Mental Health Considerations for the Older Adult

**General Resources**

**Anorexia Nervosa in the Elderly**
http://sagelink.ca/anorexia_nervosa_in_elderly
Anorexia Nervosa is a potentially lethal condition characterized by distorted body image, fear of weight gain and food restriction thought to affect mostly young females but as this author points out elderly people of both sexes are vulnerable. A number of unique challenges for the elderly affected are explored.

**Health Status and Treatment-Seeking Stigma in Older Adults with Trauma and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder**
http://sagelink.ca/health_status_treatment-seeking_status_in_older_adults_with_trauma_ptsd
This study compared health status across four trauma/PTSD groups of older adults with depression, anxiety and/or at risk drinking who attended primary care appointments. A positive observation from the study was that the anticipated effect of treatment-seeking stigma does not seem to affect these primary care patients readiness to accept help for mental health conditions.

**Mental Health in Later Life**
http://sagelink.ca/mental_health_in_later_life
This website is designed to educate older adults to take care of themselves physically and mentally. Topics covered include: retirement, depression, dementia, alcohol abuse, medication, mental capacity and care for others.

**Bereavement in the Elderly: the Role of Primary Care**
http://sagelink.ca/bereavement_in_the_elderly_the_role_of_primary_care
The authors use a case study to illustrate the important role that Primary Care Physicians (PCP) can play for those older adults who develop bereavement-related depressive illness. Optimizing support and available resources prior to, and throughout the bereavement process is suggested to reduce suffering.

**Hearing Loss in Older Adults – Its Effect on Mental Health**
http://sagelink.ca/hearing_loss_in_older_adults_its_effect_on_mental_health
The significant impact of hearing loss on communication and interaction with others sometimes goes unrecognized by health care practitioners. The author provides a list of considerations related to this invisible handicap.

**The Impact of Working Beyond Traditional Retirement Ages on Mental Health: Implications for Public Health and Welfare Policy**
http://sagelink.ca/impact_working_beyond_traditional_retirement_age_on_mental_health
The results of this systematic literature review which examined the effect of working or volunteering beyond traditional retirement ages showed no negative impacts in the ten studies which met the inclusion criteria. Four of the studies showed positive effects on a range of mental health outcomes.
Mental Health Considerations for the Older Adult

**Blogs**

Preventing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) After a Critical Illness  
http://sagelink.ca/preventing_PTSD_after_a_critical_illness  
Research suggests that people with pre-existing mental health issues who have scary memories after being in the ICU are at higher risk of developing PTSD after a critical illness. European hospitals have been using “ICU diaries” in an attempt to reduce the severity of PTSD symptoms experienced.

Unique Challenges for the Clinician Treating an Elderly Eating Disorder Patient  
http://sagelink.ca/unique_challenges_for_the_clinician_treating_an_elderly_eating_disorder  
Geriatric eating disorders pose various challenges to clinicians in the field.

**Special Interest Group**

Mental Health Nursing Interest Group (MHNIG)  
http://sagelink.ca/mental_health_nursing_interest_group  
MHNIG offers a network of professional resources, support, and access to financial assistance through bursaries and awards. The purpose of MHNIG is to actively promote partnerships that work towards improving the mental health and well-being of individuals, their families, and our communities.

**Research**

Speed of Remission in Elderly Patients with Depression: Electroconvulsive Therapy v. Medication  
http://sagelink.ca/speed_of_remission_depression_in_elderly_ect_v_med  
The authors aimed to compare the speed of remission in elderly patients with depression using ECT v. medication in elderly in-patients.

A Review of Brain Stimulation Treatments for Late-Life Depression  
http://sagelink.ca/review_of_brain_stimulation_treatments_for_late-life_depression  
Considering the challenges with pharmacotherapy and the high incidence of treatment resistance in this population, brain stimulation treatments are an important clinical consideration. Given the concern of cognitive side effects the authors suggest that older adults should be included in future transcranial direct current stimulation and magnetic seizure therapy clinical trials.

A Meta-Analysis of Cognitive Functioning in Older Adults with PTSD  
http://sagelink.ca/meta-analysis_CF_in_older_adults_with_PTSD  
The authors conducted a meta-analysis to summarize and integrate the literature on cognitive functioning of older adults with PTSD. Their findings highlight the need for thorough evaluation of cognitive functioning in older adults with PTSD with special focus on the areas of processing speed, learning, memory and executive functioning.

Preventing Falls Among Older People with Mental Health Problems: A Systematic Review  
http://sagelink.ca/preventing_falls_among_older_people_with_mental_health_problems  
The objective of this review was to evaluate the effectiveness of fall prevention interventions for older people with mental health problems being cared for across all settings.
Antiglucocorticoid Therapy for Older Adults with Anxiety and Co-Occurring Cognitive Dysfunction: Results from a Pilot Study with Mifepristone
http://sagelink.ca/antiglucocorticoid_therapy_for_older_adults_with_anxiety_co_cog-dys_pilot_study
This study offers the first pilot test of an antiglucocorticoid medication for older adults with anxiety disorders and co-occurring cognitive dysfunction. This treatment development is important because of the aging of the population, the high prevalence of anxiety disorders in older adults, and the common co-occurrence of cognitive dysfunction.

Brain Stimulation in the Treatment of Late-Life Severe Mental Illness Other than Unipolar Non-Psychotic Depression
http://sagelink.ca/brain_stimulation_in_the_treatment_of_late-life_severe_mental_illness
The authors conclude that several brain stimulation modalities show promise in the treatment of late-life psychiatric disorders other than unipolar depression.

Dementia Resulting From Traumatic Brain Injury: What is the Pathology?
http://sagelink.ca/dementia_resulting_from_traumatic_brain_injury_what_is_the_pathology
This article reports that a meta-analysis of 15 case-controlled studies estimated that individuals who had a severe head injury which resulted in a loss of consciousness were at approximately 50% increased risk of dementia compared to others.

Show me the Evidence: Evidence in the Making – Dementia Research
http://sagelink.ca/show_me_the_evidence_dementia_research
This CIHR webpage highlights some Canadian dementia research including; “Weighing the Vascular Burden: Accumulation of Health Problems Heightens Risk of Dementia”, “Saliva Provides Clues to Identify Mild Cognitive Impairment: Biomarkers May be a Step Towards Treatment for Alzheimer’s Disease” and more.

Dr. Daniel Blumberger
http://sagelink.ca/dr_blumberger_researcher
Dr. Daniel Blumberger is a Clinician Scientist appointed in the Brain Stimulation and Geriatric Mental Health Programs, and is head of the Late-Life Mood Disorders Clinic. He is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. Some of his recent work involves theta-burst stimulation as an alternative to pharmacological treatment for depression.
http://www.ctvnews.ca/health/three-minutes-of-theta-burst-therapy-can-help-conquer-depression-1.2205080
Mental Health Considerations for the Older Adult

**Guideline/Protocol**

**Caregiving Strategies for Older Adults with Delirium, Dementia and Depression**
http://sagelink.ca/caregiving_strategies_delirium_dementia_depression_bpg

This best practice guideline provides the resources necessary to take an evidence-based approach for developing policies, procedures, protocols, educational programs, assessments and documentation tools.

**Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada**
http://sagelink.ca/guidelines_comprehensive_mental_health_services_for_older_adults_in_canada

These guidelines are intended to support planning, development and implementation of a mental health services system that can respond adequately to the needs of its senior population. They are meant to guide systems planners, government, policy makers and program managers in planning, developing and ensuring a comprehensive, integrated, principle-based and evidence-informed approach to meeting the mental health needs of seniors.

**The Diagnosis of Mild Cognitive Impairment due to Alzheimer's Disease: Recommendations from the National Institute on Aging-Alzheimer's Association Workgroups on Diagnostic Guidelines for Alzheimer's Disease**
http://sagelink.ca/diagnosis_of_MCI_due_to_AD_diagnostic_guidelines

The National Institute on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association charged a workgroup with the task of developing criteria for the symptomatic pre-dementia phase of Alzheimer's disease (AD), referred to in this article as mild cognitive impairment due to AD. They developed two sets of criteria: (1) core clinical criteria to be used by healthcare providers without access to advanced imaging techniques or cerebrospinal fluid analysis and (2) research criteria that could be used in clinical research settings including clinical trials.

**Assessment and Treatment for PTSD with Co-Occurring Neurocognitive Disorder (NCD)**
http://sagelink.ca/ax_tx_ptsd_w/_ncd

Evidence suggests that existing assessment measures and evidence-based treatments for PTSD are appropriate for patients with mild NCD. Assessment considerations and a variety of treatment options are explored.

**Geriatric Depression Scale (Short Form)**
http://sagelink.ca/geriatric_depression_scale_short_form

This 15 item screening tool is used to augment the assessment of the presence of depression in older adults and/or to monitor depressive symptoms.

**Screening for Delirium, Dementia and Depression in Older Adults**
http://sagelink.ca/screening_delirium_dementia_depression_older_adults

Evidence-based nursing best practice guidelines for the screening of delirium, dementia and depression in older adults suitable for all health care providers in any setting.
Mental Health Considerations for the Older Adult

Management Strategies

**Improving the Management and Outcomes of Late-Life Depression in Canada**
http://sagelink.ca/improving_mgmt_of_outcomes_late-life_depression_cda
This report from the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Community Studies, St. Mary’s Hospital Center, Montreal uses a chronic care model (CCM) to provide a framework to improve the management and outcomes for late life depression.

**BPSD: Acute Decline – A Focus on Delirium**
http://sagelink.ca/bpsd_handbook_ch_4_delirium
This chapter of the Introduction to Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia: A Handbook for Family Physicians outlines the general approaches to the management of delirium in dementia. Delirium is a frequent complication of dementia. Left untreated, a delirium can lead to a variety of poor outcomes, including death.

**BPSD: Focus on Mood and Anxiety Disturbance**
http://sagelink.ca/bpsd_handbook_ch_6_mood_and_anxiety
This chapter of the Introduction to Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD): A Handbook for Family Physicians outlines the general approaches to the management of mood and anxiety disturbance in dementia.

**Management of Alcohol Use Disorders in Older Adults: What Doctors Need to Know**
http://sagelink.ca/mgmt_alcohol_use_disorders_in_older_adults_physicians_info_sheet
This fact sheet covers screening and identification, diagnosis and management strategies of alcohol misuse and dependence in older adults.

**Best Practices: Using Harm Reduction**
http://sagelink.ca/best_practices_using_harm_reduction
This information sheet provides an overview of using harm reduction management strategies for alcohol abuse problems in older adults.

**The Silent Geriatric Giant: Anxiety Disorders in Late Life**
http://sagelink.ca/silent_geriatric_giant_anxiety_disorders_in_late_life
This article provides an overview of these often undiagnosed and untreated disorders including the impact to quality of life; challenges to diagnosis related to later life differences in presentation; pharmacological treatment and psychotherapeutic interventions.

**Personality Disorders in the Elderly**
http://sagelink.ca/personality_disorders_in_the_elderly
This article outlines common elements of effective clinical approaches to addressing personality disorders in older adults.