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Effects of Nutrition on the Aging Brain

Janet Powe

University of North Georgia, jgpowe2237@ung.edu

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Abstract

The Baby Boomer generation started to turn 65 in 2011. Life expectancy has been steadily increasing. The future public cost of long term care will sky-rocket. In 2014, the Bipartisan Policy Organization produced a study on long term care facilities showing that nursing home facilities are funded by well over 100 billion Medicaid dollars and on track to grow exponentially. Unfortunately, “malnutrition is [a] prevalent health care phenomenon in nursing home residents entailing serious consequences for those who are affected” (Schonherr, Halfens, Lohrman, 2014). Identifying the failure of diets in long term care facilities to provide nutrition and finding solutions to the detrimental effects of poor nutrition is of utmost importance. This examination of the effects of inadequate nutrition in the aging brain uses research taken from a number of scientific journals, books, and interviews. This paper will assess the nutritional quality of food in long term care facilities, the lack of necessary nutrition for optimal brain health, and the results of less than optimal brain health including biological, pharmacological, sociological and physical sequelae.