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UC San Diego Funded by NIMH to Study Successful Aging in Adults with HIV

5-year grant totals \$3.4 million

The National Institute of Mental Health has awarded a \$3.4 million grant to a team of researchers at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine to study successful aging in HIV-infected adults. HIV is a serious, chronic, medical disease that affects the lives of more than one million Americans.

Since the advent of antiretroviral therapy (ART) to treat HIV, life expectancy of HIV+ adults has been increasing progressively. By 2015, nearly half of HIV+ individuals in the United States will be over age 50, and this number is expected to continue to rise. The newly funded study will be the first large-scale investigation of successful aging in HIV-infected individuals between the ages of 36 and 65 years.

The goals of the UC San Diego study are to examine the positive psychosocial factors such as resilience, hardiness, optimism, and social engagement that determine self-perceived successful aging, according to principal investigator Dilip Jeste, MD, Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Neurosciences, and director of UC San Diego's Stein Institute for Research on Aging. The study will also look at biomarkers of both physical and cognitive aging, comparing these factors in individuals who are HIV-infected with non-infected adults.

“Our hope is that understanding factors that promote successful aging at an individual level may lead to the development of new preventive and therapeutic interventions aimed at improving quality of life and well-being in adults living with HIV,” said co-principal investigator David J. Moore, PhD, associate professor of psychiatry at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

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