Is aging a disease? Scientists call for new classification of aging

November 10 2015

The paper explores the evolution of disease classification practices and the progress made since William Cullen's seminal Nosolagae Methodicae synopsis published in 1769. It discusses some of the additions to the ICD-10 including some of the less obvious conditions like obesity that may set the precedent for classifying aging as a disease.

While there is clear disagreement among demographers, gerontologists and biogerontologists on the subject, classification of aging as a disease is likely to unite both scientists and medical practitioners in the effort to prevent the pathological age-related processes and attract more resources to aging research.

In part, the report calls for creating a task force of scientists to more thoroughly evaluate whether to provide a more granular and actionable classification of aging as a disease in ICD-11.

"Aging is a complex multifactorial process leading to loss of function and a very broad spectrum of diseases. While the notion of whether aging itself is a disease is usually disputed, classifying it as such will help shift the focus of biomedicine from treatment to prevention. Classifying aging as a disease with multiple 'non-garbage' ICD codes may help create business cases for large pharmaceutical companies to focus more R&D resources on this important field. Considering the unprecedented increases in life expectancy and the heavy burden of medical costs in the developed countries, maintaining the human body in the disease-free youthful state for as long as possible is not just an altruistic cause, but a

pressing economic necessity", said Alex Zhavoronkov, PhD, CEO of Insilico Medicine, Inc.

More information: Alex Zhavoronkov et al. Classifying aging as a disease in the context of ICD-11, *Frontiers in Genetics* (2015). DOI: 10.3389/fgene.2015.00326

Provided by InSilico Medicine, Inc.

Citation: Is aging a disease? Scientists call for new classification of aging (2015, November 10) retrieved 10 April 2024 from
https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-11-aging-disease-scientists-classification.html