interdisciplinary group of members represents physicians, nurses, social workers, psychologists, educators, and researchers with expertise in disaster preparedness, caregiving, trauma, HIV, vaccination, home health, long-term care, social isolation, motivation, and risk communication with older adults. In this symposium, Task Force members will share how they have advanced the areas of research, education, and practice related to the pandemic. Speakers will discuss the process of developing a COVID-19 research agenda and how that is moving forward. They will also share how Task Force members representing AGHE have been supporting members through listening sessions and the development of materials to assist with the transition to online teaching. Finally, speakers will provide updates on the several fact sheets, webinars, and a decision aid that have been developed to support GSA members and their work with older adults.

GSA COVID-19 TASK FORCE: DEVELOPING A RESEARCH AGENDA

Barbara Resnick,[1] and Sheryl Zimmerman,[2] *1. University of Maryland School of Nursing, Baltimore, Maryland, United States, 2. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States*

GSA COVID-19 Task Force members worked with organizational leaders and special interest groups to ascertain areas where further research about COVID-19 and older adults would be helpful. The responses were compiled into a single document to create a research agenda. Processes to share the agenda with federal agencies and partners will be shared.

GSA COVID-19 TASK FORCE: SUPPORTING THOSE IN PRACTICE

Lisa Brown, *Palo Alto, California, United States*

The GSA COVID-19 Task Force developed multiple materials to assist older adults, those who care for them, and policy makers in understanding a variety of topics, including aging and immunity, ageism, the process of developing a vaccine, and how to social distance. Members of the group also undertook development of a decision aid on whether to engage in activities outside the home. The process of developing the decision aid according to Ottawa Research Institute guidelines will be explained.

GSA COVID-19 TASK FORCE: SUPPORTING TRANSITIONS TO ONLINE TEACHING

Joann Montepare,[1] and Judith Howe,[2] *1. Lasell University, Newton, Massachusetts, United States, 2. Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Bronx, New York, United States*

GSA COVID-19 Task Force members collaborated with AGHE to develop multiple teaching briefs and biblio briefs on various topics to support faculty who had to adjust to online teaching quickly. Task Force members will review those documents, as well as the AGHE listening session to identify where educators and students need additional support.

SESSION 7510 (SYMPOSIUM)

THE STUDY OF SENSORY AGING IN EXISTING COHORTS OF OLDER ADULTS

Chair: Joshua Ehrlich

Sensory impairments in later life are associated with numerous adverse health outcomes, including falls, depression, cognitive decline and dementia, and loss of independence. While population-based cohort studies offer a wealth of data for studying health and aging, these studies have not been widely leveraged to investigate the epidemiology of sensory impairment and the effect of sensory impairments on health outcomes and well-being in older adults. This symposium will provide attendees with examples from presenters' own research using sensory function data from large-scale and population-based cohort studies. Presentations will also describe available sensory data and opportunities to improve measures of sensory function in cohort studies. Finally, presenters will focus on methodological considerations when studying the effect of sensory impairment on health outcomes, trends, and trajectories in older adults using data from cohort studies. The symposium will include presentations on vision, hearing, olfaction, and nesting of a randomized controlled trial within an existing cohort study. Participants will gain a clear understanding of the importance of measuring sensory function; methods for integrating sensory measures into existing cohorts; and the original results of analyses that have used sensory data from existing cohorts to study health and well-being in older adults. Sensory Health Interest Group Sponsored Symposium.

THE SENSE OF SMELL AND AGING: WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM POPULATION STUDIES

Jayant Pinto, *University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, United States*

Decline of the sense of smell with age causes a marked impact on older adults, markedly reducing quality of life. Olfactory dysfunction impairs nutrition, decreases the ability to experience pleasure, and results in depression, among other burdens. Large-scale population studies have identified impaired olfaction as a key heath indicator that predicts the development of decreased physical and mental health, reduced physical activity, weight loss, mild cognitive impairment and dementia, and mortality itself. These data have been generated via analyses of data from several aging cohorts, including the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP); the Beaver Dam cohort; the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities project; the Rush Memory and Aging Project; the Health, Aging, and Body Composition project; the Washington Heights/Inwood Columbia Aging Project; among others. In this presentation, we will review the close connection between olfaction, health, aging, including discussion of insights from these studies. We will also discuss emerging data from NSHAP on the effects of sensory function on cognition, mental health, and social interaction, which demonstrate that sensory function plays a vital role in the lives of older adults. Part of a symposium sponsored by Sensory Health Interest Group.