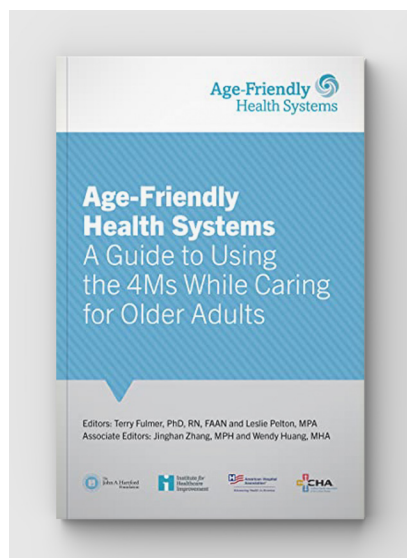




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# “THE GUIDE TO PROPEL YOUR HEALTH SYSTEM TO AN AGE-FRIENDLY FUTURE”

By Rebecca Slossberg, Teffin Benedict, Leslie Pelton and Terry Fulmer



A new book, *“Age-Friendly Health Systems: A Guide to Using the 4Ms While Caring for Older Adults,”* provides health care professionals with an easy-to-use manual for implementing evidence-based practices that enable health systems to become more age-friendly and focused on what matters most to older patients. The book was co-edited by The John A. Hartford Foundation (JAHF) President, Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN, and Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)

Vice President, Leslie Pelton, MPA, with associate editors Jinghan Zhang, MPH, and Wendy Huang, MHA. The editors and contributors note that to safely, equitably and effectively serve the growing number of adults over the age of 65, health systems must adopt models of care that meet the specific needs of an aging population. This book aims to guide providers towards a health care system where holistic, reliable, patient-centered care is the standard. This can be achieved through implementation of evidence-based practices organized in a framework known as the 4Ms (what **M**atters, **M**edication, **M**entation and **M**obility) that is intended for every older adult in all care settings.

## Why do we need Age-Friendly Health Systems?

Age-Friendly Health Systems is an initiative of IHI and JAHF in partnership with the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA) and the American Hospital Association. The movement began with five pioneering health systems, Ascension, Anne Arundel Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente, Providence and Trinity Health. As noted, three of the pioneers are members of CHA. Today, over 2,600 hospitals and practices, nursing homes and convenient care clinics have become recognized as participants of the movement and CHA members have been at the forefront.

## The Case for Age-Friendly Care

The conceptual framework for an Age-Friendly Health System is the 4Ms set: What **M**atters, **M**edication, **M**entation and **M**obility. The book defines the 4Ms and explains how to implement practices in each area, including practical tools for screening and documentation, with case studies from other Age-Friendly Health Systems.

The first of the 4Ms, what **M**atters, is about aligning care with the goals of the older adult. A comprehensive explanation of how to have a “what matters” conversation, as well as effective documentation of these conversations, can be found in one of the chapters. The second of the 4Ms, **M**edication, is about the importance

of only prescribing when necessary and using medications that are appropriate and safe for older patients. This chapter details information about risks of certain prescriptions, drug interactions, encourages deprescribing and provides other recommendations to improve medication management. The third of the 4Ms, **M**entation, focuses on assessments and actions to take for people living with common mental disorders such as dementia, depression and delirium. Screening tools for each are provided in the book with detailed strategies for measurement.

## What Matters Medication Mentation Mobility

Lastly, **M**obility, focuses on promoting and increasing safe movement by older adults, which goes beyond typical fall prevention approaches that often reduce mobility. The book highlights how older adults are frequently assumed to fall because of their age and instead provides a



more ‘person-centered’ and ‘clinically relevant’ approach that emphasizes maintaining physical activity and function.

In addition to promoting understanding of the 4Ms, the book can be used as a resource for optimizing workflow and aligning with health care quality measures. Measurements in the Age-Friendly Health Systems initiative include hospital outcomes such as 30-day readmission rates, length of stay and Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) scores, with similar measures for different care settings.

## The Business Case for AFHS

An important chapter makes the business case for Age-Friendly Health Systems. On the road to implementation, one integral step includes persuading health care leaders that this approach to care is both beneficial for patients and financially advantageous for the health system. To help readers make the business case for Age-Friendly Health Systems, the book includes guidance on developing return-on-investment calculations and explains the use case for different care settings. For inpatient facilities, controlling costs by reducing medical complications, undesired medical interventions and improved patient safety can be achieved with 4Ms care, resulting in shorter hospital stays and lower costs per day. Outpatient settings, in contrast, are more focused on expanding services and thereby increasing revenue. To convince health care leaders to adopt the 4Ms framework, the book outlines clear steps to making a business case, provides specific financial models and offers case studies of organizations working towards becoming Age-Friendly Health Systems.

## Summary: Why you Need this Book, Why it Matters, and How to Move Forward!

Addressing the current needs of aging adults in the United States and around the world through age-friendly health care has never been more pressing. The 4Ms framework of what Matters, Medication, Mentation and Mobility is a vital foundation for improving care for older adults. This new book is intended to provide all the necessary tools and resources in one place for implementing age-friendly care. In addition to the resources for implementation, the book concludes by sharing information about recognition that can be achieved by health systems that adopt this framework. This recognition is aimed at notifying the public as to which health systems are dedicated to age-friendly care and to recognize those health systems that have made a commitment to improving their care for older adults. The case studies bring alive the voice of the systems and the proud achievements they have shared. This book provides an easy-to-use guide with practical implementation tools for health care professionals to understand the 4Ms framework for creating Age-Friendly Health Systems that improve care for older adults in all care settings.

