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NURS - 3325 Holistic Care of Older Adults

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Citizens in the United States are beginning to live longer, creating an unprecedented number of elderly throughout the nation. As of 2014, 14.5% of the population were older than 65, accounting for 46.3 million Americans. This number has been projected to continue to increase by a substantial amount, 98 million, by the year 2060 ("Older Adults", 2020). As one of those individuals who is slowly falling into the elderly category, there are certain pieces of criteria that are essential to have within a walking distance as the elderly population sometimes struggle to get out as much as their younger counterparts. Access to food, medical care, and places to exercise are crucial for the elderly community.

In the neighborhood that I reside in, there are a multitude of services that are offered that enhance the quality of life for the elderly individuals like myself. First and foremost, within one mile there is a Winn Dixie store for groceries and two meal delivery services relatively close. In older populations, there is a significant amount of food insecurity, or the uncertainty of food for the community. Due to functional impairment, isolation, financial issues, and overall poor health, many within the elderly community are unable to access food on their own, especially if it is over a mile from their home. As the geriatric population continues to increase, it is likely that the food insecurity risks will continue to escalate (Fernandes, et al., 2018). For the elderly in the community who are unable to reach the grocery store on their own, this meal delivery option is of great service. There are some within the community who struggle to get around and also have little to no family in the area, causing trouble when it comes to this type of task. Meals on Wheels and Meals at Senior Centers both offer a helpful option that many would not have in other communities that are further away.

Another crucial part to the community that surrounds a majority elderly population is access to healthcare within a decent vicinity. Those in the geriatric population are at a far higher risk of becoming ill and dealing with ailments that younger people do not have to worry

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about as often. Geriatrics are at an increased risk for cardiothoracic issues, orthopedic injuries, and quite a few other significant injuries like diabetes and hypertension (“Older Adults”, 2020). This population group also deals with more immense physiological, psychological, and behavioral issues while also dealing with functional limitations. For those who suffer from an orthopedic disability, they are also less likely to recover (Sun & Smith, 2017).

For all of these reasons, it is critical that those who have reached advanced age, 65 years and above, have access to a healthcare facility. Within two miles of my home, there is a primary care physician office, a hospital, and a pharmacy. Each of these prove to be crucial in their own ways. Firstly, a primary care office provides continuous care on chronic conditions, something that many in the geriatric community deal with more often than not. In the case of those chronic conditions taking a turn for the worse or in situations where there is a sudden emergent issue at hand, there is a hospital 1.6 miles away from the place that I reside. This placement provides peace of mind for so many in the area, knowing that real healthcare, even in emergent situations, is just a short walk or drive away. Finally, the pharmacy at CVS that is 0.6 miles away also makes sure that many in the community are given access to the medication that keeps their chronic conditions at bay. Without access to a close pharmacy, there are many that would likely see a resurgence in their health problems far quicker than if they are given adequate access.

Geriatric Windshield Survey Paper centers.

Finally, within the community, there is a park and a senior center where people within the elderly population can connect with one another. Human beings are social, no matter the age, and the social isolation and loneliness that is found in the geriatric community can cause a variety of health risks and lead to mental disorders as well. Previous research has shown that social isolation and loneliness can lead to high blood pressure, obesity, anxiety, depression, heart disease, cognitive decline, and even Alzheimer's disease. In the older age group, there are many who fall into this pattern of lonely behavior due to a lack of family, no spouse, and few friends ("Social isolation, loneliness in older people pose health risks", 2019).

Both the park and the senior center located just a mile away from where I reside prove to be key points to stopping the progression of loneliness. The park gives people in the community a chance to exercise and be out in the fresh air with one another. The community centers give the elderly a chance to interact with one another and play games, do arts and crafts, and even have all of their beauty needs handled.

As a member of the geriatric community, a population group that is continuing to grow in size by the day, there are certain things that need to be readily accessible as far as businesses and community drivers. Personally, I feel that the most important factors within the community are food resources, healthcare resources, and community interactions so that those in the community do not feel as if they are completely on their own. Within my residential area, each of these prove to be a part of the community and are clearly valued as they are long-standing

References

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