

Emory Nursing Assistant Professor Emily Mroz, PhD, Receives Prestigious K22 Award to Advance Dementia Caregiving Research

Emory University's Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing is proud to announce that Assistant Professor **Emily Mroz, PhD**, has been awarded a K22 Career Development Award from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) on the project titled "Preparedness for Caregiving in Experienced Caregivers of Persons Living with Dementia." This award represents a significant milestone, being among the first of its kind to be received within the School of Nursing.

Dementia caregiving presents unique challenges and opportunities for growth, yet many caregivers face low confidence in their abilities and experience poor psychological health. These factors can diminish their preparedness for new caregiving roles, even after previous caregiving experience. Dr. Mroz's groundbreaking research aims to develop and validate a multidimensional measure of caregiver preparedness while exploring how personal narratives from past caregiving roles influence preparedness and psychological health in caregivers who are currently supporting persons living with dementia (PLWD).

The long-term goal of Dr. Mroz's work is to leverage these insights to create a narrative-based intervention to enhance caregivers' preparedness and improve psychological health outcomes. Her innovative approach utilizes a narrative identity theoretical framework, which examines how individuals' subjective accounts of lived experiences shape their caregiving capacity and readiness for future roles.

Dr. Mroz's innovative study addresses a critical unmet need for a growing subgroup of caregivers—those with prior caregiving experience for PLWD—by providing foundational (Stage 0) evidence for a future narrative-based intervention. By exploring the link between caregiving narratives and preparedness, Dr. Mroz aims to develop resources that improve the quality of life for caregivers and the persons they support. Her findings have the potential to influence caregiving practices, promote psychological well-being, and reduce institutionalization rates among PLWD.

Dr. Mroz's work will also position her for future career milestones, including leading larger clinical trials and collaborating with community partners to translate research findings into practical interventions. With this funding, she plans to pursue an R01 proposal to further develop a narrative-based intervention that empowers caregivers, promotes psychological health, and improves caregiving outcomes.

Dr. Emily Mroz is a social-behavioral scientist who specializes in adult development and aging. She holds a PhD in Psychology from the University of Florida with a graduate certificate in Gerontology. Following her graduate training, Dr. Mroz completed three years of postdoctoral training in the Section of Geriatrics, Yale School of Medicine, funded by the National Institute on Aging. Dr. Mroz is a mixed-methods researcher, with skills in both qualitative and quantitative (statistical) analysis. Her program of research focuses on developing interventions, resources, and solutions for individuals, their family members, and their care teams as they navigate serious illness (e.g., dementia, cancer), end of life, and bereavement. Dr. Mroz conducts research in partnership with a wide network of other scientists, with clinicians, with community care organizations, and with people with lived experience. She also has a passion for mentoring and for disseminating research to community audiences. She brings a healthcare quality improvement lens, as well as a community engaged participatory research approach, to many of her research endeavors.

For more information on Dr. Emily Mroz, visit her [faculty profile](#). To learn more about the K22 Research Project grant, visit the National Institute of Aging (NIA) [website](#).

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About the School of Nursing

As one of the nation's top nursing schools, the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University is committed to educating visionary nurse leaders and scholars. Ranked the No. 1 master's, No. 2 BSN, and No. 6 DNP programs in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, the school is recognized as a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education by the National League of Nursing. The school offers undergraduate, master's, doctoral and non-degree programs, bringing together cutting-edge resources, distinguished faculty, top clinical experiences, and access to leading health care partners to shape the future of nursing and impact the world's health and well-being. Learn more at nursing.emory.edu.