diverse participants (21 women, 4 men) caring for a family member with cognitive decline participated in focus group interviews conducted via videoconferencing methods. We captured more nuanced experiences from the perspective of study participants with regards to the caregiver interventions and their research participation. Interviews were conducted by trained research personnel, lasted 60-75 minutes, and followed an open-ended questioning route. Based on thematic analyses, we identified the following themes: 1) Changing one’s mindset: Seeing life through their shoes; 2) Getting information in one place; 3) Expanding the personal experience; 4) Fears and vulnerability; 5) Time constraints vs. wanting more; 6) Not everyone is at the same place; 7) Technology: It’s going to be part of our lives; and 8) Research: Not always in sync. Our findings indicate high satisfaction with most components of the program while specific recommendations were offered to improve the intervention and study experience such as tailoring materials to stage-specific needs.

GENOMIC SEQUENCING OF SOD1 D Yeast That Escape Spore Death

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Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a devastating neurodegenerative disease that impacts nerve cells and the spinal cord, which in some cases are linked to mutations in the Superoxide Dismutase 1 (SOD1) gene. Sod1 is an antioxidant within cells that converts reactive oxygen from superoxide into water using a copper and zinc ion to deactivate the oxygen. When the SOD1 gene is deleted, yeast cells are still able to undergo meiotic divisions and generate four spores, but the spores that are produced are inviable. However, we see that randomly, sod1Δ spores can grow on rich media. This leads us to hypothesize that somewhere in the genome, there is a suppressor mutation that allows these cells to grow. We tested this hypothesis by preparing samples for whole genome sequencing. By comparing the genomic sequences from our suppressor mutants to wild-type controls, we’re able to identify a single point mutation within a gene called NCA2, which codes for a protein that regulates expression of Fo-F1 ATP synthase subunits 6 and 8. Given this result, we are now working to try and understand the relationship between the sod1Δ spore death phenotype and the modulation of ATP synthase activity. In summary, the results from our work have the potential to further help us understand what role Sod1 plays in yeast meiosis and may be able to give us a deeper understanding for ALS cases that are linked to Sod1.

GOALS OF CARE CONVERSATIONS IN NURSING HOME AND ASSISTED LIVING CARE PLAN MEETINGS

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Me & My Wishes is a novel systematic approach for long-term care residents living with dementia to record videos about their care preferences that can be shared with staff and families in care plan meetings. To understand how the videos were utilized in Goals of Care (GOC) conversations, we coded and analyzed transcripts of recorded care plan meetings at the time of sharing the video using a priori codes derived from GOC conversation elements. Coding discrepancies were resolved in team meetings; finalized codes were summarized to derive themes. Thirty-four care plan meeting conversations between residents (n=34), family members (n=29) and staff (n=35) were analyzed. Residents appreciated sharing personal histories and preferences via video, while staff members appreciated deeper understanding of residents’ care preferences. Two themes described care plan meeting conversations: Everyday Care - a checklist-style assessment of the resident’s daily care (e.g., help with activities of daily living), activities engaged in and satisfaction with care; and Clarifying Care Goals - checking the resident’s treatment preferences (e.g., pain management, CPR), explaining hospice, or confirming the resident’s contact person. Several elements of GOC were not discussed (e.g., disease progression) and conversations lacked depth and comfort evidenced by apologetic language and abrupt transitions of topics rather than exploring alignment of goals with care preferences. Me & My Wishes videos are a mechanism for residents to voice preferences. Standardized guidance, which is lacking in long-term care, is needed to help care teams engage in meaningful conversations to ensure alignment of goals and treatment preferences.

HEALTH EQUITY IMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19 ON DEMENTIA CARE IN COMMUNITY FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

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This presentation shares results from an analysis of interviews conducted to understand the health equity implications of COVID-19 responses on dementia care in the community for people of African descent in Nova Scotia, Canada. Interviews were embedded within a larger multi-method rapid research project that aimed to assess the impact of COVID-19 on dementia care for geographically and socially marginalized groups in the province. Data from the interviews was analyzed using a constructivist thematic analysis method, guided by an intersectional theoretical scaffold. Three themes were identified related to systemic barriers, mental health, system navigation and self-care, and collected under the overarching theme of ‘facing the unknown with dementia’. Results emphasized the value and notable absence of community driven, culturally specific dementia programs, resources and navigators for people living with dementia, family caregivers and care workers of African descent. Participants identified lack of health system and care provider knowledge and understanding of the cultures and histories of people of African descent as a barrier to quality care and to addressing dementia-related stigma. Conversations focused on the need for practical and accessible tools, strategies and perspectives responsive to the actually lived realities and needs of people in community, and for research that actually