

March 30, 2021

To the members of the GSA Health Sciences Awards Committee:

It is our distinct pleasure to nominate **Pamela Cacchione, PhD, RN, CRNP-BC, FGSA, FAAN** for the **Joseph T. Freeman Award**. Dr. Cacchione's 30 year career exemplifies the intersection of practice and research in the field of aging. She has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to finding solutions informed by science to address challenges faced by patients and healthcare teams. In the sections below, we highlight her significant contributions to the care of older adults, through her scholarship, practice and policy work.

As a gerontological nurse practitioner (GNP) with a sub-specialty of geropsychiatric nursing, Dr. Cacchione has been an Associate Professor of Geropsychiatric Nursing on the Standing Faculty Clinician Educator Track at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) School of Nursing since 2009. In this role, she holds a practice appointment that she has dedicated to the health and wellness of older adults and their caregivers. From 2009-2017, her practice appointment was with Mercy LIFE (Living Independently For Elders) in West Philadelphia as a gerontological nurse practitioner in geropsychiatric practice. Currently she practices at the University of Pennsylvania Health System, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center as a Nurse Scientist.

Dr. Cacchione's scholarship is directly informed by her years of practice as a GNP with expertise in geropsychiatric nursing and her years as a nurse scientist in a practice and education setting. Her scholarship focuses on three interrelated clinical areas for older adults: geriatric syndromes (e.g., delirium and sensory impairment); models of care, (e.g., Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)); and human factors research informing technology design (e.g., robotics and monitoring devices).

As PI of a National Institutes of Health funded R01 study, *Nursing Interventions for Sensory Impaired Long-Term Care Elders*, she implemented an evidence-based intervention – Individualized-Sensory Enhancement in the Elderly (I-SEE) in long-term care settings to improve the care and quality of life of sensory impaired older adults. This study produced new knowledge on the impact sensory impairment has on scoring as cognitively impaired on cognitive screens; fear of falling, and the quality of social engagement. These finds were published in data-based publications, abstracts, editorials and book chapters. Findings also informed evidence-based, highly visible and accessible guidelines on the Hartford Institute of Geriatric Nursing's website guiding nurses and other practitioners in addressing sensory impairment to avoid preventable disability.

As a nurse scientist and expert in gerontology, she leveraged her expertise in normal changes in aging and sensory impairment to engage in transdisciplinary work of human factors research influencing the design and testing of social assistive robots and testing of other technologies through two National Science Foundation (NSF) funded studies with publications in engineering, social robotics, and nursing journals. She is the co-PI on a current NSF study investigating a Penn designed social assistive robot, *Quori*, deployed with personalized plans of care for older adults enrolled in a PACE center. The goal is to develop low-cost mobile assistive robots that perform important repetitive tasks freeing up caregivers to provide essential care requiring human interaction. She procured intramural funding to deploy a commercially available robotic seal PARO (**P**ersonal **A**ssistive **R**obot) on the PPMC ACE unit to decrease agitation in persons with dementia and/or delirium. This is the first randomized controlled study using PARO on an ACE unit to test the efficacy of PARO interactions to decrease agitation, the use of psychoactive drugs and length of stay.

Dr. Cacchione was instrumental in elevating evidence-based nursing practice as a GNP providing geropsychiatric consultations and director of research at Penn LIFE (a PACE model). She led the initiative that resulted in Penn's LIFE practice (now Mercy LIFE) to receive national recognition through the American Nurses Credentialing Centers' Pathways to Excellence Program. Further, through her leadership and clinical appointment at LIFE, she developed a quality program for reducing psychotropic medication use, particularly in persons with dementia and published several papers on geropsychiatric conditions based on critically important clinical issues for older adult participants in PACE: dual diagnosis, depression, psychosis, dementia related behaviors, fear of falling, sleep, and the impact of music.

In her current nurse scientist at role at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center (PPMC) she continues to advance evidence-based practice through the Acute Care for Elders (ACE) unit. As a member of the unit-based council of the ACE Unit, she provides evidence-based resources to the interprofessional council to improve patient outcomes in mobility, delirium, polypharmacy, pressure injuries and sepsis and supports the ACE unit's evidence-based initiatives and Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) activities.

Many of Dr. Cacchione's publications reflect her engagement with nurses in supporting research in the practice setting and disseminating findings to inform practice. Several recent examples include:

1. Kuzmik, A., Boltz, M., **Cacchione, P.Z.** Resnick, B. (In Press). Physical activity in hospitalized persons with dementia: Feasibility and validity of the MotionWatch8. *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*.
2. Pavone, K.J., Jablonski, J., Junker, P. **Cacchione, P.Z.**, Compton, P., Polomano, R.C. (In Press). Evaluating the relationships among pain, opioid analgesic administration and the onset of delirium in older adults in the surgical intensive care unit. *Clinical Nursing Research*
3. Boltz, M., Resnick, B., Kuzmik, A., Mogle, J., Roman Jones, J., Arendacs, R., Belue, R., **Cacchione, P.**, Galvin, J. (In Press). Pain incidence, treatment, and associated symptoms in hospitalized persons with dementia. *Pain Management Nursing*.
4. Pavone KJ, Jablonski J, Junker P, Cacchione PZ, Compton P, Polomano RC. (In Press). Evaluating delirium outcomes among older adults in the surgical intensive care unit. *Heart & Lung* Doi: 10.1016/j.hrting.2020.04.009
5. Sefcik, J.S., Ersek, M, **Cacchione, P.Z.** (In Press). Nursing home residents with advanced dementia and persistent vocalizations: Observations of surrounding context. *International Journal of Older People Nursing*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/opn.12322>
6. Lach, H.W., Hanlon, A., Lozano, A., **Cacchione, P.Z.** (2020). Prevalence and correlates of fear of falling in sensory impaired nursing home residents. *Aging and Mental Health*. 24(3), 474-480. DOI: 10.1080/13607863.2018.1537359
7. Petrovsky, D.V., Sefcik, J.S., Hanlon, A., Lozano, A.J., **Cacchione, P.Z.** (2019). Social Engagement, Cognition, Depression and Comorbidities in Sensory Impaired Nursing Home Residents. *Research in Gerontological Nursing* 12(5): 217-226. <https://doi.org/10.3928/19404921-20190627-01>

See her CV for many other examples of collaborative research that informs practice.

In addition, Dr. Cacchione combines her practice and research expertise as an entrepreneur. She has licensed a company, AgingSense, to develop and test innovative heart failure (HF) monitoring socks. These socks are designed to alert persons with HF to exacerbations of HF and monitor treatment effects. Through Penn's School of Nursing Innovation Accelerator program, she is completing rapid prototyping and testing with persons with HF.

Dr. Cacchione is the editor of *Clinical Nursing Research (CNR)* where she advances clinical nursing science. When she began her tenure as editor, CNR lacked an impact factor and she successfully led the publication to its first impact factor of 0.89 in 2011 and now *CNR* has an impact factor of 1.589.

Dr. Cacchione's clinician/researcher expertise is demonstrated in her national leadership roles. For example, she served on the executive board as President-elect, President and Past President for the Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA). During her time in these roles, the GAPNA developed a certificate exam for Advanced Practice Gerontological Nursing Specialist. She also was the convener of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Nursing Interest Group, led Penn's National Hartford Centers of Gerontological Excellence as Center Director, and currently serves as the convener of the American Academy of Nursing's Expert Panel on Aging. As a Health and Aging Policy Fellow, she collaborated with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on the PACE Innovation ACT, and the implementation of Community Health Choices, a mandatory managed care program for dual eligibles across Pennsylvania.

In summary, Dr. Cacchione's contributions to the field of aging are real and tangible, improving the quality of care and life of older adults in the community, hospitals, home care and long-term care. These contributions are attributable to the intersection of her practice and research roles and the support and guidance she provides nurses in these practice settings to improve geriatric nursing practice using the evidence from research. Clearly, Dr. Cacchione exemplifies a prominent clinician researcher in the field of aging.

Nominators:

Christine Mueller, PhD, RN, FGSA, FAAN  
Senior Executive Associate Dean for Academic Programs  
Long-term Care Professorship in Nursing  
University of Minnesota, School of Nursing

Helen Lach, PhD, RN, CNL, FGSA, FAAN  
Associate Dean for Research/PhD Director, Interim  
Saint Louis University  
Trudy Busch Valentine School of Nursing

Mary Naylor, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Marian S. Ware Professor in Gerontology  
University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing

John Morley, MD  
Professor  
School of Medicine/Division of Geriatric Medicine  
St. Louis University