

USC Judith D. Tamkin International
Symposium
on Elder Abuse

*The Elder Justice Panorama: Promising Programs,
Sustainable Progress, and the Path Forward*

February 26 & 27, 2026
The Westin Pasadena,
Pasadena, CA



Symposium Program

General Information

Recognizing Mrs. Judith D. Tamkin

We are forever grateful to Mrs. Tamkin for her gift that established this symposium and her endowment that allows it to live on. Her deep and personal commitment to eradicating elder abuse is helping to reshape our understanding of elder abuse and ultimately save innumerable older adults from abuse and neglect.

Symposium Location

The Westin Pasadena
191 N Los Robles Ave., Pasadena, CA, 91101

Registration Hours

Fountain Ballroom Foyer, Second Floor of Hotel

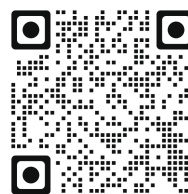
Thursday, February 26, 2026 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Friday, February 27, 2026 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Symposium Description

The mission of the USC Judith D. Tamkin International Symposium on Elder Abuse is to create safe and healthy environments for all older adults, here and across the world, by bringing researchers, practitioners, advocates, thought leaders, lawmakers, and other stakeholders together to share findings, strategize solutions, and help shape and propel the field of elder justice.

Symposium Learning Objectives

1. Share innovative research studies and practice-based strategies in the field of elder abuse.
2. Examine and discuss the use of screening tools to identify the risk and presence of elder abuse.
3. Identify funding priorities and opportunities to advance elder abuse research and evidence-based practices.
4. Identify and integrate best practices to mitigate susceptibility to scams and develop person-centered responses to harms caused by elder financial exploitation.
5. Address the health, social, and psychological impacts of child maltreatment and intimate partner violence on abuse in later life.



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Tamkin Symposium
materials and resources

Accreditation Statement

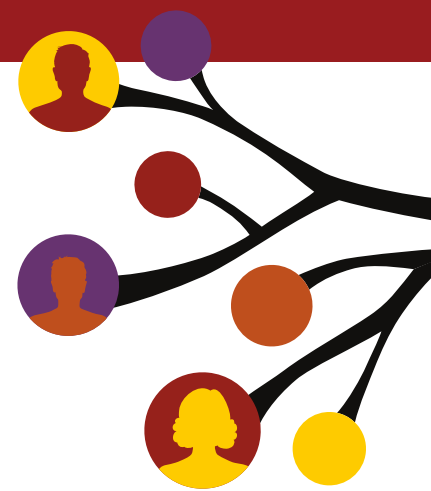
The Keck School of Medicine of USC is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

Credit Designation

The Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California designates this live activity for a maximum of **13.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™**. Physicians should claim the credits commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Conference Wifi

Network: **Tamkin2026**
Password: **ElderJustice**



7:30 – 8:30 a.m. **Registration (Breakfast)** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. **Welcome & Presentation of Tamkin Scholars** *Fountain Ballroom*

9:00 – 9:50 a.m. **Keynote Address - My Journey to the Angels: Toward Spiritual Renewal** *Fountain Ballroom*
Thomas Cole, PhD

This presentation summarizes the message of Cole's forthcoming memoir, *My Journey to the Angels: Toward Spiritual Renewal*. It includes stories of living into the paradox of physical decline and spiritual growth; a critique of capitalist and scientific materialisms; a call to personal/cultural spiritual renewal and to recovery of sacred nature as a key to our planet's future.

9:50 – 10:30 a.m. **From Evidence to Practice: Overview of Implementation and Dissemination Methods** *Fountain Ballroom*
Linda Ko, PhD

The persistent gap between scientific discovery and real-world application remains a critical challenge in clinical and public health practice. This session will provide a conceptual and methodological overview of translating research evidence into various community settings. Attendees will learn the core principles of Dissemination and Implementation (D&I) research, review hybrid study designs, implementation frameworks, and adaptation processes to ensure interventions fit the local contexts. The session will also describe opportunities and challenges within the field. By the conclusion of this session, attendees will gain an overall understanding on how to systematically move research discoveries into real-world settings.

10:30 – 10:45 a.m. **Break** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. **Implementing Novel Elder Mistreatment Interventions Across Community and Health System Settings** *Fountain Ballroom*

- Navigating Feasibility Testing to Enhance Future Implementation: Modifications to the KINDER Program
Kylie Meyer, PhD, MSc
- Implementing RISE in New Contexts: Listening and Learning
David Burnes, PhD
- Developing, Piloting and Disseminating Elder Mistreatment Electronic Health Record Tools in a National Health System
Lena Makaroun, MD, MS
- Iterative Adaptation of Hospital-based, Elder Abuse Consultation Services: Ongoing lessons from the Vulnerable Elder Services, Protection, and Advocacy Team (VESPA)
Elizabeth Bloemen, MD

This panel will present four different elder mistreatment interventions in various stages of implementation that span both community and health care settings.

continued
10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Working in the community, Dr. Meyer will present on the process of piloting the KINDER (Knowledge and Interpersonal Skills to Develop Enhanced Relationships) program, which is designed to prevent psychological elder mistreatment within caregiving relationships. Dr. Burnes will present on the implementation of RISE (Repair Harm, Inspire Change, Support Connection, Empower Choice) in several different contexts across the country to prevent and respond to cases of elder mistreatment and self-neglect in the community. In the health care context, Dr. Makaroun will present on a national implementation of electronic health record tools in the Veteran Health Administration system designed to address elder mistreatment. Dr. Bloemen will present on the implementation of the Vulnerable Elder Services, Protection, and Advocacy Team (VESPA), a hospital-based elder mistreatment consultation team intervention that supports older adults and their families who have experienced elder mistreatment.

Together, these interventions represent new and innovative approaches designed to address the complex problem of elder mistreatment and represent important steps toward creating real and impactful solutions in our field.

12:00 – 1:15 p.m. **Networking Lunch** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*

1:15 – 2:15 p.m. **Assessing, Managing, and Mitigating Risk in Elder Abuse – Implementing Advances Used to Respond to Other Forms of Violence** *Fountain Ballroom*
Kate Wilber, PhD & Jennifer Storey, PhD

Identifying and reducing risk has been a cornerstone of elder abuse research with generally disappointing results. This session will summarize this work before turning to evidence of successful models of intervention for other forms of violence. Barriers to implementing violence risk assessment in practice can come from both the complexity of clients and gaps in professional practice. This presentation will relay work by Dr. Storey from implementing the Harm to Older Person's Evaluation (HOPE) in practice, with professionals of varied backgrounds using two models. By combining the Risk Needs Responsivity model of offender management and treatment with the use of Communities of Practice to understand, facilitate and deliver the learning, Dr. Storey identified ways to improve the HOPE and its implementation in practice. This session will share that learning which has applications beyond risk assessment and can be applied to imbedding interventions, screening, and other empirical research into practice.

2:15 – 2:45 p.m. **Conversation on Elder Abuse Interventions and Implementation Science** *Fountain Ballroom*

2:45 – 3:00 p.m. **Break** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. **Financial Exploitation Panel** *Fountain Ballroom*

- Balancing protection and autonomy using temporary transaction holds in Minnesota
Marti DeLiema, PhD

continued 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Older adults who are manipulated by financial perpetrators may resist intervention from concerned professionals. An adult protection law in Minnesota authorizes financial institutions to place temporary holds on transactions if the older adult is believed to be experiencing financial abuse or fraud. Dr. DeLiema partnered with the Minnesota Department of Commerce and Adult Protective Services to analyze data on elder financial exploitation cases that were referred for temporary holds between 2022 and 2025 and interviewed older adults who experienced a protective hold. Temporary account holds were implemented in 23% of the investigations, safeguarding \$34 million dollars. Participants described how the hold prevented perpetrators from taking more money but expressed anger and mistrust toward their financial institutions for restricting their funds access. Results indicate that temporary holds can protect victims against significant financial costs, but when applied too broadly or placed without sufficient communication, cause psychological distress and some material harm.

- Financial Exploitation in Older Age: Brains in Context

Duke Han, PhD

Financial exploitation can have a devastating impact on the wellbeing of older adults, yet the reasons why some older adults experience financial exploitation remain elusive. Recent work informed by the fields of neuropsychology and neuroscience has increasingly demonstrated links between financial vulnerability in older age and serious health outcomes such as Alzheimer's Disease. Because of this, research on financial exploitation in older age has been made a public health priority, and this has led to a substantial expansion in knowledge on the topic. Despite this growth in understanding, gaps in knowledge, misconceptions, and ageist viewpoints continue to persist. To address these, this presentation will (1) discuss the potential role of age-associated cognitive and neuropathological brain changes in financial exploitation through new findings from our research laboratory, and (2) highlight important contextual considerations that need prioritization in future research endeavors.

4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

**Day 1 Closing Plenary - Shifting Elder Justice Paradigms:
Toward Evidence, Choice, Holism, and Meaning**

Fountain Ballroom

MT Connolly, JD

This presentation will examine advances in the elder justice field in a historical context. What lessons can we learn? That history, and Thomas Cole's illumination of the deep mysteries of aging, helped to inform both the book, *The Measure of Our Age*, and the RISE model. RISE-APS, and RISE's recent expansion to housing, health, and family justice center settings, will serve as a case study to examine ways to translate research (and especially implementation science) into practice. In this process, questions about meaning and about what matters most too often go unasked, yet should be asked again and again. And the answers should serve as a compass for our elder justice work at the individual, family, community, and cultural levels.

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Poster Reception

Madera Room

- 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*
- 8:00 – 8:30 a.m. **Welcome & Presentation of Georgia Anetzberger Awards** *Fountain Ballroom*
- 8:30 – 9:15 a.m. **Going Beyond the Data: A Primer on Nursing Homes and Residents' Struggle for Quality Care and Dignity in Daily Life** *Fountain Ballroom*
Alison Hirschel, JD & Lori Smetanka, JD
- Nursing homes are often viewed through the lens of data, including staffing ratios, inspection results, demographics, and complaint categories. But behind the numbers lies a more complex reality: the lived experience of residents. This session will offer a primer on the nursing home system, unpacking how it is structured, regulated, and financed, while also examining the ways it too often fails to provide residents with dignity and quality.
- Through a combination of data and real-world examples, participants will explore:
- The basics: who lives in them, who pays for them, and how they are regulated.
 - The impact of corporatization, private equity, and opaque corporate structures on staffing and care.
 - Why traditional measures of “quality” fail to capture the human experience of residents.
 - The gap between legal requirements and lived reality in nursing homes.
 - This session also examines nursing home fundamentals while engaging with the deeper story of what it means to live in one.
- 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. **Collecting and Using Data in Nursing Homes** *Fountain Ballroom*
Dana B. Mukamel, PhD
- This session will provide an overview of national datasets with information about nursing homes that are available to researchers and the public at large, focusing on datasets that can offer data on individual facilities. These will include the Minimum Data Set (MDS), the Payroll Based Journal (PBJ), Medicare and Medicaid Claims, the Medicare Cost Reports and the Nursing Home Care Compare. This session will examine the type of information that each dataset offers, its costs and in general terms the process of obtaining the data and the level of expertise required to analyze the data. This session will also share examples of studies that can be performed with these data and questions that can be answered with them and will discuss some of their limitations.
- 9:45 – 10:05 a.m. **Break** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*



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10:05 – 11:05 a.m. **Facilitators and Barriers to Research in Licensed Facilities** *Fountain Ballroom*

- Thoughts on Research in Long Term Care environments: Its Meaning, Purpose, and Practical Concerns.

Elizabeth Halifax, PhD, RN

No one aspires to a future as a resident in long term care (LTC). However, the reality of aging, disease processes, and injury, can result in health crises, chronic health problems and the potential to lose function and independence. This in turn, leads to the need for care. LTC research is meaningful when it reflects the lived experience of people living and working in LTC, so that we can plan, prioritize, and provide the quality care needed. This presentation will explore:

- How we can build empathy for LTC residents by understanding our implicit biases regarding age, poor health, the dying, and LTC environments.
- The importance of focusing on what is going well in LTC environments and how that is achieved.
- Suggestions on how to approach LTC facilities/businesses regarding research access and cooperation
- The need for mentorship of new researchers in this field.

- Breaking Down Barriers: Leveraging Partnerships and Understanding to Improve Long-Term Care

Rachel Tate, LCSW

The concepts of elder justice and person-centered approaches often focus on community dwelling older adults. Translating these approaches to adequately serve residents in long-term care facilities can be daunting given the challenges researchers face in working within this complex structure with highly vulnerable individuals. Long-term care residents live and receive care in environments that are often focused on avoiding regulatory sanctions and minimizing profit loss. In this session we will explore the need for creative approaches to engagement in the long-term care structure to ensure continued strides in improvement in care.

Shaun Rushforth, MSG

- Elder Justice Through the Lens of Licensed Long-Term Care Facilities

Shaun Rushforth, MSG, MBA

Licensed long-term care facilities operate within complex systems shaped by regulation, staffing realities, family dynamics, and wide variation in resources. This session centers on the perspective of licensed facilities including Board and Care homes, Assisted Living Facilities, Skilled Nursing Facilities, and Continuing Care Retirement Communities to better understand how elder abuse prevention, detection, and reporting function in practice. This session also highlights practical opportunities for collaboration, trust-building, and sustainable progress.

11:05 – 11:45 a.m. **Q&A: Research in Licensed Facilities** *Fountain Ballroom*

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Networking Lunch** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*
1:00 – 1:10 p.m. **Special Performance** *Fountain Ballroom Foyer*

- 1:10 – 1:40 p.m. **Is Regulation Enough to Protect Human Rights in Nursing Homes?** *Fountain Ballroom*
Wenche Malmedal, PhD, MSc, RN, FAAN
- The session begins with a brief introduction to the context of Norwegian nursing homes—an integral part of what is often referred to as “the world’s best healthcare system”. This overview includes staff and resident characteristics as well as the regulatory framework governing these institutions. Recent research findings on abuse and neglect in Norwegian nursing homes will then be presented, with particular emphasis on the phenomenon of neglect. We will explore how a neglective care culture may be created under the existing conditions and discuss how this may contribute to violations of human rights. Although regulations are in place, they are not always followed, and we will examine the consequences of such non-compliance. The session concludes with an introduction to SafeEst (Norwegian: TryggEst), a model for detecting, reporting, and addressing elder abuse, that has been implemented in many Norwegian municipalities.
- 1:40 – 2:25 p.m. **Strategizing Innovative Research Ideas and Opportunities in Licensed Facilities** *Fountain Ballroom*
- 2:25 – 2:55 p.m. **Closing Keynote - Watching Elder Abuse Science and Service Come of Age: A Professional and Personal Reflection** *Fountain Ballroom*
Mark Lachs, MD, MPH
- My presentation will describe and reflect on the remarkable evolution of our field over the past 75 years. I will highlight what I regard as the most important scientific, clinical and policy developments in elder abuse, many of which were unfathomable to me when began working in the field 35 years ago. Finally, I will make the case that our history can and should inform its future direction.
- 2:55 – 3:10 p.m. **Symposium Closing** *Fountain Ballroom*

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We invite you to support the USC Judith D. Tamkin International Symposium on Elder Abuse and other projects of the USC Center for Elder Justice: elderjustice.usc.edu/donate

Award Winners

2026 Georgia Anetzberger Award Recipients



Erica Wood, JD has had a profound impact on the field of elder maltreatment. She has led pioneering practice, research, and policy initiatives in adult guardianship, health and financial decision-making, less restrictive alternatives, legal services delivery, and access to courts, among other areas. Erica has advanced the rights and liberties of vulnerable older adults nationwide. Her distinguished tenure with the American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging, leadership on WINGS and the Guardianship Summit, and consequential national research studies, have improved the landscape of elder justice.



Rachel Tate, LCSW has led groundbreaking practice innovations as the vice-president of Ombudsman Services at WISE & Healthy Aging. With oversight of the Long-term care Ombudsman Program in Los Angeles County, she is an educator, trainer, role model, and leader, who has paved the path for many in this arena to better serve older adults in long-term care. Rachel spearheaded the creation of the first multidisciplinary team dedicated to addressing systemic improvement in long-term care facilities and has contributed to research initiatives in long-term care facilities. In the wake of the Eaton Canyon fire, Rachel marshalled community efforts to provide shelter, food, and necessities for residents who were evacuated from their facilities. She has improved the lives and outcomes of numerous older adults.

2026 Tamkin Scholars



Louis To is a registered social worker and a final-year PhD candidate at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. His doctoral research explores the application of Motivational Interviewing in elder abuse victims. In recent years, he has delivered training sessions to social welfare and healthcare professionals to promote evidence-based approaches and raise awareness of elder abuse. Looking ahead, he is interested in examining how emerging technologies—such as social robots and generative AI—can be integrated into elder abuse prevention and intervention. Fluent in Cantonese, English, and Mandarin, Louis seeks to contribute to culturally informed and collaborative strategies that safeguard the well-being and dignity of older adults.



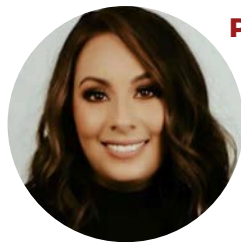
Mara Rosenberg, MD, MCR is a geriatrician and current T32 Clinical Research Fellow at the University of California, San Francisco. She completed her medical school training at Oregon Health & Science University, internal medicine residency at Legacy Health in Portland, and her geriatrics fellowship at UCSF. Dr. Rosenberg's prior research has leveraged large, national, survey-based databases to explore the needs and stressors of family caregivers and to characterize the relationship of sensory impairments with elder mistreatment risk. She is particularly interested in improving elder mistreatment identification and prevention efforts across the healthcare system, with a focus on elder neglect and family caregiving interventions.

Award Winners

Honorable Mentions



Ruthann Froberg, MPA is a second-year PhD student in the Human Development and Family Science program at Virginia Tech. Her research interests include lifespan risk and protective factors for older adults experiencing elder mistreatment, elder mistreatment screening practices in clinical settings, and approaches to assessing sexual consent capacity for people living with dementia. Ruthann is also a key member of Education Development Center's National Collaboratory to Address Elder Mistreatment team. Her work appears in journals such as *Academic Emergency Medicine*, *Health Policy and Economics*, *Innovation in Aging*, and *International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine*. She is a frequent presenter at the Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting and holds an MPA and Graduate Certificate in Gerontology from the University of Kentucky and a BS in Chemistry and Public Health from Emory & Henry University.



Peggy Jo Archer is the Director of the Elder Justice Project at the International Association for Indigenous Aging. She has dedicated her career to violence prevention, beginning in 2007 with a focus on power-based violence. Peggy Jo has extensive experience supporting both tribal and non-tribal Adult Protective Services (APS) professionals and programs. Currently, she leads the first tribal APS working group, bringing together over 150 APS professionals from tribal nations and state agencies to enhance collaboration and improve services. Peggy Jo has overseen federally funded initiatives, including the National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative (NIEJI) at the University of North Dakota and the Native American Elder Justice Initiative National Resource Center (NAEJI). As a knowledgeable and culturally informed resource on aging issues for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, she is deeply committed to combating elder abuse and advancing justice for Indigenous elders.



Eleanor Batista-Malat is a PhD candidate at the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. Eleanor's research is focused on if and how elder abuse is addressed in primary care and home- and community-based services. She is also a graduate research assistant on an NIA-funded study developing and testing an elder abuse risk screening tool and risk reduction intervention at the University of Southern California.

