**Legal and Ethical Issues Related to the Older Adult**

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As nursing students, we are all taught that elderly patients do require special attention as that demographic are more sensitive to medications, they are often taking multiple medications that can cause adverse interactions, their senses such as vision and hearing become deficient, memory impairment is common (Blitzstein et al., 2022). When it comes to mental health care for the aging population it is becoming common knowledge that major depressive disorder is the most common mental health disease to burden them with an already failing system (Blitzstein et al., 2022). This combination of events along with retirement and loss of spouses and/or children has led to white elderly males having the highest suicide rate over all other ages (Blitzstein et al., 2022).

The aged community are more at risk of losing their autonomy due to physical and mental health concerns (Dabove, 2017). Individual rights can become endangered if family believes that a person is not as mentally sharp or as physically strong as they once were (Dabove, 2017). Different cultures have differing attitudes on elderly family members and the deficits that they may face (Holtz, 2022). There are studies being performed to determine if the elderly do better in cultures where they are viewed as “not worthy” of care due to age versus cultures where the elderly are revered and care is given regardless of age (Holtz, 2022). If a person is 80, is their ability to have surgery disregarded as a waste of time due to their age and how many more years they are thought to have left to live (Holtz, 2022). If the person is thought to live another 20 years and make it to 100, would it be worth it to them to have a joint replaced, a tooth repaired, fatty tumor removed. Who makes the decisions to move forward with procedures or studies and is it considered a violation of a person’s rights to dismiss their care due to their age?

**References**

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