

STUDENT RESEARCH WEEK

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PubMed's Alzheimer's Disease Research Ontology

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Abstract

Alzheimer's Disease is a lethal degenerate neurological disorder that affects speech and memory (American Psychological Association, 2013). According to Alzheimer's Association (2014), 5.2 million people in the United States alone have Alzheimer's. Due to the aging Baby Boomers, the number is expected to reach nine million by 2050. The Alzheimer's Association and the National Institute of Aging created a tool for the classification of Alzheimer's research: the Common Alzheimer's Disease Research Ontology (CADRO) (Refolo et al., 2012). The present study utilized a content analysis to examine the PubMed database to determine the current focus of Alzheimer research. The search was limited to articles published between 2014/01/01 and 2014/12/31 that could be located with the search term "Alzheimer's disease." Of the yielded 9233 results, every 200th article was systematically selected for inclusion in the study for a total sample size of N= 47. Each abstract was coded according the CADRO classification system. Results showed that 58% of research in PubMed focuses on molecular pathologies and physiology. Research in this category is useful for the development of potential treatments and cures for Alzheimer's disease. However, there remain significant gaps in this literature. For example, few articles focused on research resources (13%) or clinical interventions (13%). With increasing federal healthcare costs and caregiver demands, research also should focus on the sociological impact of this condition (i.e., support and health economics, which represented only 6% of the literature). This data should comprise a greater proportion of the literature in order to suggest the appropriate allocation of resources for managing the impending national health crisis.

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