

SUBJECTIVE MEMORY COMPLAINTS ASSOCIATED WITH DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS AMONG TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING OLDER ADULTS

Nickolas H. Lambrou, PhD,¹⁻³ Carey E. Gleason, PhD,¹⁻³ Juno Obedin-Maliver, MD, MPH, MAS,⁵ Mitchell R. Lunn, MD, MAS,⁵ Annesa Flentje, PhD,⁶ Matthew Capriotti, PhD,⁷ Micah Lubensky, PhD,⁸ and Jason D. Flatt, PhD, MPH⁹

¹University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, Department of Medicine, Division of Geriatrics, Madison, WI

²Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center, Wm S Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital, Madison, WI

³Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, Madison, WI

⁴Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco

⁵Division of Nephrology, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco

⁶Community Health Systems, School of Nursing, University of California, San Francisco

⁷Department of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco

⁸University of California, San Francisco

⁹Institute for Health & Aging, School of Nursing, University of California, San Francisco

Background: Emerging data suggest that social factors influence cognitive decline. Marginalized communities, including transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) individuals, encounter higher levels of stress and health disparities. Recent data indicate an association between social stress and subjective cognitive complaints (SCCs) – a marker of risk for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) in TGNC elders. We propose there are unique factors influencing cognitive aging in TGNC older adults, including increased risk for discrimination and violence, justifying study of this population alone. This study examines psychosocial factors associated with SCC, and the relationship between discrimination in healthcare settings and memory complaints in a sample of TGNC older adults.

Method: We utilized cross-sectional data from The PRIDE Study - Rainbows of Aging Survey for TGNC adults aged 50+ (n=115), a national, online, cohort study focused on the health of LGBTQ people including questions on memory complaints, health experiences and discrimination. Associations between discrimination in healthcare settings and memory complaints were examined using chi-squared and t-tests, and multivariable logistic regression.

Result: Participant median age was 58.2 (SD=6.5), range: 50-76. Participants were well-educated (>95% attended some college or higher), and predominantly white (90%). Nearly 16% of participants rated their memory as poor to fair and 17% reported that their memory was worse than a year ago. TGNC participants with memory complaints were more likely to report food insecurity (44%), poor-to-fair health status (50%), and physical violence (71%, all $p < 0.01$). Discrimination in medical settings was associated with memory complaints and worsening memory in the past year (all p -values < 0.01). After accounting for demographics, TGNC older adults experiencing discrimination in medical settings were > 5 times more likely to report recent

worsening memory (OR: 5.3; 95%-CI: 1.8-16.0; p=.003) and >10 times more likely to report poor to fair memory (OR: 10.0; 95%-CI: 2.6-38.3; p=0.001).

Conclusion: TGNC older adults reported both higher frequencies of memory complaints (SCC) and higher rates of discrimination in healthcare settings. Implications for training healthcare professionals in affirmative cognitive screening and dementia-related care in various fields of practice will be discussed.

Learning Objective(s): Discuss risk factors for cognitive decline in TGNC older adults, and create innovative, preventative and affirmative interventions in healthcare settings.

Keywords: Transgender health, cognition, MCI, Dementia, Alzheimer's Disease