigate the role of mandatory reporters in identifying and reporting suspected cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults to Adult Protective Services (APS). Additionally, the study seeks to research the existing interventions designed to improve the communication and collaboration of APS among mandatory reporters, family members, and APS personnel, as well as existing referrals, investigations, and case outcomes to better understand reporting dynamics and systemic challenges.

Project Objectives:

1. Examine the responsibilities, decision-making, and perceived barriers experienced by mandatory reporters when reporting to APS.
2. Identify and evaluate interventions aimed at improving communication and interprofessional collaborations between mandatory reporters, caregivers, and APS.
3. Analyze available data on APS investigations and case outcomes to explore patterns and implications for the older adult populations.

Examining the role of mandatory reporters and APS communication dynamics.

Trends in referrals, investigations, and case outcomes are analyzed to identify potential areas for improvement.



- Interested in collaborating with professionals involved in Adult Protective Services, healthcare services including PT, OT, nursing, social work, legal/ethical compliance, geriatric care, healthcare policy and administration, and interprofessional communication.
- Key reference points include factors influencing mandatory reporting decisions; common barriers to APS referrals; perceptions and misconceptions of APS; communication gaps between reporters and APS.



Addressing Turnover and Workforce Shortages in Home Health Aides: Evidence-Based Retention Strategies

Daniel J. Van Dussen Professor, Jaquelyn Harker, Physical Therapy Student Youngstown State University

Keywords: Direct Care Workers; Turnover; Home Health; Retention.

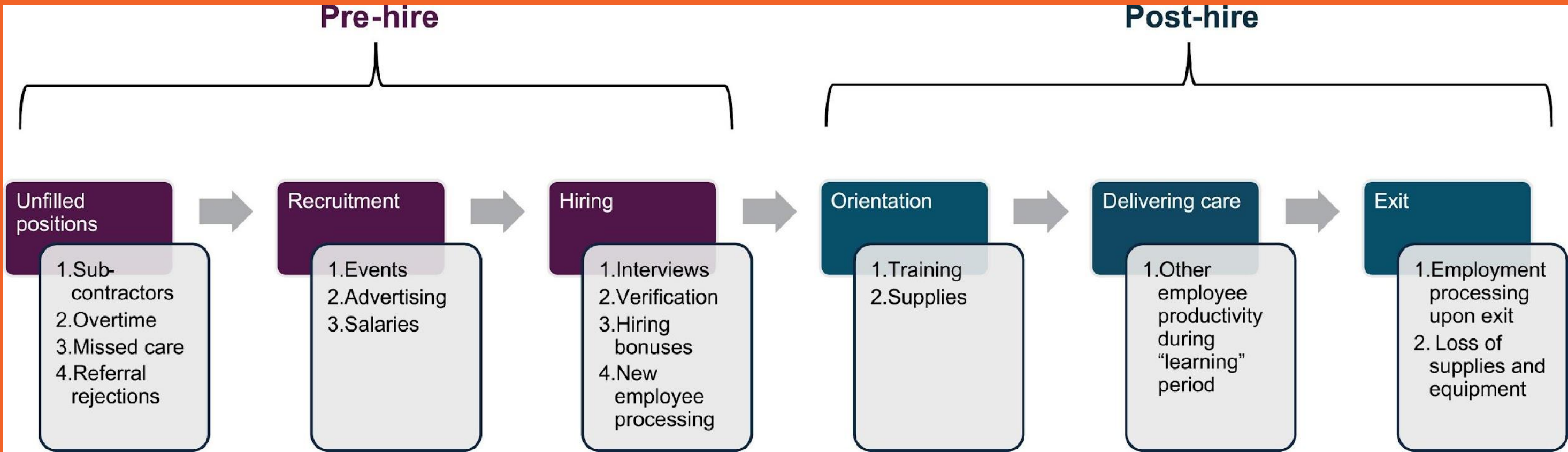
Project Status: In-Development
Seeking Project Partners: Yes

Purpose Statement: To build on our past research to evaluate workforce instability among direct care workers by examining turnover rates, causes of turnover, and projected workforce shortages. The goal is to identify and apply evidence-based intervention strategies to improve retention, increase interest, and overall reduce turnover rates among direct care workers to support sustainable home-based care delivery.

Project Objectives:

1. Analyze turnover rates and identify primary causes of workforce attrition.
2. Examine economic and operational costs of turnover for home health agencies.
3. Identify and evaluate evidence-based strategies and programs that improve retention and workforce recruitment....

High turnover among home health aides- driven by low wages, burnout, and limited advancement- leads to workforce shortages and higher employer costs. This project aims to identify evidence-based strategies, including compensation, mentorship, and career development, to improve retention and workforce stability.



Employee lifecycle from unfulfilled positions to exit, highlighting the cost and workflow inefficiencies at each stage.



- We are seeking collaborators, including home health agencies, healthcare administrators, and researchers to support data collection, program implementation and evaluation. Partnerships with community organizations, workforce development programs, and education institutions are also desired to help expand recruitment pipelines to test evidence-based retention strategies.
- **Key discussion points:**
 - Extremely high turnover rates (up to 79-126%) and rapid workforce churn (Shryer, 2025)
 - Strong projected demand (17% growth; per BLS)
 - Significant employer costs
 - Impact on patient care
 - Evidence-based solutions: compensation increases, mentorships, career pathways
 - Need for data-driven retention pathways

References

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2025). *Home health and personal care aides*.
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/home-health-aides-and-personal-care-aides.htm>

Shyder, D. (2025, December 8). *Industry report: Personal care turnover hits 126 percent as home health referrals rise*. McKnight’s Home Care.

Zagrodney, K. A. P., et. al. (2026). The cost of turnover in home healthcare: A conceptual model. *Healthcare Management Forum*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/08404704251412842>

Title: Aging as Liberation from Appearance Pressure
Subtitle; Older Adults’ Experiences of Reduced Self-Surveillance, Beauty Anxiety, and Identity Change

Author; Ibukunoluwa Odejimi;
Title; Aging as Liberation from Appearance Pressure
Affiliation; Kent State University/ University of Uyo,
Email; iodejimi@kent.edu)

Key words; Older Adults; Appearance Pressure; Self-Surveillance, Life Course, Body Image.

Purpose Statement; This project explores how older adults experience changes in appearance-related pressure as they age. Rather than framing aging as bodily loss, the study examines whether later life is associated with reduced self-surveillance, diminished beauty anxiety, and greater freedom in bodily presentation and identity.

Project Objectives:

- 1. To Examine how older adults describe changes in appearance-related pressure across the life course.
- 2. To Explore experiences of self-surveillance and self-objectification in later life.
- 3. To Understand how changes in appearance pressure relate to identity, confidence.



Methodology
Research Design: This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore how older adults interpret and experience changes in appearance-related pressure across the life course.
Study Population: The target population includes older adults (aged 60+) residing in or attending older adult facilities in Stow, Kent, Akron, Cuyahoga Falls area.
Sampling Strategy: A convenience sampling approach will be used. Participants will be recruited from facilities where the researcher already volunteers. This allows for: Easier access to participants, Established trust and rapport, A concentrated population of older adults
Data Collection Method: Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews
Interviews will focus on Experiences of appearance pressure across life stages, Feelings about body image and self-presentation, Changes in confidence, identity, and self-expression
Data Analysis: Data will be analyzed using thematic analysis, identifying recurring patterns and meanings in participants’ narratives.



This project is actively seeking collaborators to support data collection, analysis, and community engagement. Ideal Partners Include: Researchers in aging, sociology, psychology, or gender studies
Healthcare and senior care professionals, Administrators of older adult facilities, Community organizations working with older populations.

Seeking partners who can provide:
Expertise in qualitative research or aging studies
Support with transcription, or data coding
Opportunities for community-based collaboration and impact

Project Status; Research design finalized
Recruitment sites identified
Data collection beginning soon
Actively seeking collaborators and funding support

A Campus Designed for All: Scalable Solutions for Student Housing and Aging in Place



Older adults have the highest homeownership rates of any age group - !80%. This suggests a substantial base of housing stability within communities like Athens County.

Intergenerational housing models, like Nesterly, greatly **reduce monthly rent** for students and/or includes engagement to **promote aging-in-place** for the older adult homeowner.

*We propose that only students who have earned a "B" or higher in an aging / gerontology course are eligible.

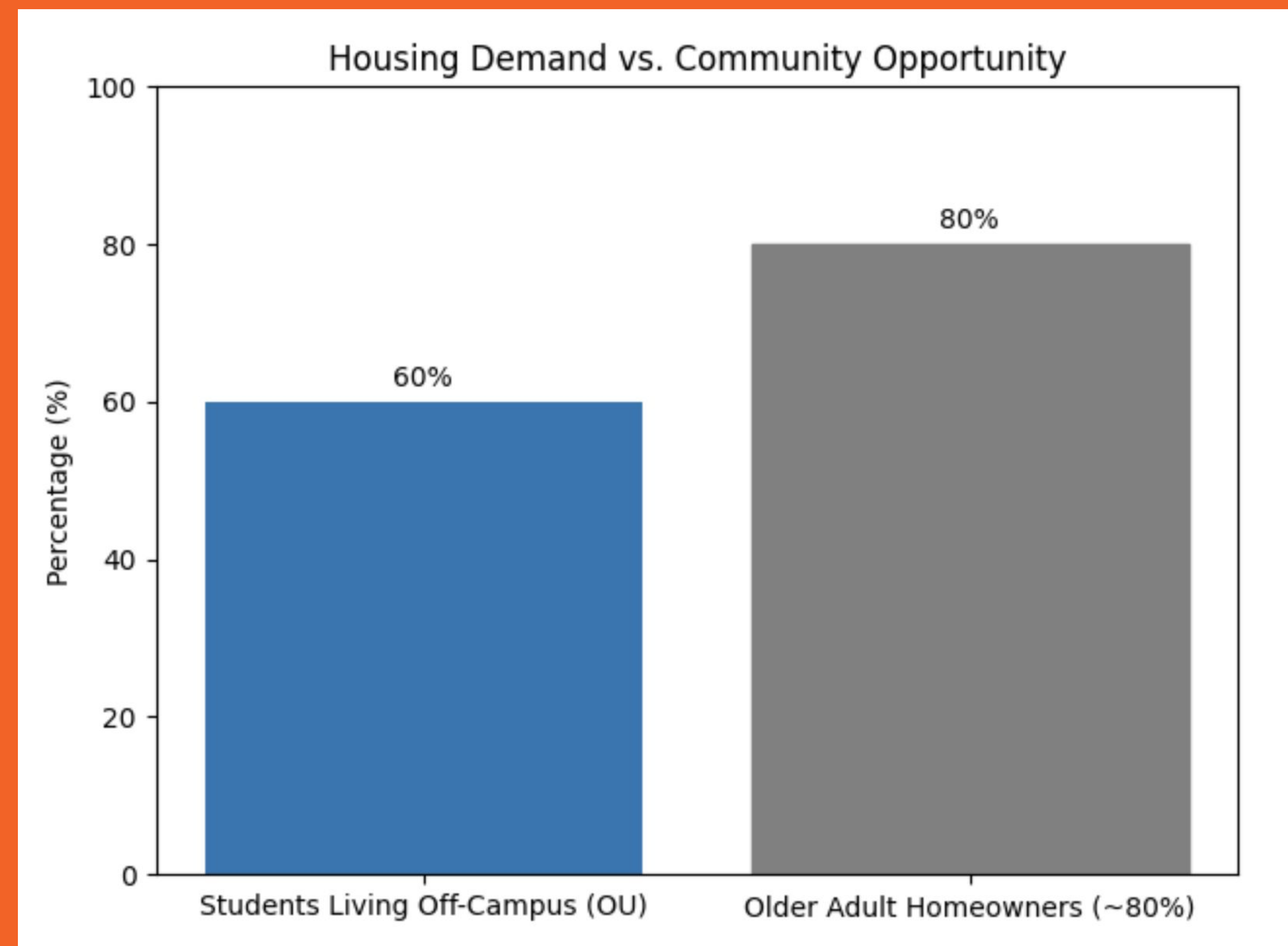
COLLABORATION

We are seeking persons who are exploring similar initiatives at respective universities. This may include:

- University-supported programs
- External vendor support
- Hybrid models



Universities are positioned to address both student housing and aging in place.



Averages for Traditional Student Rentals:

\$800–\$1,200/month (U.S.)

\$500–\$800/month (Athens)

Utilities not included

Julie A. Brown, Ph.D.

David M. Brown, Ph.D.

Ohio University

AgeTech@proton.me

Keywords: Intergenerational housing, Aging in Place, Age-Friendly Universities

Project Status: In-Development

Seeking Project Partners: Yes

INTRODUCTION

Many traditional-aged students face challenges securing affordable and safe housing. Intergenerational shared housing models that pair students with older adults offer a promising approach to address these needs while supporting aging in place.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

To explore and identify an intergenerational shared housing model that enhances quality of life, social connection, and reciprocal support for both Ohio University students and older adults in the community.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Examine intergenerational housing models
2. Identify shared benefits, challenges, and best practices
3. Define key components of successful implementation of best option identified

Title: Understanding Multilevel Barriers to Adult Day Services (ADS) Referrals: A Descriptive Qualitative Study

Subtitle: A Multistakeholder Examination Guided by the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)

Kingsley C. Udeh, MSPH., B.MLS, Doctoral Candidate,
Social Gerontology Scripps Gerontology Center, Miami
University Email: udehkc@miamioh.edu

Keywords: Adult Day Service (ADS), Referral
Processes, Consolidated Framework for
Implementation Research (CFIR), Multilevel Barriers

Project Status: In-Development.

Seeking Project Partners: Yes

Purpose Statement: Adult Day Services (ADS) are essential long-term support programs that promote aging in place, reduce caregiver burden, and delay institutionalization. However, ADS enrollment has declined sharply, and **little is known about how referral processes influence access and uptake**. This study aims to generate actionable knowledge by examining **individual, organizational, and systemic factors** that shape referral dynamics, guided by the updated **CFIR framework**.

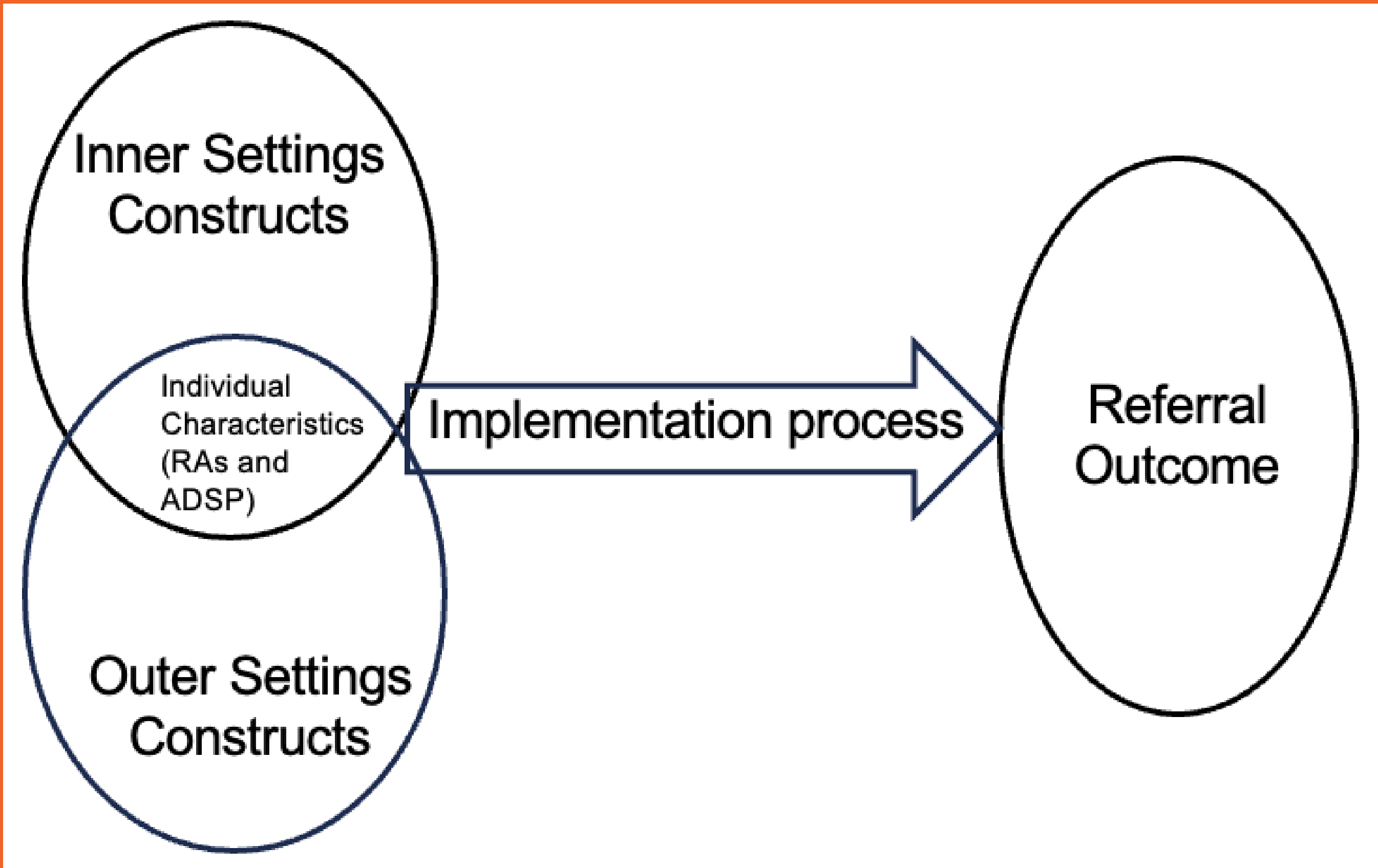
CFIR enables a structured examination of referral inefficiencies, institutional constraints, and cross-sector collaboration challenges.

Project Objectives:

1. To assess referring agents' (RAs) understanding of ADS, referral practices, and perceived barriers/facilitators.
2. To examine ADS providers' perspectives on referral challenges, institutional constraints, and opportunities for improvement

Main Project Focus

This study investigates the **multilevel barriers** that shape referral processes to Adult Day Services (ADS) across three key stakeholder groups: Community-Based ADS referring agents, Facility-Based ADS referring agents, and ADS providers.



Why this matters:

- ADS enrollment declined **36%** between 2014 and 2022 (latest CDC-NPALS Report), despite strong evidence of ADS benefits.
- Referral inefficiencies, limited awareness, and individuals' ADS misconceptions contribute to decline and underutilization.
- No existing research comprehensively examines referral dynamics across stakeholder groups.



Method:

Design: Descriptive Qualitative

Framework: Updated CFIR (2022)

Objective 1, CFIR domains: Inner Setting, Implementation Process.

Objective 2, CFIR domains: Outer Setting, Implementation Process

- **Sample:** 9 – 12 Community-Based RAs, 9 -12 Facility-Based RAs, and 9-12 ADS Providers
- **Data Collection** – Semi-structured Interview
- **Analysis** – Deductive thematic analysis aligned with CFIR

Partners or collaborators:

- Geriatricians, Discharge planners, ADS centers staff/owners, Area Agencies on Aging staff, community-based case managers, etc.

Discussion Points

- ADS enrollment decline is linked to **referral inefficiencies**
- Multilevel barriers vary across stakeholder groups and institutional contexts
- Findings will inform **targeted interventions**, improve referral workflows, and strengthen ADS infrastructure

Significance: An estimated one-third to one-half of family caregivers to persons living with dementia engage in elder mistreatment, with psychological mistreatment the most common type.^{1,2} Little is known about how to prevent elder mistreatment.³

Project Status: Recently funded by the National Institute on Aging, recruitment planned to begin in summer 2026.

Purpose Statement: The primary purpose of this study is to determine the efficacy of *KINDER* at reducing the frequency of psychological mistreatment by family caregivers to persons living with dementia.

Key questions (abbreviated):

1. Does the *KINDER* work?
2. Why does *KINDER* work?
3. Does *KINDER* work differently for different caregivers?

Knowledge and Interpersonal Skills to Develop Enhanced Relationships (*KINDER*)

Kylie Meyer, PhD, Assistant Professor, Co-Director, University Center on Aging and Health, Case Western Reserve University | knm77@case.edu

Keywords: Elder abuse/mistreatment, prevention, family caregivers, dementia

Can a program to support healthy family caregiving relationships prevent psychological elder mistreatment by family caregivers to persons living with dementia?

KINDER is an 8-week psychoeducational program that includes three facilitated discussions, and a weekly workbook lessons that include story-based videos, readings, and reflection.

Pilot study participants demonstrated **reduced relationship strain** and **lower levels of mistreatment** post-intervention.



Knowledge and Interpersonal Skills to Develop Exemplary Relationships Workbook

Seeking Project Partners: Yes! We need help to reach caregivers for the study and are looking for sites to implement in the future.

- We are seeking to identify family caregivers to persons living with dementia to participate in a randomized control trial.
- Our long-term goal is to integrate *KINDER* into health and community settings to prevent psychological elder mistreatment and promote high-quality caregiving.

Funding and Disclosure

Research reported in this poster was supported by National Institute on Aging of the National Institutes of Health under award number R01AG093797 (Meyer). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

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Accessing Mental Health Care in Later Life: A Resource Analysis of Southeastern Appalachian Ohio

AFFILIATIONS



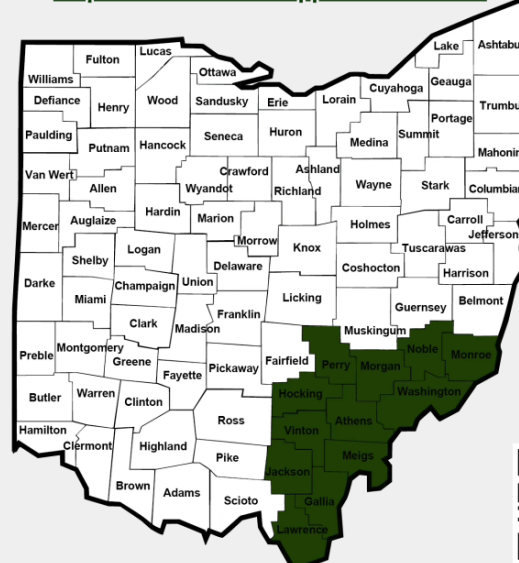
01. Introduction

This poster presents an exploratory resource mapping of mental health services available to adults over the age of 65 in Southeastern Appalachian Ohio, a region characterized by geographic, economic, and workforce-related barriers to care. As mental health needs among aging populations continue to rise, access to appropriate and timely services remains uneven, particularly in rural communities. This project uses publicly available information to identify and categorize mental health resources across twelve counties within Southeastern Appalachian Ohio, including community mental health centers, aging services, organizations, and tele-mental health options. Resources are examined for their accessibility to older adults, with attention to aging-specific services and the availability of remote care.

02. Objective

By highlighting patterns of availability and access, this project aims to illuminate both barriers and opportunities for supporting mental health among older adults in Appalachian regions. The findings seek to inform practice, policy, and future research efforts focused on improving equitable access to mental health services for aging populations in rural communities.

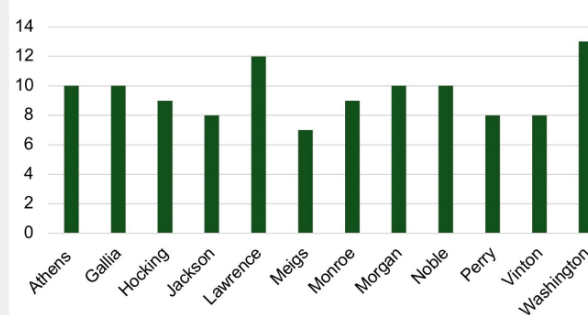
Map of Southeastern Appalachian Ohio:



Ohio's Older Population 2020-2050:

Age Group	2020	2030	2040	2050
Total Population of Ohio	11.8 million	11.7 million	11.4 million	11.1 million
60 and Older	2.86 million (24.2%)	2.94 million (25.1%)	2.72 million (23.8%)	2.62 million (23.5%)
65 and Older	2.1 million (17.4%)	2.3 million (19.5%)	2.1 million (18.6%)	2.0 million (17.6%)
85 and Older	232,830 (2.0%)	213,800 (1.8%)	261,400 (2.3%)	288,630 (2.6%)

Number of Mental Health Services



03. Findings and Analysis

- Per 100,000 population in Appalachian Ohio, the supply of mental health providers is 51% lower than the national average, and 41% lower than the average in non-appalachian Ohio (Appalachian Regional Commission, 2020).
- Adults over the age of 65 are among those at the highest risk for suicide (Ohio Department of Behavioral Health).
- The suicide rate in Appalachian Ohio is 19% higher than the national rate, and 26% higher than the rate in non-appalachian Ohio (Appalachian Regional Commission, 2020).
- Telehealth services expand access to behavioral health care by making appointments more accessible to residents (Thompson, K., 2025).

04. Conclusion

- Long travel distances and low income regions constrains access to specialists.
- Rural aging residents are more likely to connect with family members rather than town-based services.
- Geographic isolation contributes to higher rates of suicide, depression, and poor health outcomes.
- Technology gaps limit the use and benefit of Telehealth services.

Arrested Third Instar (ATI) *Drosophila* Larva as a Model for Studying Aging and Neurodegeneration

Mikalah Kostalas, Prakriti Baral, Daewoo Lee
Neuroscience Program, Department of Biological Sciences, Ohio University, Athens, OH 345701

Keywords: Aging, Neurodegeneration, *Drosophila* Melanogaster, Disease Model

Project Status: Recently Funded & In-development
Seeking Project Partners: No

Purpose Statement: This project aims to evaluate the **Arrested Third Instar (ATI)**

***Drosophila* larva** as a novel model for studying aging and neurodegeneration. Normal *Drosophila* are in the larval phase for around 5 days, creating a limitation to aging and neurodegenerative research. By inducing developmental arrest, this model allows for the examination of age-related neurodegenerative processes within a controlled and accelerated timeframe as the larvae can live up to 35 days. The goal is to determine whether ATI larvae can effectively replicate key features of neurodegeneration by observing the α -synuclein protein associated with Lewy Body Dementia & Parkinson's Disease. The ATI model is aimed at providing a scalable and efficient platform for investigating underlying mechanisms and potential therapeutic targets relevant to age-associated diseases.

Project Objectives:

1. Establish the ATI *Drosophila* larval model to enable extended study of age-dependent processes.
2. Characterize aging and neurodegenerative phenotypes, including oxidative stress and structural changes in neural tissues and neuromuscular junction (NMJ).
3. Assess α -synuclein propagation and associated synaptic dysfunction.

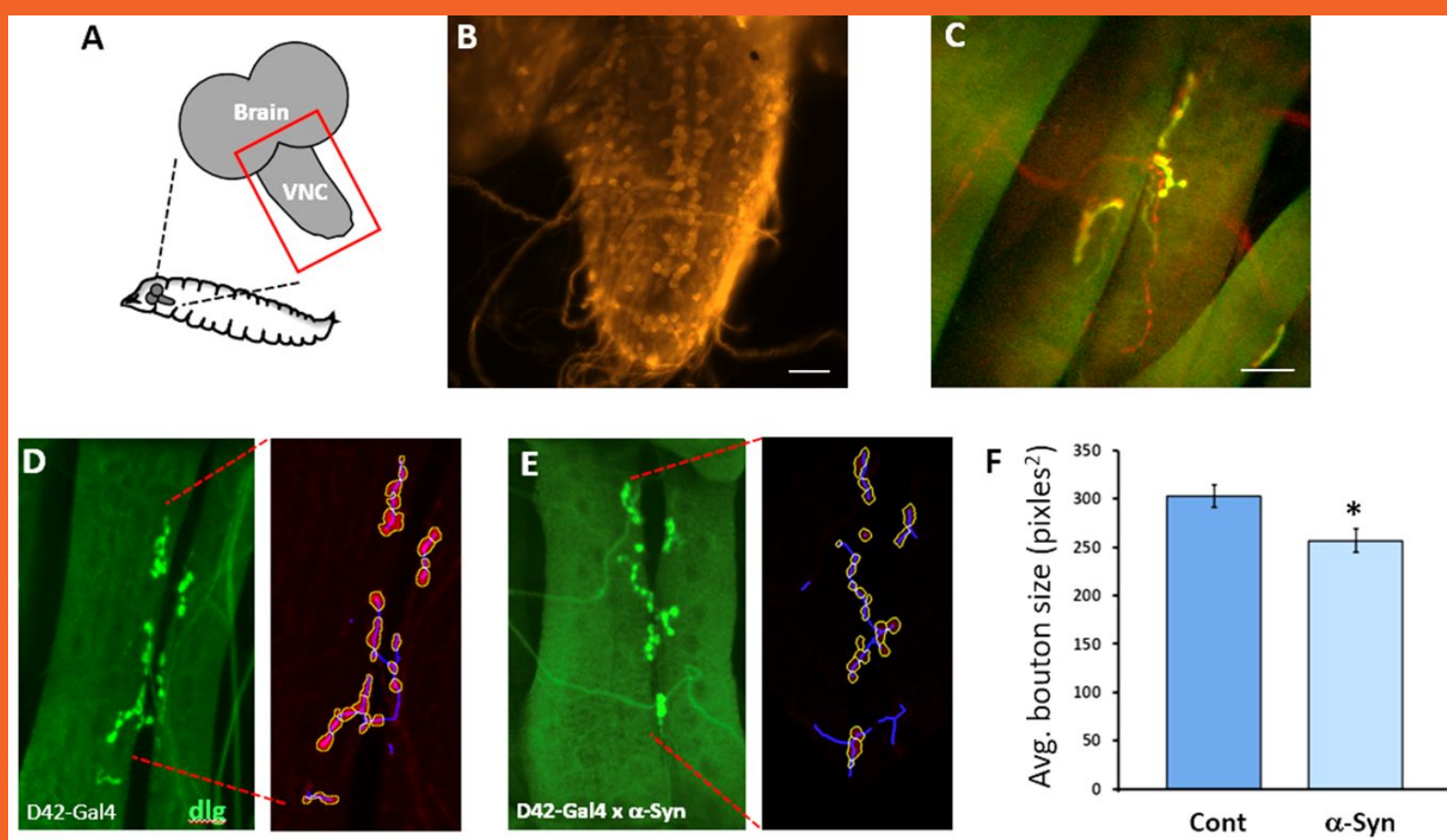


Figure 1. Alpha-synuclein expression and toxicity in non-ATI *Drosophila* larval glutamatergic neurons and NMJs

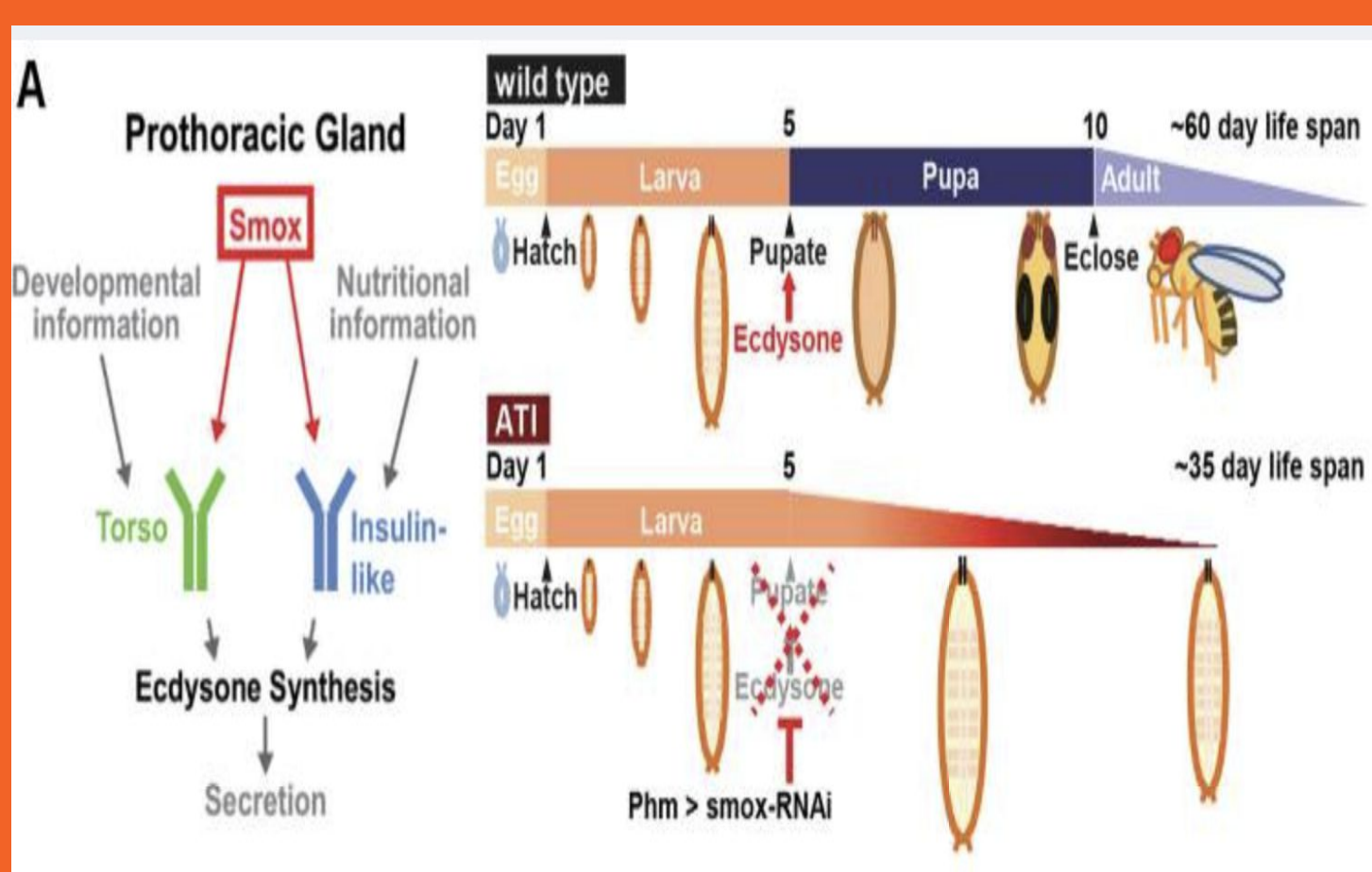


Figure 2. SmoxRNAi-mediated developmental arrest in third instar larvae (ATI).

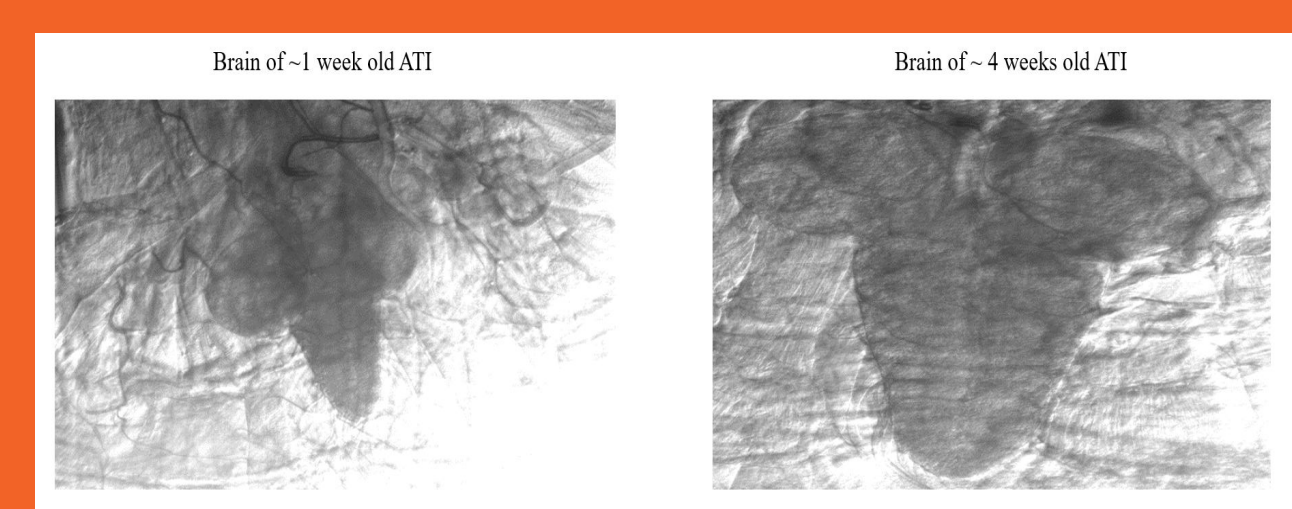


Figure 3. Brain structure of older ATI larvae compared to young ATI.

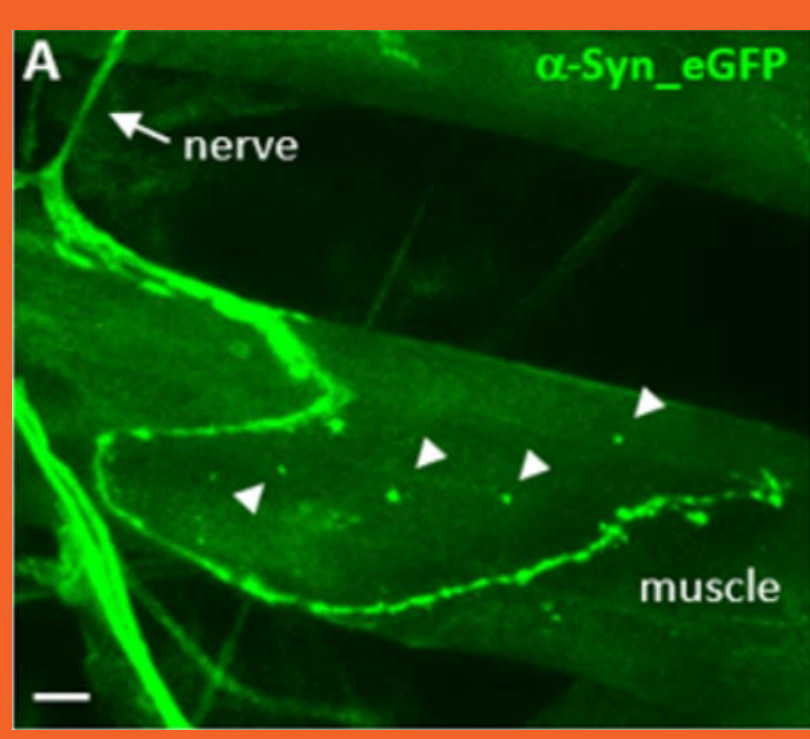


Figure 4. Modeling potential cell-to-cell propagation of α -syn; concluding that NMJ is not a clear enough model to confirm propagation from pre-synaptic to post-synaptic terminal

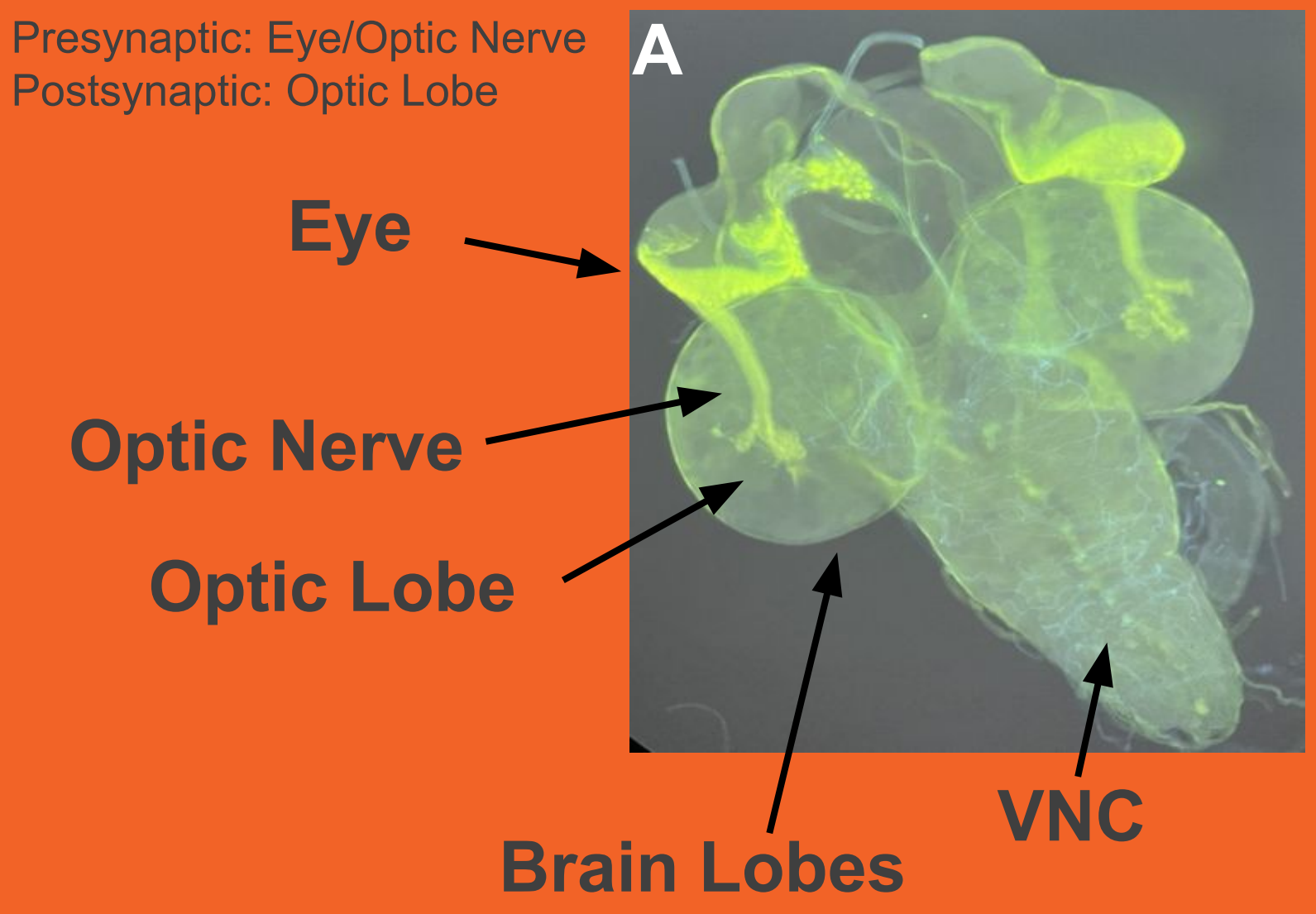
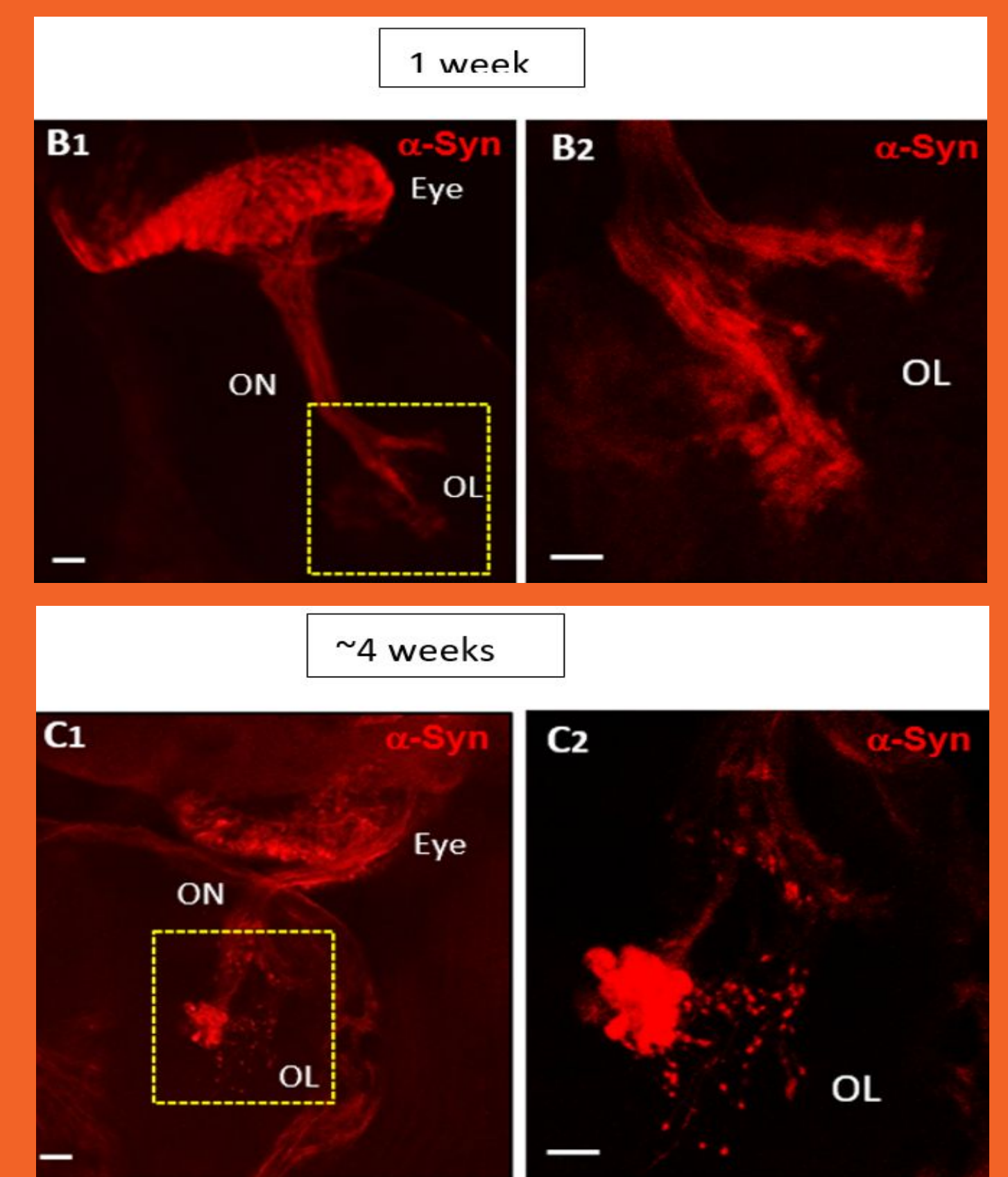


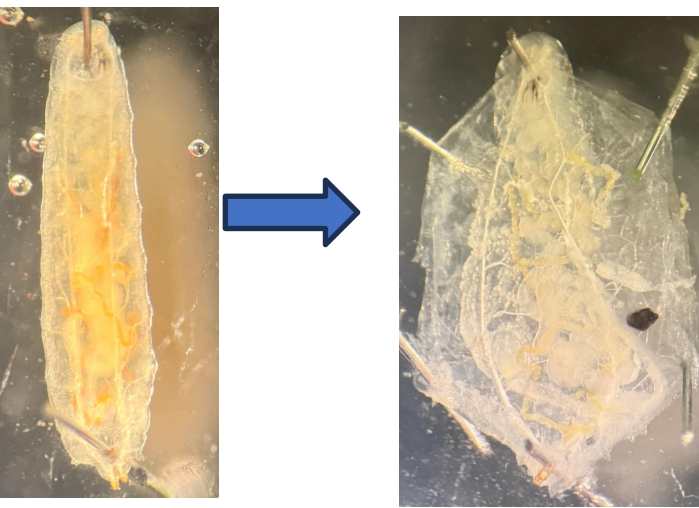
Figure 5. Developed eye model for clear observation of pathogenic α -synuclein protein spread across synaptic compartments A) View of model in normal larval eye B & C) α -syn ATI eye aging comparison. VNC = ventral nerve cord.



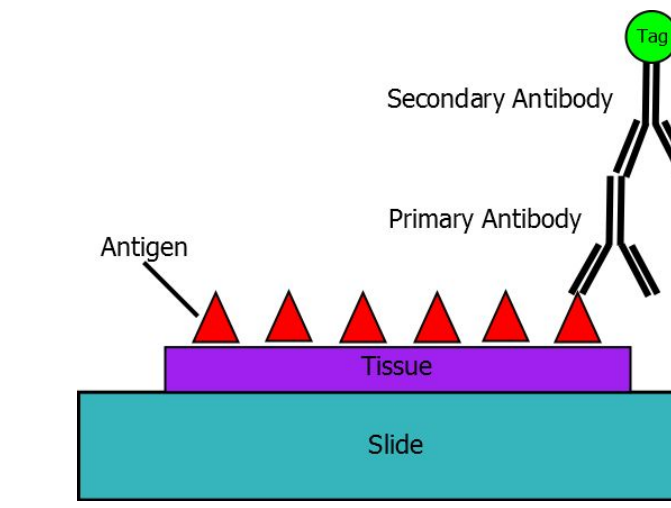
Methods & Materials

Fly lines: a-syn (WT); D42 (Fig.1), OK6, SmoxRNAi; A53T, pth (Fig.4), GMR, SmoxRNAi; A53T, pth (Fig.5)
Antibodies: a-syn Ab MJFR1 (Abcam, #AB138501)

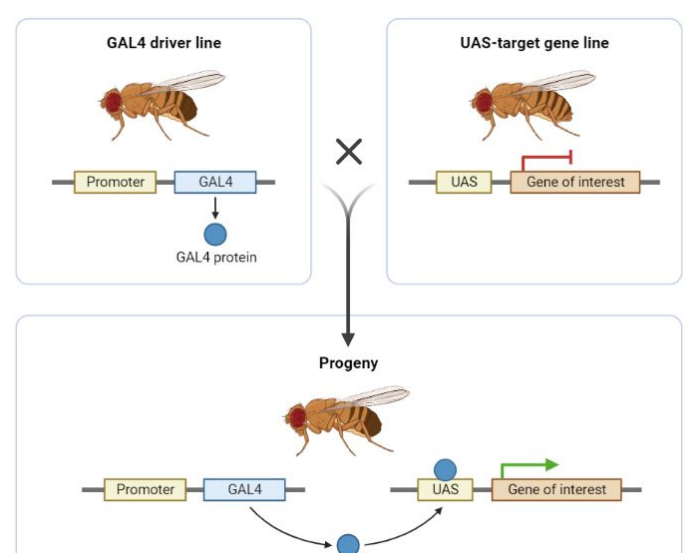
a) Larval Dissection



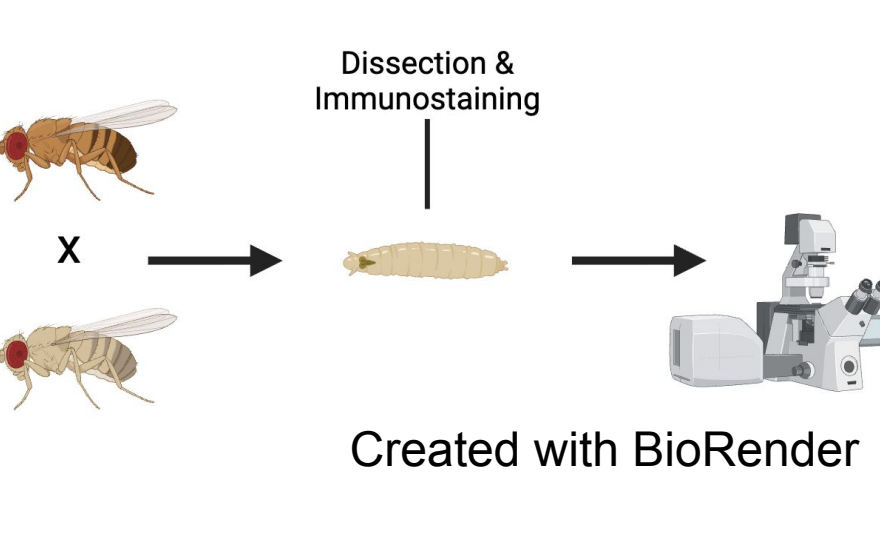
b) Immunostaining



c) UAS-Gal4 System



d) Experimental Workflow



Current Findings

- ATI larvae shows signs of aging including presence of melanotic masses and shriveled fat bodies.
- Brain structure of older ATI appears enlarged and less defined compared to young ATI (Figure 2).
- ATI shows pathogenic protein propagation from presynaptic to postsynaptic terminals, indicating synaptic dysfunction (Figure 3, Figure 5).
- ATI larvae provide a scalable platform to study age-related neurodegeneration.
- Preliminary data indicate aging phenotypes and protein propagation are recapitulated.
- Model may be used for future studies on molecular mechanisms underlying α -Syn spreading and potential therapeutic targets.

Reference & Acknowledgements

Perry S, Goel P, Tran NL, Pinales C, Buser C, Miller DL, Ganetzky B, Dickman D. Developmental arrest of *Drosophila* larvae elicits presynaptic depression and enables prolonged studies of neurodegeneration. Development. 2020 May 21;147(10):dev186312. doi: 10.1242/dev.186312. PMID: 32345746; PMCID: PMC7325439.

This work was supported by the National Institute of Health (NIH) grant (AG098725). The authors would also like to thank Ms. Aeran Lee for all technical support.

Developing Organizational Partnerships to Implement Care Navigation: A Replicable Model for Age-Friendly Health Systems

- **Morgan J Minyo**, PhD, Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, mminyo@benrose.org
- **David M Bass**, PhD, Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, dbass@benrose.org

Keywords: Care Navigation; Community-Based Organizations; Age-Friendly Health Systems

Project Status: In-Development
Seeking Project Partners: Yes

Purpose Statement: Develop a replicable model for establishing organizational partnerships between Age-Friendly Health Systems and community-based organizations to improve care for older adults living with dementia and/or other chronic health conditions and their family and friend caregivers. Benjamin Rose’s evidence-based care navigation program, *BRI Care Consultation*TM, would be included in this model as the linkage that bridges care between health systems and community organizations.

Project Objectives:

1. Develop a feasible, replicable model for establishing organizational partnerships.
2. Implement the new model with Age-Friendly Health Systems and community-based organizations.
3. Evaluate the feasibility and efficacy of the partnership model to improve care for older adults and their family and friend caregivers.

“
... coordinated approaches across clinical and community settings are essential to meet the full spectrum of needs of persons living with dementia and their caregivers. (Reuben et al., 2025)
”

Care Navigation can enhance care coordination between health systems and community organizations, increase caregivers’ self-efficacy, and lower older adults’ health care costs.

“
... high-risk populations are less likely to access early-stage interventions and caregivers are less likely to receive adequate support. These disparities warrant an innovative approach in which health systems partner with community-based organizations to more effectively reach underrepresented and underserved older adults and caregiver dyads. (Ceide et al., 2024)
”



Project Deliverables:

- Business Associates Agreement formalizing the organizational partnership.
- Protocols and manuals to implement the new partnership model.
- Integration of partnership into electronic records of health system and community organization.
- Feasibility data on implementation of Care Navigation under the new partnership model.
- Caregiver ratings of satisfaction with Care Navigation & quality of care under partnership model.

Next Steps:

- Seeking Age-Friendly Health Systems and community-based organizations interested in participating as trial sites to help develop and implement this replicable model.
- Foundation for a model ready to be scaled and tested in a multi-site randomized clinical trial with Age-Friendly Health Systems and community organizations across the U.S.



Title: Between family voice and residents' care choice: Exploring family involvement in residents' care decisions in Ohio nursing homes

Obinna C. Odo, MSW, MSG, Doctoral Candidate in Social Gerontology, Department of Sociology and Gerontology and Scripps Gerontology Center, Miami University, Oxford, OH



Methods

- Qualitative design
- 3 Nursing Homes (Urban, Suburban, Rural)
- Semi-structured in-depth interviews
- 24 Participants:
 - Family members
 - Residents
 - Nursing home staff
- Inductive thematic analysis

Project collaborators/partners

- Family caregivers of nursing home residents
- Nursing home residents
- Nursing home care staff:
 - Registered nurse (RN),
 - Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - Nurse aide
 - Nursing home activity staff
 - Nursing home administrators

CONTACT

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Department of Sociology and Gerontology and Scripps Gerontology Center

Proposed conceptual framework integrating family-centered care and person-centered models to explore the dynamics of family voices and residents' care preferences



Keywords: Family involvement, Family-centered care, residents' autonomy, Ohio nursing homes

Project Status: In-Development

Seeking Project Partners: Yes

Purpose Statement:

Explores how family interpretation of residents' best care interest, residents' expressed preferences, and care staff dynamics intersect in care decision-making, highlighting areas of alignment and tension to inform nursing home policy and practice.

Project Objectives:

Objective 1: Understand families' perceptions of family involvement in residents' care decision-making, including how they define and conceptualize it.

Objective 2: Gain insight into areas of alignment and tension between residents' expressed care preferences and families' interpretations of residents' best interests.

Objective 3: Explore how nursing home care staff shape family involvement in residents' care decision making (e.g. negotiating family-resident alignment and tension in care decisions).

From Feedback to Improvement: Building a Client Experience Survey System in Community-Based Aging Services

Using standardized client experience surveys to strengthen quality improvement and decision-making in nonprofit aging services

Sara M. Powers, PhD, Senior Research Scientist,
Benjamin Rose, spowers@benrose.org

Keywords: Client Experience; Quality Improvement; Aging Services; Survey Evaluation

Project Status: In-Development
(Ongoing implementation and refinement across multiple programs/services)

Seeking Project Partners: Yes
(Partners interested in collaboration on survey standardization, benchmarking, and shared learning across aging service organizations)

Purpose Statement: Community-based aging service organizations increasingly rely on data to guide program improvement and demonstrate outcomes to funders and policymakers. However, many organizations lack standardized approaches for capturing and using client experience data.

Project Objectives:

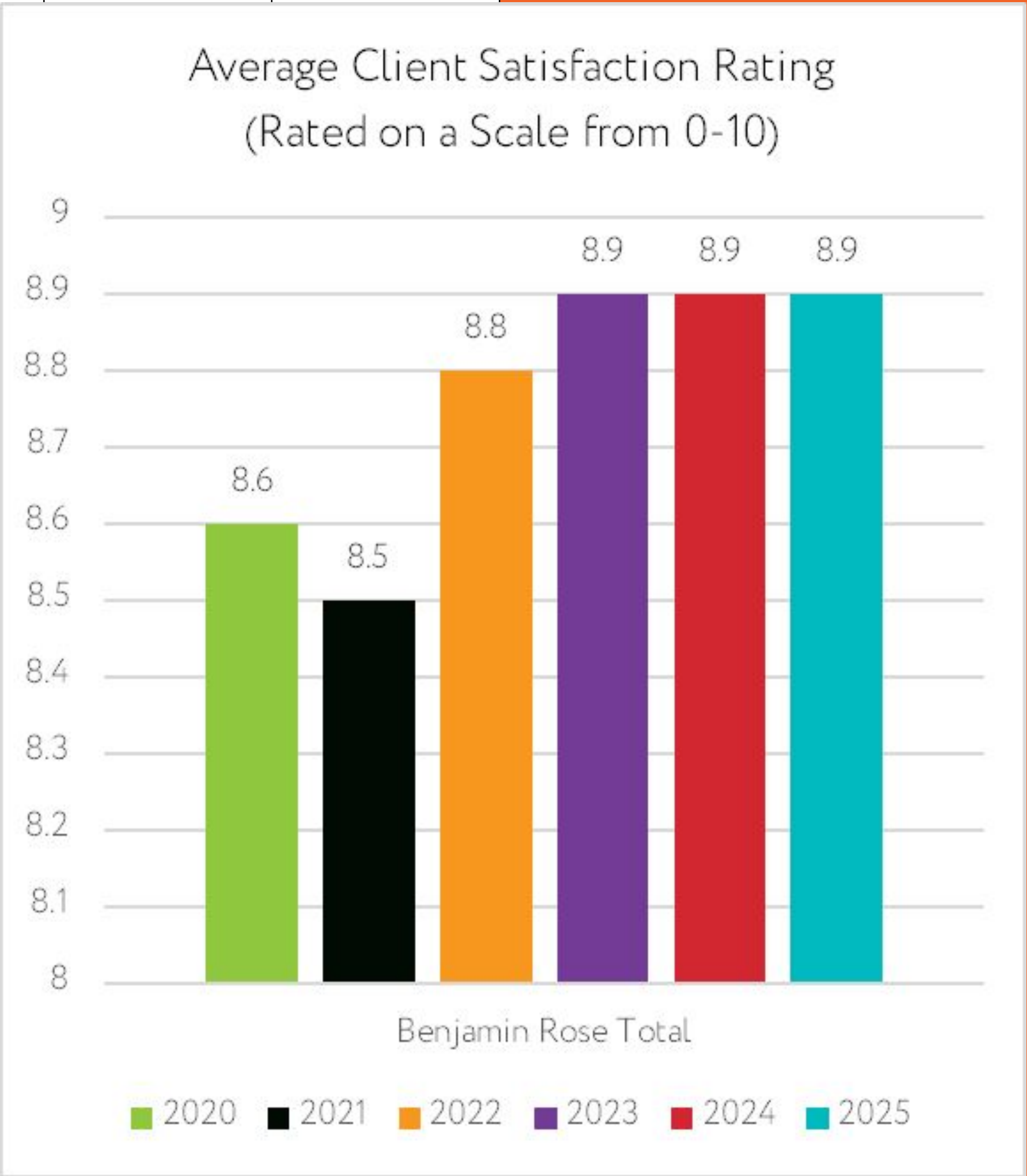
Objective 1: Develop and implement a standardized survey framework for collecting experience data across diverse aging service programs.

Objective 2: Design surveys that are accessible to older adults.

Objective 3: Integrate survey results into organizational quality improvement processes (e.g., performance and quality improvement, program planning, staff training).

Aligned with broader statewide efforts, this work integrates the client voice into evaluation and decision-making to enhance service quality and improve outcomes tied to the social determinants of health for older adults.

Please indicate if you would like more information or support in any of the following areas		
	Yes	No
Economic Stability		
Paying for food or groceries	56.3% (335)	43.7% (260)
Paying for housing, rent, mortgage, or utilities	52.1% (313)	47.9% (288)
Paying for home repairs	41.3% (241)	58.7% (342)
Finding affordable housing	33.9% (196)	66.1% (382)
Accessing job or employment assistance	15.9% (91)	84.1% (481)
Education Access & Quality		
Learning about benefits or programs you may qualify for like Social Security or Medicare	50.6% (304)	49.4% (297)
Help with or access to technology like the internet or electronic devices		
Help with legal matters, like wills or advance directives		
Health Care Access & Quality		
Support for managing health conditions like diabetes, arthritis, etc.		
Finding a doctor, dentist, or health provider		
Help with medications or managing prescriptions		
Neighborhood & Built Environment		
Improving safety in your home or neighborhood		
Transportation to appointments or errands		
Social & Community Context		
Staying active through exercise or classes		
Managing stress, anxiety, or mental health		
Help with personal care, housekeeping, or caregiving		
Feeling lonely or wanting to connect with others		



We welcome collaboration with aging service organizations (implementing client experience surveys), researchers (studying service quality/client outcomes), state agencies and Area Agencies on Aging (interested in survey alignment or policy insights), and others (seeking benchmarking or shared survey tools/learning opportunities).

- Our Client Experience Survey Approach
- Standardized & Scalable Framework** – consistent accessible survey design (person-centered language at appropriate reading level, simple response options, multiple modes to complete survey when applicable) with outcome measures tied to program logic models and funder/reporting requirements; with core items stemming across all organizational surveys (e.g., unmet needs across social determinants of health areas).
 - Implementation & Dissemination Feedback Loops** – distributed annually or ongoing basis across programs (Senior Centers, Meals on Wheels, Financial Wellness programming and workshops, Behavioral Health services, senior volunteers, etc.), with results shared through reports, dashboards, staff discussions, and Board presentations.



Dementia Friends in Incarcerated Settings: Development, Implementation, and Expansion

Nicolay, S.¹, Bibbo, J.¹, Williman, M.², Burman, B.², Kinzig, E.², Bollin, S.², Hazelett, S.³, Wyrostek, L.⁴ & Werner, E.²

¹Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging; ²Ohio Council for Cognitive Health, ³Summa Health System, ⁴MemoryLane Care Services

Keywords: Dementia, Education, Incarceration

Project Status: In-Development

Seeking Project Partners: No

Purpose Statement: To utilize the Dementia Friends Program to ensure that all Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) staff have the skills and information to care for those living with cognitive change.

Project Objectives:

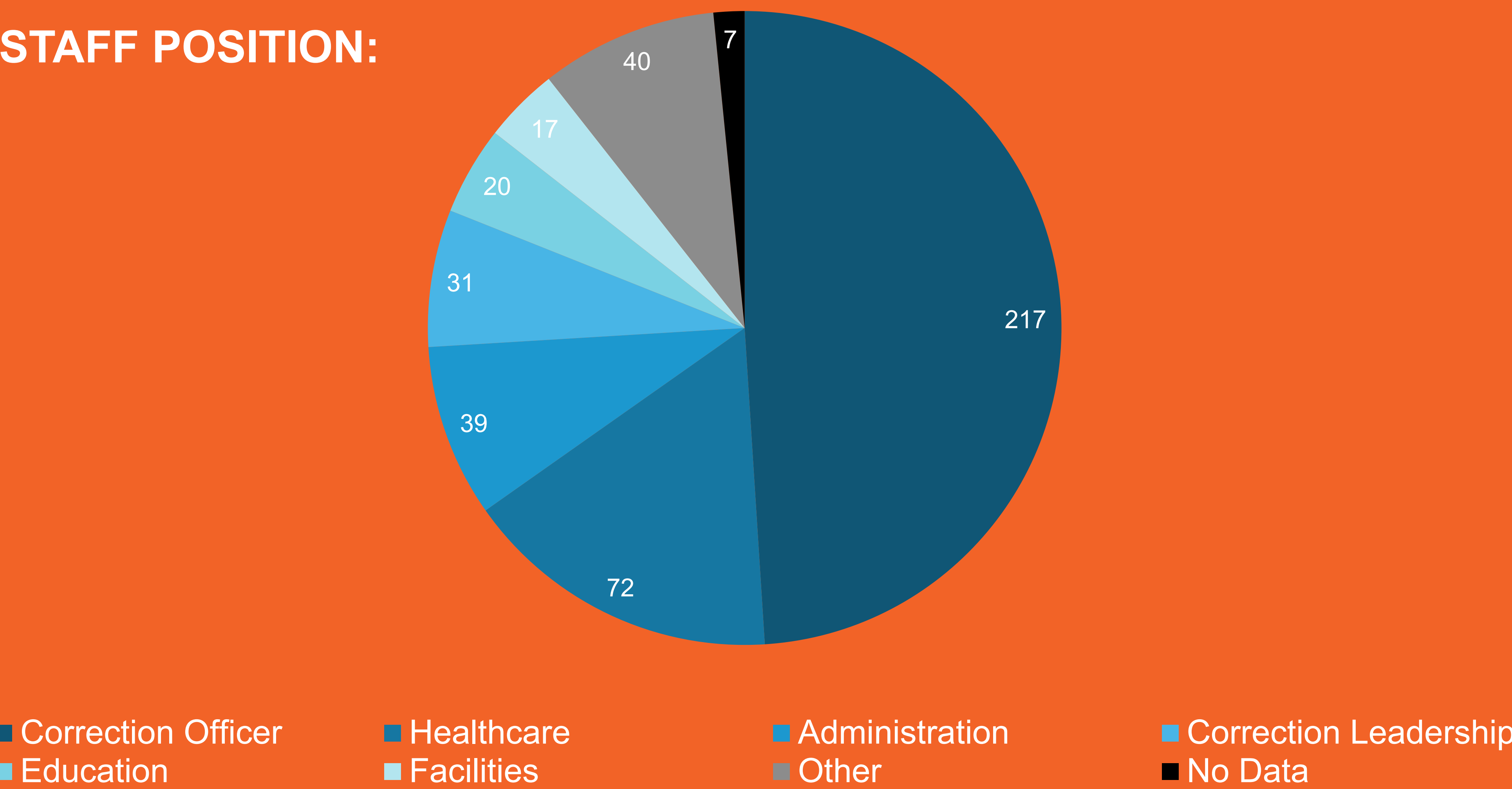
- 1. Provide all ODRC staff and individuals living in carceral settings the on-demand, self-paced, and interactive Dementia Friends Program.
- 2. Identify funding sources to expand to nine parole boards in Ohio.
- 3. Connect across the country.

How This Initiative Developed In Ohio:

- Passion of ODRC leadership for those living with dementia in incarcerated settings and for the staff who care for them.
- Connection with the Ohio Department of Aging.
- Ohio GWEP’s commitment to all citizens of Ohio.
- Flexibility of USAging and Dementia Friends USA

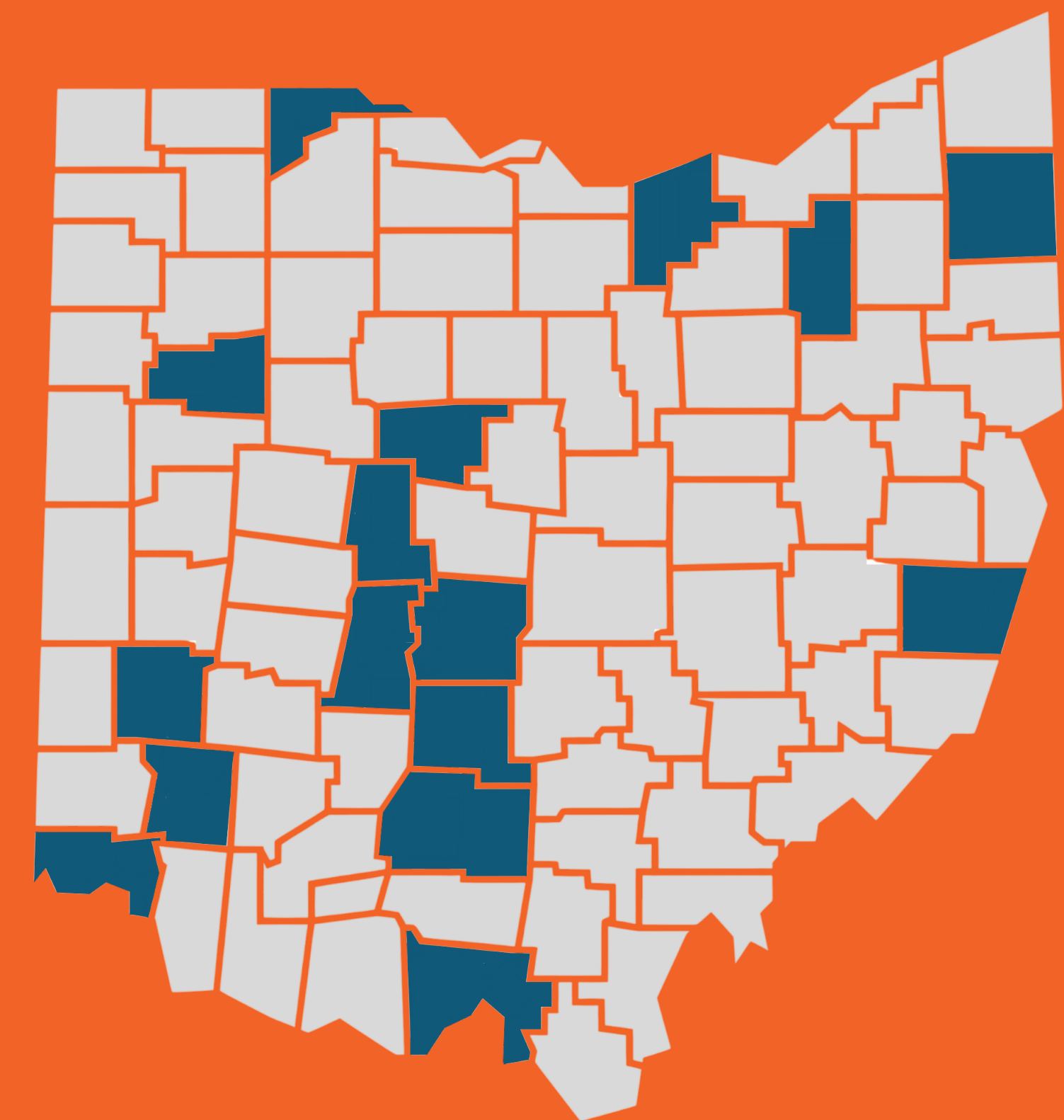
Completed Dementia Friends in 2025 (n=443)

STAFF POSITION:



STAFF LOCATION:

19 of 28 ODRC Institutions in Ohio (68%)



“I am excited that this information was included in our ODRC annual training. There are so many people who can benefit from this information!”
-ODRC staff member

- 89% agreed or strongly agreed that they would be able to use what they learned in their work.
- 87% agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend Dementia Friends to other people they work with.

“A core finding that emerges is that training is needed for law enforcement and other community-based frontline first responders, providers, lawyers, judges, and correctional staff on the ways that thought processes and behaviors change as individuals begin to experience more significant dementia.” (ABA, 2022)

Project Partners: Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), Ohio Council for Cognitive Health, Northeast Ohio Medical University’s Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP), MemoryLane Care Services, Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, Summa Health System

Why Dementia Education And Training for Correction Systems (ABA, 2022) :

- The number of people living in carceral settings age 55 and older has increased by 400% from 1993 to 2013. It is predicted that by 2030, this age group will account for one-third of the US prison population.
- An estimated 20% of people in prison and 33.5% of those in jail age 50 or older live with a cognitive disability.
- When compared to the general population, people living in carceral settings have significantly worse health outcomes. For example, 38.4% of adults in prison versus 15.4% of adults in the general population report having a disability.
- Common challenges associated with dementia are often magnified and more complex in incarcerated settings.

The Lived Experience of Sexual Ageism in Older Adults

Shuo Cao, MSN,RN, PhD Candidate
University of Cincinnati, caoso@mail.uc.edu

Project Status: In-Development

Seeking Project Partners: Yes

Purpose Statement:

This project uses an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design to investigate how older adults experience sexual ageism and how these experience shape their sexual health. While existing research has established the sexual ageism form public perspective, little is known about how older adults themselves perceive, interpret, and internalized these ageist beliefs, and how to measure this phenomenon. Using in-depth qualitative interview, this study will aim:

Objective 1: To explore older adults’ lived experiences of sexual ageism and its impact on their sexual health.

Objective 2: To develop a theoretical framework explaining the internalization of sexual ageism and its consequences.

Objective 3: To develop and preliminarily validate the sexual ageism scale for older adults.

RESEARCH GAPS	PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS
Gap 1: No existing measure of sexual ageism for older adults	Contribution1: Development of Sexual Ageism Scale for Older Adults
Gap 2: Limited understanding of how sexual ageism is internalized	Contribution 2: Qualitative exploration of internalization process
Gap 3: Lack of research connecting sexual ageism and sexual pleasure, desire, and risky behavior with emphasis on older men	Contribution 3: Direct inquiry into sexual pleasure, desire, and risky behavior experiences with emphasis on older men
Gap 4: Minimal attention to how older adults adapt to sexual changes as aging	Contribution 4: Exploration of adaptation processes
Gap 5: No cross-cultural comparisons of sexual ageism	Contribution 5: US sample now; future China comparison (planned)



Collaborators:

- Established track record in aging and/or sexual health research
- Access to diverse populations of older adults (especially older adults with STIs or HIV)
- Interested in qualitative studies and scale development

Theoretical Context

- Levy’s Stereotype Embodiment Theory (2009)
- The concept of Ageism (1969)
- The impact of ageism on sexual health (Cao, et al., 2026)

Study Design

- Phase 1: Qualitative (semi-structured interviews with older adults, thematic analysis an/grounded theory approaches, extract quotes for item generation)
- Phase 2: Scale Development (Item generation, cognitive interview, pilot survey)
- Phase 3: Scale Validation Study (Confirmatory factor analysis, cross culture validation)

Title: *Older Adults’ Experiences with Technology and AI for Social Connection: A Community Engaged Study*

Author: Vivian J. Miller, PhD, MSSA, LSW
Associate Professor in Social Work
College of Health & Human Services
Bowling Green State University

Email: millevj@bgsu.edu

Keywords: technology, artificial intelligence (AI), social connection

Project Status: In-Development

Seeking Project Partners: Yes

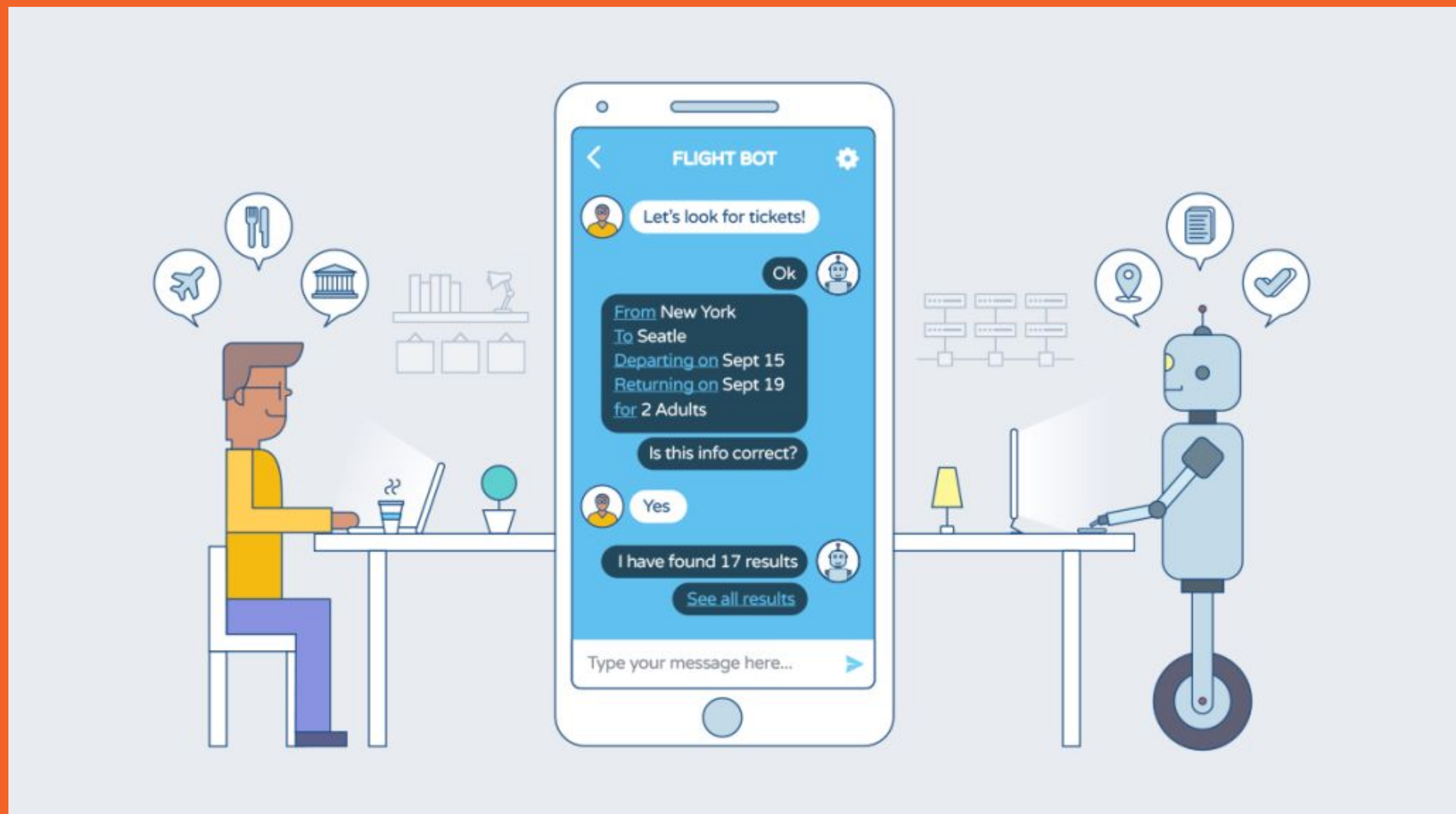
Purpose Statement: This research project explores how AI tools and technology, such as personal voice assistants (PVAs) and chatbots, can serve as innovative solutions to enhance social connection, companionship, and mental well-being among older adults.

Project Objectives:

Objective 1. Explore older adults’ lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to using current technologies to support meaningful social engagement.

Objective 2. Utilize focus group discussions to elicit and analyze perspectives on the design features, system attributes, and contextual conditions they consider essential for ensuring that technologies are inclusive, age-responsive, and conducive to meaningful social connection.

AI is rapidly advancing and becoming embedded in health, social, and community systems (Lawson, 2023), yet older adults are at risk of being left behind (Kakulla, 2025) in discussions on new technologies.



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- Seeking interested **collaborators** and **funders** who can support this work to include community members in an important dialogue related to **technology, AI, and social connection**.
- Looking for **partners** to scale this project beyond Northwest Ohio!

Let’s chat about this project!



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