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[Center for Aging & Disability
Education & Research at
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Resources

Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State University

The Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State University is dedicated to research in social and behavioral sciences and cognitive neuroscience to issues of aging and urban health. Besides research, it is focused also on education to prepare future leaders in aging research, outreach and engagement to connect older adults and their families to current knowledge, and partnerships to build programs to stand the test of time. Visit the [website](#) for more info.

National Institute on Aging's Alzheimer's Disease Research Centers

The Alzheimer's Disease Centers (ADCs) are funded by the National Institute on Aging (part of the National Institutes of Health) and located at major medical institutions across the U.S. Researchers and clinicians at these centers aim to translate research advances into improved diagnosis and care for people with Alzheimer's disease, with a focus on finding a way to cure and possibly prevent Alzheimer's. For more info about the mission and goals of ADCs, visit the [website](#).

Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Core Center

Michigan's Alzheimer's Disease Core Center is one of the 31 Alzheimer's Disease Centers across the country. It is a [statewide program](#), linking efforts at three major research universities, University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Wayne State University in

Issues and Views

NIA Alzheimer's Disease Research Centers A Perspective on the Most Promising Research

By Mary Johnson

Alzheimer's disease and related forms of dementia remain a major problem for our aging society. Currently, more than five million Americans are diagnosed with Alzheimer's—at great cost to individuals, families, and the health and long-term-care system. While the past twenty years have seen advances in understanding Alzheimer's disease and caring for patients, no breakthrough treatment has emerged.

Some of the most promising research on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias these days is taking place through the National Institute on Aging's Alzheimer's Disease Research Centers program, a network of researchers and clinicians who work together at 31 centers across the country to develop and share new research approaches and findings. For a perspective on this work, *The LearningEdge* turned to **Peter Lichtenberg (pictured at right)**, a nationally renowned researcher and clinician who is director of the Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State University. The university is part of the Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Core Center, along with the University of Michigan and Michigan State University. The Michigan ADCC is the newest in NIA's centers program, having received its funding in 2016.



"This is a fantastic opportunity," Peter Lichtenberg said. He noted that the core center will support a wide range of studies and will educate scientists, healthcare professionals, and the public about causes and treatments. "Not least," he said, "citizens of Michigan can benefit directly as they grapple with understanding and intervening for people with Alzheimer's."

A common core. "We are creating a popular common-core set of knowledge," Lichtenberg said. "It's what every researcher in dementia should know, from basic science to clinical, and also including health services." Junior research scientists receive training in this core along with mentoring. Lichtenberg is one of the core training leaders.

Integration. Lichtenberg said he looks forward to a deeper integration of Alzheimer's research with geriatrics and other programs across the university, to develop new lines of research. "For example, we are already working with Wayne State's Healthier Black Elders Center to advance understanding of dementia in underrepresented minorities," he said. "It's going very well; integrating them into the research plan goes along with having a true connection with the community when they need it."

Scientific perspective. Each of the core centers addresses Alzheimer's and related disorders from a different scientific perspective. While most research examines the disease with a focus on beta-amyloid, the protein that forms the plaques that characterize Alzheimer's, the Michigan ADCC will look at other potential causes. "Nothing is really working on the amyloid front," Lichtenberg says. "Some people have many tangles in the brain but never have a day of dementia. Researchers are now realizing that we need to dig deeper and farther. **Beta amyloids are necessary for development of Alzheimer's disease, but they are not sufficient.** This evidence frees us to be open to a broader range of possibilities."

"And of course," Lichtenberg says, "we must use what we know to improve **treatment, support, and**



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New CADER Course: Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias of Aging

Alzheimer's disease poses one of the greatest challenges to our aging society. In this **self-paced online** course, you'll develop the skills you need as a provider of supports and services to older adults and families facing dementia. The course is based on the principles of person-centered care and incorporates the latest research and best practice in assessment, referral, and intervention. Visit the [CADER website](#) for more information or to [sign up](#) (use code **ENEWS2017** for a 10 percent discount).

'I feel I have so much more to offer my clients and families now. Thank you.'

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