

ISR

75 Years of Social Science in the Public Interest

The Present

State of the Science: The Present

- **Present**—highlighting recent advancements
- current challenges
- and ongoing research efforts shaping and enriching our understanding of aging today.



Recent Advances

- Surveys
- Acceptance by medical community—researchers & clinicians
- Integration of new technologies for measurement
- Genetic, biological, physiological ideas
- Innovations in data collection, linkages &



Surveys

- Acceptance of surveys as a way of knowing
- Survey organizations like ISR—and NORC—established 75 years ago. Mostly as public opinion pollsters
- The topics that can be—and are—covered by surveys has expanded. Microbiome and mailing fecal samples to a survey organization. Vaginal swabs. Geriatric assessment. Mental health
- And we have more ways to get surveys to respondents



- Social concepts and social research in medical journals
- Sociology part of the MCAT
- Inclusion of depression, domestic abuse in clinical screenings
- SDOH as a concept



Social Science → Medicine

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- Frailty
- Health & Society
- Physiological pathways from discrimination to, say, cognition
- Inflammation as a marker of stress exposure



New Technologies

- Adaptive testing
- Fitness trackers
- Smart phones (CHART)
- Measuring levels of pollutants in the home
- Google street view



Disciplines & Their Ideas

- GERIATRICS!!
- Genetics
- Biology—measuring physiological processes
- Physical functioning
- Neurology fMRI



Data Collection

- Many ways to gather data
- Many ways to link data
- Powerful new analytic techniques



Challenges

- Finding people
- Getting agreement to provide data
- Increasing concerns about data confidentiality
- Recruiting and retaining field interviewers
- Representing the diversity of populations

