

# Introduction to Aging : James J. Cotter Ph.D. & Kim Buttery

## Objectives

[pdf](#)

### Students will be able to

- describe the role of public health in dealing with a special population, the senior citizens
- describe the criteria for labeling a person aged
- describe the elements of aging
- describe governmental agencies responsible for assisting/ measuring aging
- describe non governmental agencies who assist aging persons.
- describe how ageing can be expected to affect public health services over the next 25 years.
- [Competencies](#) 1C (1,2, 7,8) !D (1,2,3,5,7,10) 1E(1` ,4,6,9) IIA (1,2,3,4,)

### Key Words

*Aging, aged, seniors, nursing homes, homes for the aged, retirement centers, senior citizens advocacy, home visiting, senior centers, mental health and aging, Alzheimer's diseases, Parkinson's disease, Osteoporosis, chronic diseases.*

### Concept:

*Aging starts at birth. Getting older is not necessarily accompanied by significant declines in either physical or mental function. There are many resources available to assist people as they age. Misunderstanding and lack of knowledge is the greatest detriment to health maintenance while aging.*

### References:

Schneider 2nd Edn: Introduction to Public Health - Chapter 28

Consider The UK definition of aging, the second heading on the page - [Ageing and the Life Course](#).

[Data from the US Census Bureau](#), August 2008: the 85 and older population is expected to more than triple, from 5.4 million to 19 million between 2008 and 2050.

### Future Implications

- The social and economic implications of the aging of the Baby Boom generation will be a significant concern for policy makers, the private sector, and individuals. The size and longevity of this group will trigger debate about possible modifications to Social Security, Medicare, and disability and retirement benefits, among other issues. What is happening to the [population pyramid](#).
- The changing marital and family composition that is occurring in the United States is likely to change the types of familial support that are available to people at older ages.
- The future older population is likely to be better educated than the current older population, especially when Baby Boomers start reaching age 65. Their increased levels of education may accompany better health, higher incomes, and more wealth, and consequently higher standards of living in retirement.
- Older women will be increasingly more likely to have been in the labor force long enough to have their own retirement income, although their lower median earnings may translate into lower incomes in retirement.
- Research on genetic, biological, and physiological aspects of aging is likely to change the future for

the older population. In the medical and public health arenas, research to understand chronic diseases, such as diabetes and Alzheimer's disease, may produce significant improvements for treatment and prevention.

Think about the [changing use of health services](#) as the population ages and its ramifications. What has happened since the economic depression started in 2007?

Review Dr Cotter's [Slides](#)  
([pdf handouts](#))

Review the .pdf file CDC's [State of Aging](#) Report with particular attention to the discussion starting page 26. You may also want to review [the report](#) from the National Association of State Units on Aging and compare its comments with those in the CDC report (pay particular attention to page 3, PH & aging; exhibit 3, page 4; exhibit 8, p 11; barriers to health p12; and discussion page 22-24); . A recent concern has been with [Older Driver Safety](#), see web site.

David Brooks in Frontline "Longer Lives - The [Ties that Bind Us](#)."  
DVD- Living Old Excerpts & Discussion, [Web Site](#) The first and last segments are the most important.

TAKING CARE: [ETHICAL CAREGIVING](#) In OUR AGING SOCIETY ( this is a large file and will take about 1 minute to download, save it to your hard drive and dip into it as necessary)  
The President's Council on Bioethics; Washington, D.C., September 2005  
**(Scan the Conclusions and recommendations section with attention to highlighted areas- start at p 228 ff.)**

WHO - [Long Term Care](#) pp6&7 (Another long file [28mg] to save to your hard drive)  
[American dream](#): Live long and prosper  
[The Aging Network](#)  
[Changing the Nursing Home Culture](#)

#### **New Readings 2009**(scan only)

Editorial on Aging [AJPH](#)  
[Conquering old age](#) (Editorial BMJ-July 08)  
[Baby Boomers](#) and aging  
[Who Pays](#) for Long Term Care (Policy Analysis for reference)  
[Who Cares](#) for the Elderly  
[Dying at Home](#) from Drugs (Fatal Medications)  
[Bereavement Adjustment](#) (Sept 08 JAMA)

#### [2009 Links](#)

For those interested in pursuing this topic further "The Epidemiology of Aging", William A Satariano.  
[James & Bartlett](#), 2006