

Symposium Summary

This symposium is focused on social environments in later life. Four presentations (two from the U.S., one from Japan, and one from Taiwan) examine how different types of social relationships as well as changing sociocultural environments, may impact older adults' well-being across societies. The first presenter will discuss the macro-level demographic and cultural shifts, reviewing cross-national data and exploring how such shifts have contributed to changing social relationships and health among aging populations. The second presenter will examine later-life marital quality trajectories among adults in the U.S. The third presenter will describe the association between social relationships and frailty in community-dwelling older adults in Japan, highlighting the importance of identifying and intervening with older adults with social relationship problems. The fourth presenter will introduce the findings on sex-specific associations between social isolation and psychological outcomes, as well as selected biomarkers in community-dwelling middle-aged and older adults in Taiwan. These four presentations will provide a broad overview of social relationships and their implications for well-being in later life. The symposium will help identify culturally-sensitive strategies for promoting the well-being of older adults in global communities.