



Common Areas of Practice in Geriatric Psychology

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ABOUT THE STUDY

Geriatric psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on people's mental and physical well-being as they age. These specialized psychologists investigate a range of psychological capacities that deteriorate with age, including memory, learning, and coordination.

In a number of employment situations, geriatric psychologists perform the diagnosis, investigation, and treatment of specific mental problems with senior clients. Elderly loneliness, depression, dementia, Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, and Parkinson's disease are among the common conditions addressed.

Geriatric psychology and geriatric psychiatry

Geriatric psychology: The study of how the brain ages is the basis of geriatric psychology. The psychologist wants to see how an aged person's daily activities are impacted by the neurological and physiological processes occurring in their brain. A psychologist who specializes in geriatrics offers care for deteriorating brain functions to enhance quality of life.

Geriatric psychiatry: Geriatric psychiatry is a branch of psychiatry that focuses on identifying, diagnosing, and treating mental health issues in people who are older. The field consists of the diagnosis, therapy, and management of conditions like Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and depression. A qualified medical professional who can write prescriptions for older patients is a geriatric psychiatrist. A medical school background and degree are required for psychiatrists.

Common areas of practice

Loneliness in elderly people: An emotional reaction to the process of social isolation is loneliness. It frequently involves experiencing anxiety as a result of being socially isolated or having difficulty communicating with people. Loneliness has been linked to poor immunological, cognitive, and metabolic functioning, according to research. It affects people at all ages, from young children to the elderly.

As they might need to use these ideas to improve the lives of their patients, nurses and other people who care with the elderly should get familiar with the numerous theories of loneliness. Due to the changes an individual experiences as they age, such as declining

economic stability and resources, changes in family structures, decreased social interaction, and the death of a spouse or relative, they become particularly difficult.

Depression: It is a significant public health issue and a focus of research since depression in the senior community can have serious effects. Younger adults are more prone to exhibit affective symptoms than older adults, who are more likely to show cognitive problems, somatic symptoms, and loss of interest. It is comorbid with "morbidity, increased risk of suicide, reduced physical, cognitive, and social functioning, and more self-neglect," all of which are linked to an increase in mortality.

Dementia: Dementia is not a particular illness but a collection of symptoms that relate to deterioration in mental capacity. One's behavior, memory, and mental processes can all be impacted by a wide range of symptoms. It is challenging to carry out daily tasks because of these disabilities. They also lead to emotional issues and a decline in motivation for life.

Dementia does not impact a person's awareness because it is not a condition of consciousness. Dementia is treated by geriatric psychologists who assist in the disease's diagnosis. This is accomplished through various cognitive evaluations and exams. They will also examine dementia studies and possible treatments.

Alzheimer's disease: 60 to 80 percent of dementia cases are caused by Alzheimer's disease, making it the most prevalent type of dementia. Alzheimer's disease initially has modest symptoms, but they get worse over time. The inability to recall recent events is a typical early symptom. As the illness worsens, many symptoms appear.

Speech challenges, periods of disorientation, mental disorders, a lack of desire, etc. are some of these symptoms. A geriatric psychologist's responsibilities for Alzheimer's disease are similar to those for dementia in that they include diagnosis, treatment, and research.

Vascular dementia: The second most prevalent kind of dementia, vascular dementia, is brought on by a stroke. Frequently, due to underlying symptoms and pathology, it is challenging to distinguish between different types of dementia. Vascular dementia is ultimately brought on by problems with the blood flow to the brain. The assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and research of vascular dementia are all aided by a geriatric psychologist.

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