The Challenge

In the U.S., there are 46 million adults age 65 and older, and that number is expected to double by 2060.[1] Older adults have higher rates of utilization and emergency department readmissions compared to any other age group.[2] As people age, many older adults experience decreased mobility, social isolation, loss of independence and changes in their self-identity that make everyday life harder.

For older adults and family caregivers, the current health care system can be difficult to navigate to find the right care at the right place at the right time. Too often, care delivered to older adults is not evidence-based or aligned with what matters to them.

A Solution: Age-friendly Care

Age-friendly care values older adults and their unique needs. Hospitals are becoming age-friendly health systems to reliably deliver evidence-based care and better address the challenges older adults and their caregivers face. Dedicated to improving the care of older adults, the *Age-Friendly Health Systems* is a movement of *The John A. Hartford Foundation* and the *Institute for Healthcare Improvement*, in partnership with the *American Hospital Association* and the *Catholic Health Association of the United States*.

The initiative uses the *4Ms Framework* – What **M**atters, **M**edication, **M**entation and **M**obility to address the needs of older adults, improve their health outcomes, increase patient satisfaction and reduce cost.

Age-Friendly Health Systems Promote Value

Through *The Value Initiative*, the AHA is addressing affordability through the lens of value to improve outcomes and enhance the patient experience while reducing cost. When patients receive care in an Age-Friendly Health System, it improves value not only for the patients themselves, but for families, caregivers, health care providers and the overall health care system. Five

4Ms Framework
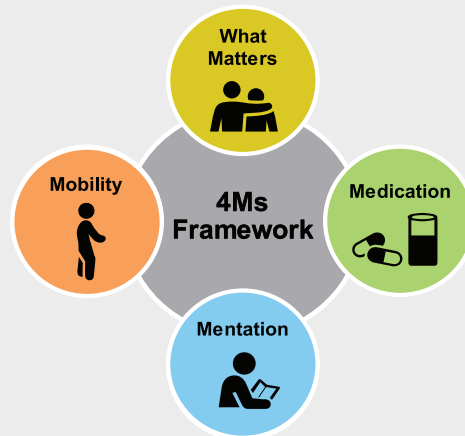
What Matters: Know and align care with each older adult's specific health outcome goals and care preferences including, but not limited to, end-of-life care and across settings of care.

Medication: If medication is necessary, use age-friendly medication that does not interfere with What Matters to the older adult, Mobility or Mentation across settings of care.

Mentation: Prevent, identify, treat and manage dementia, depression and delirium across settings of care.

Mobility: Ensure that older adults move safely every day in order to maintain function and do What Matters.

Source: An initiative of The John A. Hartford Foundation and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in partnership with the American Hospital Association and the Catholic Health Association of the United States.

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pioneer Age-Friendly Health Systems have seen results in each area of AHA's value equation.

AHA's Value Equation

$$Value = \frac{\text{Outcomes \& Patient Experience}}{\text{Cost}}$$

For example, by integrating the 4Ms in various ways and ensuring better care coordination since 2017, Anne Arundel Medical Center gave back 10.23 years of patients' time, reduced readmission rates by 8% and length of stay by 26 hours, all contributing to improved patient experience, better outcomes and reduced cost per patient.[3] In addition, Rush University Medical Center reduced 30-day readmission rates of older adults from more than 20% to nearly 8%.[4] Additionally, St. Vincent Medical Group of Ascension integrated the 4Ms in their Medicare wellness exams and increased the proportion of wellness exams completed by Medicare wellness nurses to reduce cost. This process guided the care of more than 2,100 patients, resulting in a $600,000 return on a $3 million investment.[5,6]
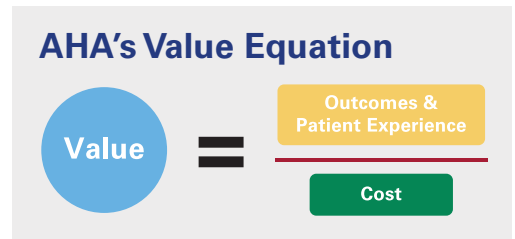
Join the AHA Action Community

Teams in the Age-Friendly Health Systems Action Community engage and collaborate around using the 4Ms to organize care in the hospital and ambulatory settings, accelerating adoption of the 4Ms by learning with other organizations in a free, seven-month virtual community. The Action Community is designed as an on-ramp for hospital-based teams (e.g., EDs, ICUs, general wards, medical-surgical units) and ambulatory care teams (e.g., primary care, specialty care) to adopt the 4Ms. The instruction and coaching are setting-specific and include transitions in care between settings.

The AHA's *Action Community*, convening this fall with rolling admissions through November, will support hospitals and medical practices to effectively integrate the 4Ms Framework in their existing practices. Currently, 333 teams are on the journey of becoming an Age-Friendly Health System. The benefits of joining this action community include:

- Redeploying and prioritizing existing hospital/health system resources to delivering evidence-based care;
- Supporting your health organization's mission, vision and values;
- Putting your organization ahead in preparing for the impending demographic market shift; and
- Being recognized as an "Age-Friendly Health System Participant."

Visit *www.aha.org/agefriendly* to join, or email *ahaactioncommunity@aha.org* with questions.

Sources

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