

Caring for Older Adults in Disasters: A Special Collection of Papers for a Special Population

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The increasing number of disasters and an aging population makes the care of older adults (defined as persons aged 65 years and older¹) in disasters worthy of special consideration. Between 2012 and 2050, the United States will experience substantial growth in its older population.² Older adults are anticipated to represent 21.7% of the total population in the United States by 2040.² Older adults suffer higher morbidity from disasters, and several studies show that disasters impact older adults more significantly than other segments of the population.³⁻¹² This combination of a growing population that is disproportionately affected by disasters makes the scholarship and science of caring for older adults in these settings more important than ever.

To address this need for better scholarship, the National Center for Disaster Medicine and Public Health (NCDMPH), in collaboration with the journal *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, presents a special collection of papers on caring for older adults before, during, and after disasters. This special collection is the first set of papers of its kind focused on the care of older adults in catastrophes. These papers aim to bring together the most relevant research, practice, and educational initiatives while building the evidence base on the care of older adults in disasters.

Authors representing a wide variety of disciplines submitted manuscripts in response to a call for papers. These articles included a mix of original research, brief reports, responder tools, letters to the editor, and commentaries. Submissions address issues related to disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience. Manuscripts submitted for this special collection underwent peer review, per journal policy, prior to publication.

This special collection is a significant step toward enhancing disaster health science and helps NCDMPH advance its mission of service as the nation's academic center of excellence leading domestic and international disaster health education and research efforts. In collaboration with federal, state, local, academic, and organizational partners, the NCDMPH creates and translates science and education to improve readiness. NCDMPH is housed at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. NCDMPH looks

forward to increased engagement, intellectual exchange, and disaster readiness for our communities resulting from publication of this special collection.

This special collection of papers was edited by a series of guests including the following:

- Kandra Strauss-Riggs, MPH, Operations Director, Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine.
- Kelly Gulley, MPH, Project Coordinator, Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine.
- Brian A. Altman, PhD, Education Director, Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine.
- Kenneth W. Schor, DO, MPH, FAAFP, Director for Preventive Medicine and Public Health, The Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, Previous Acting Director, NCDMPH, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.
- Melen G. R. McBride, PhD, MSN, MEd, RN, FGSA, Associate Director, Emerita, Stanford Geriatric Education Center, Stanford University, School of Medicine.

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Disclaimer

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