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Project: *Factors influencing older adults' emotional support needs*



Background

Supporting older adults emotionally is key to maintaining their health and emotional wellbeing. There are 1.2 million older adults in Canada who lack emotional support. This lack of emotional support may increase the risk of loneliness, anxiety, and premature death. Multiple factors such as age, sex, marital status, medical conditions, social relationships are thought to influence older adults' emotional support. Despite an increased policy emphasis on meeting older adults' support needs to

maintain their health and well-being, we lack an understanding of many of these factors. Identifying and understanding such factors is a prerequisite to addressing older adults' emotional support needs effectively. This research project actively engages patients (citizens) as partners to identify important factors that can be modified or mitigated to improve the provision of emotional support for older adults. I will involve citizens (family/friend care partners and older adults in need of care) of my supervisors' citizen advisory committee to frame the project, guide our focus, and explain patterns identified in the research study. In this project, I will (1) conduct a scoping review to assess the available evidence on individual, relationship, community, and society-related factors

that influence older adult's emotional supports. I will also (2) assess racial disparities in emotional support using the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging data. Lastly, I will (3) assess if nature and extent of family involvement in care is associated with emotional well-being among older adults in Alberta DSL homes. This study will provide important knowledge that can be used to develop tailored interventions and inform policies to improve emotional support provision for older adults.