Innovative Research Approaches in Elder Abuse: Evaluation

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Overview

• Background

• Review of Prevention and Intervention Research

• Evaluation Design Options
  – RCTs
  – Non-randomized options

• NIJ 2016 Elder Abuse Prevention Demonstration
  – Solicitation overview
  – Award announcement
“Where We’ve Failed Miserably: Evidence based treatment and prevention strategies”

- A very wise man Karl Pillemer (September 15, 2016)
Background

- Brief history of NIJ’s funding in elder mistreatment evaluation research through FY 2015.
  - 30+ funded projects between FY 2005 and FY 2015
  - 3 funded projects evaluating 2 Elder Abuse Forensic Centers
  - 0 funded preventive intervention evaluations
Comparison to Other Fields Using CrimeSolutions.gov Program Registry

- 122 programs listed under Violent Crime (25 effective, 87 promising).
- 87 programs listed under Victims and Victimization (22 effective, 53 promising).
- 23 programs listed under Child Abuse and Maltreatment (6 effective, 15 promising).
- Nothing listed under Elder Mistreatment.
Comparison to Other Fields Using CrimeSolutions.gov Practice Profiles

- Domestic violence interventions for male perpetrators using the Duluth Model – 22 studies
- Psychotherapies for victims of sexual assault – 6 studies
- Cognitive Behavior Therapy for domestic violence offenders – 22 + studies
- Second responder programs – 10 studies
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner forensic exams – 6 studies
- Advocacy interventions for victims of domestic violence – 2 studies
- No practice profile for elder mistreatment or any elder mistreatment practice
2016 Systematic Review of EA Interventions
Ayalon, Lev, Green, & Nevo (2016)

- 24 studies met the inclusion criteria
- Only 5 studies used any type of elder abuse as the outcome measure and only 1 of those included physical abuse
- International scope
- Studies were grouped into 3 categories
  - Interventions for professionals to detect or stop EM (2)
  - Interventions targeting older adults who experience EM (3)
  - Interventions targeting caregivers who mistreat older adults (19)
- 13 RCTs, 7 Quasi-experimental or comparison group designs, 4 pre-post designs
- 9 physical restraint studies that measured restraint as an outcome (pooled effect: -.24)
2015 Integrated Review of EA Interventions

- 37 experimental studies for 34 separate interventions were reviewed and grouped by level of human ecology
- Quality of the research based on a 22 point scale
- Of the 34 interventions, 11 received at least a score of 12.
- Methods categorized as randomized or non-randomized
- No indication in the report of specific outcomes for each study
2016 Cochrane Review
Interventions for Preventing Abuse in the Elderly
Baker, Francis, Hairi, Othman, & Yuen Choo (2016)

- Just published in mid-August.
- Includes RCTs, Quasi-experimental studies, pre-post studies with at least a 12 week follow-up period designed to prevent or reduce EA.
- Only 7 studies met the inclusion criteria.
- Few measured occurrence or reoccurrence of abuse.
- None reported unintended negative outcomes.
- The quality of the evidence was low.
- Authors concluded that there is inadequate evidence to assess the effects of elder abuse interventions.
Rigorous Alternatives to Randomized Control Trials (RCTs)

- RCTs are preferable when they are ethically feasible.
- Conditions favorable for non-randomized designs:
  - Intervention feasibility or acceptability is high.
  - Little potential for harm.
  - Effect sizes are large.
  - Confounders are known and measured.
  - There is evidence for a causal link between the intervention and the desired outcome(s).
Rigorous Alternatives to RCTs: Propensity Score Matching

• PSM is a quasi-experimental design that estimates the difference in outcomes between program participants and non-participants that can be attributed to the program.
• PSM reduces selection bias by creating a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group using regression to constructing a propensity score from observed baseline variables.
• The propensity scores estimate the probability of participation in the program and are constructed from characteristics that may affect program participation.
Original design was RCT, but was modified due to organizational changes outside of the researchers’ control.

Revised design used PSM to compare cases that went to the LA EAFC (n=287) to similar APS cases (selected from 33,650 cases).

Using available administrative data, cases were matched on age, race/ethnicity, APS office, number of abuse types reported and type of abuse.

Findings: LA EAFC cases were significantly more likely to be submitted to the District Attorney’s office.
Rigorous Alternatives to RCTs: Regression Discontinuity

- Essentially this is a pre-test, post-test design where the participants are assigned to program or comparison groups based on a pre-program cut off score (e.g., risk for abuse score).
- Intervention is delivered only to those most as need as determined by the cut off score.
- Has been used more in education than in social sciences. It does not allow for judgment to override the cut off classification.

For more information on regression discontinuity see http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/quasird.php
If there is a treatment effect, there will be a... discontinuity...in the regression lines...at the cutoff
Evaluation Research in Elder Abuse: What is needed?

- Clearly identified theory and logic model driven by strong evidence base about risk and protective factors.
- Agreed upon understanding of desired outcomes for intervention programming across a wide range of domains (housing, physical health, psychological wellbeing, financial wellbeing, criminal justice)
- Creative use of research methods and adoption of models from related fields.
- Strong advocacy to push for programming and evaluation.
Goal of NIJ FY 2016 Elder Abuse Prevention Demonstration Project Solicitation

- Fund a rigorous, multi-year demonstration project to prevent abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of elderly individuals who reside in the community and are at risk for elder abuse.

- Make up to two awards in the form of cooperative agreements, each for an 18-month planning phase.
Expectation for 3-Phased Funding

• Phase 1: This year’s solicitation is for an 18-month planning phase. NIJ has just made 2 awards for Phase 1.

• Phase 2: In the future, if phase 1 is successful, NIJ expects to award an 18-month supplement for a pilot phase.

• Phase 3: If the pilot in phase 2 shows promise for preventing elder abuse, NIJ expects to award an implementation study of 3 or more years. This phase will be awarded as a supplement.
Expectations for Proposed Interventions

- Propose an intervention strongly grounded in theory and specify the theory.
- Build on evidence-based violence prevention or health promotion interventions in related fields.
- Identify a rationale and strategy for selecting participants.
- Propose a project that can be replicated, scaled up, and independently evaluated.
- Interventions may focus on single or multiple forms of elder mistreatment.
- Consideration of a home visiting component is encouraged.
- Partnering with an integrated health care system is encouraged.
Expectations for Proposed Evaluation

- Use a scientifically rigorous design, such as an RCT, propensity score matching, or regression discontinuity.
- Identify meaningful and measureable short- and long-term outcomes that are theoretically linked to the intervention.
- Include reliable, valid, and generalizable measures of all independent and dependent variables, mediators, and moderators.
- Use of administrative datasets is encouraged.
Expectations for Proposed Research Team

- Multidisciplinary with the following expertise:
  - Experience in the administration and conduct of multidisciplinary and multicomponent research
  - Intervention development and implementation
  - Elder abuse
  - Violence prevention, child abuse prevention, or prevention of violence against women
  - Evaluation research
  - Longitudinal research design and data analysis
  - Instrument development, design, and testing
  - Use of administrative data
  - Cost analysis research
Announcement of NIJ Awardees

- The awards will be announced next week.
- Awardees will be notified by September 22.
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