Exploration: Special Focus: Issues of Death and Dying

Each year, the Pacific Rim team takes on a new topic challenge, often areas of concern not discussed in disability and diversity conferences or relegated to small, focused discussions. This year we are tackling a familiar subject to us all, and one which has many moving parts of a potentially rich discussion – matters relating to death and dying.

We feel it is time to promote a discussion to move the issue from the margins to the center to ensure that all people experience and support others to live full lives, are less vulnerable to unnecessary deaths and have access to quality of end of life care.

This topic area is divided into two components: issues related to end of life care, grieving and planning as it relates to people with disabilities; and suicide and preventable deaths among marginalized populations.

We hope to harness interest in this topic area and would like to put together proceedings of our rich discussion. We are seeking proposals that address the following:

End of Life

- Relevance of disability to end of life care practice and service;
- Research and advocacy efforts as it relates to disability and the death and dying experience;
- Public health perspectives on disability and palliative care;
- Barriers for people with disabilities as they come to need end of life care and support;
- Best practices for assisting people with intellectual disabilities and learning challenges in coping with loss, grief and bereavement;
- Replicable models across the socio-economic spectrum for quality care for individuals with dementia and Alzheimer’s;
- Models for alternatives to state hospitals and care homes where millions face death and dying in isolation and less than acceptable situations;
- Best practices for estate and caregiving planning if a parent of a person with a disability dies;
- Rights and justice approaches to aging and end of life care for marginalized populations.

Suicide and preventable deaths among marginalized populations

- New initiatives in data tracking on suicides to include persons with disabilities;
- Inclusive and diverse crisis intervention, suicide awareness and suicide prevention trainings;
• Best practices for identifying risk factors for suicidal behavior among students with disabilities and mental health challenges;
• Models on reducing high rates of suicide among indigenous peoples, people of color, and those with learning and emotional challenges;
• Community and policy directives aimed at lessening family and community killings of people with disabilities;
• Academic and disability studies perspectives on suicides.

If you have a proposal that may not fit in to the above targets, we will welcome them as part of our discussion. We welcome proposals in any presentation format. We are especially looking for hands-on workshops.

Please see presentation formats on our webpage at http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/presenters/formats. Please check the criteria for each format and ensure that you have the appropriate number of presenters for your chosen format. You may submit proposals online at: http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/submissions or send your proposals via email to prcall@hawaii.edu.

For more information about this topic area, please contact the Conference Team at prcall@hawaii.edu.

For general information on the conference, please contact Charmaine Crockett at cccrocke@hawaii.edu, (808) 956-7539.

For registration questions please contact the registration desk at (808) 956-8816, fax (808) 956-4437 or email prreg@hawaii.edu.