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Designed environment for healthy aging

A growing number of aging adults want to remain in multi-generational communities rather than relocating to retirement communities, or having to resort to an institutional setting. To productively function in an environment where all generations interact and live well together, however, one's ability to manage diminishing cognitive and physical conditions precipitated by the aging process is a major factor that bears on everyone's quality of life. Because the designed environment frequently plays a significant role in the occurrence of neurodegenerative disorders that involve biological changes, it is self-evident that design strategies intended to support the management of these symptoms daily must be integral to multicomponent intervention strategies and account for their biological and behavioral impact. To operationalize the concept of healthy aging, meaning that it would provide a safe and comfortable environment for those experiencing functional changes related to aging, this presentation summarizes evidence for the development of translational neuroscience-informed design strategies that have the potential to support the management of neuropsychiatric symptoms, a common feature of all neurodegenerative dementias in the elderly.

Biography

Attila Lawrence is a Professor at School of Architecture from University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He has extensive expertise in the design/build industry as designer and/or constructor of record of more than thirty major residential projects for elderly clients in California. His recent work and invited lecture presentations addressed interventional design strategies to optimize multi-generational environments; mental health correlates of environmental spatial qualities; design interventions to support neurodegenerative disease management; and the strategic management of total project delivery systems. He is collaborated with University Medical Center of Southern Nevada, Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health and Center for Biobehavioral Interdisciplinary Science.

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