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Vigorous Seniors Good for Economy, Social Security, Says New KLRI Report

Longevity science offers pathways to longer, more productive lives

America's response to an aging society must be to invest more in keeping seniors healthier longer, says a new report from the Kronos Longevity Research Institute (KLRI), *Gray Is the New Gold: Longevity Science and the Flourishing Aging Society*.

"Investment in longevity research is not only beneficial to all of us personally, it also has tremendous pay-off for the economy," says Dr. Robert Butler, KLRI board member and president and CEO of the U.S. branch of the International Longevity Center (ILC). "If people started tapping into social security five years later, that program would not be facing a fiscal crisis. A five-year delay in the onset of Alzheimer's would cut the critical-care costs for seniors by more than half."

Healthier seniors continue to contribute their skills and experience to society, and are taking on second careers and volunteering, continuing to add to the nation's wealth. Longevity science is helping to make sure this trend continues.

"Longevity research is on course to yield some pretty dramatic results," says Dr. Mitch Harman, KLRI executive director and president. "We are on the verge of major breakthroughs that will help all of us lead much longer and healthier lives."

As opposed to the current practice in medical research that focuses on singular diseases, longevity science addresses the system-wide biology of aging.

The KLRI report surveys the longevity landscape, highlighting research that shows the greatest promise.

- Wisconsin National Primate Research Center and the Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge, in separate studies, are looking how calorie restriction not only extends life, but also increases energy as the body ages.
- The Vanderbilt University College of Medicine has partnered with KLRI to study how younger and older men and women react to acute oxidative stress (cellular damage from free radicals produced by normal cell processes) in order to develop interventions like antioxidants, nutrients and exercises to prevent age-related disease such as cancer and Alzheimer's.
- The Group Health Center for Health Studies in Seattle and KLRI are looking at the impact of nutrition and exercise on mental decline.
- The National Institute of Aging and KLRI are looking at the use of hormones to prevent dementia and heart disease in older women. KLRI, in partnership with Boston University, is study the effects of testosterone in older men.

- KLRI is developing a study to assess the potential of umbilical cord blood stem cells to regulate diabetic immune systems or transform into insulin-secreting cells.

The Baby Boomer generation, those born between 1946 and 1964, is retiring. By 2029, 70 million of the 78 million Americans in this demographic will be eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, as well as for social security and pension programs. Their sheer numbers have the potential to crush these systems under their own fiscal weight with dire consequences for the economy and the American way of life.

But if longevity science succeeds in slowing down the aging process by seven years, the age-specific risk of death, frailty, and disability will be reduced by approximately half at every age, dramatically reducing the number of seniors needing to draw on those services at any given point in time.

Longevity experts suggest that a new \$3 billion investment in research, just one percent of the current Medicare budget, would be an adequate first step towards creating a national agenda to bolster longevity science to help Americans – and the economy – stay healthier longer.

For full report, please visit: http://www.kronosinstitute.org/state_of_science.pdf

About the Kronos Longevity Research Institute (KLRI)

KLRI, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, is a leader in developing new modes of prevention and treatment to enhance human longevity. KLRI is the only independent research institute devoted exclusively to translating basic discoveries in the process of aging into useful tools, improved medical care and healthier lives. KLRI's research is conducted by its own highly regarded scientists and through collaborations with some of the nation's leading medical research centers. Because KLRI conducts pioneering research in an area of science that is poorly understood, KLRI offers the potential to make seminal contributions that benefit not only the growing population of older Americans, but people everywhere and generations to follow.