

## Workshop on Aging & Alzheimer's Facilities

In a joint effort between the Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Design for Aging Knowledge Committee, a workshop on "Aging/Alzheimer's Design: Links to Neuroscience" was held November 29 - December 1 2007 at the Dana Center in Washington, D.C. The workshop assembled 25 participants with representatives from the neuroscience, Alzheimer's research, aging facility management, and architecture communities.

Participants broke into focus groups to identify and discuss high priority research topics and translational research applications in the following critical areas: memory, physiological and physical ability, sensory perception, cognitive mapping, and environmental press. For example, in the sensory perception group, the question was raised whether multisensory environmental cuing is an effective tactic for orienting Alzheimer's residents. Research suggests that the association areas in the brain where this information is combined suffers impairment in early stages of Alzheimer's. Therefore, since multi-sensory stimuli would be processed in separate, versus integrated, cortical regions in this population, is the resulting effect more stressful or disorienting compared to the potency of a single sensory stimulus?

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