

The Impact of the 4Ms in Home Health: BAYADA Home Health Care

Background

BAYADA Home Health Care (BAYADA) participated in the home health prototyping initiative facilitated by Age-Friendly Health Systems. Age-Friendly Health Systems is an initiative of The John A. Hartford Foundation, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, and the American Hospital Association. In this movement, age-friendly care is defined as care that is based in the 4Ms: What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility.

The Impact of 4Ms Care

After a hospitalization for urinary retention and acute kidney injury, David (not his real name) was referred to home health services. He had a complex medical history, including uncontrolled diabetes, hypertension, schizophrenia, Stage 4 chronic kidney disease, benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH or enlarged prostate), and depression. Living alone in a single-family home, he was easily confused, forgetful, and struggled with poor health literacy and limited understanding of his medical conditions.

The local area visits team first prioritized understanding David's needs and goals (**What Matters**), with the goal of managing medications and his chronic disease so that he can live more independently. Recognizing his forgetfulness and confusion, the nurse and the team focused on **Medication** adherence, ensuring that David could maintain independence and avoid further complications. The team also identified critical gaps in his medication management, including non-adherence and untreated schizophrenia. By coordinating with the psychiatrist, physician, and pharmacy, they provided structured support, such as a pre-filled medication box for David to use and appropriate psychiatric treatment. This led to improvements in his physical health (addressing urinary retention and acute kidney injury) and his cognitive functioning.

Untreated schizophrenia and depression were contributing to David's confusion and forgetfulness. The team's efforts to address psychiatric medication helped reduce cognitive challenges (**Mentation**) and improved his ability to engage in his care. **Mobility** was further supported by supporting medication adherence and improved mental clarity, which helped David remain independent in his daily life at home.

Age-friendly care also had a profound effect on the health care staff. Enhanced collaboration and communication resulted in an integrated care plan developed by the entire team (nurse, physician, psychiatrist, pharmacist). The staff reported increased job satisfaction from seeing the fulfillment of David's goals and improvement in his quality of life. The strategic approach of the 4Ms Framework empowered the team to navigate complex influences and deliver effective, compassionate care.

Wendy Cerminara, MSPT; Director Clinical Ops, Visits (COS), BAYADA Home Health Care

Refocusing on the Person

The BAYADA team identified a comment from another older adult patient in a survey: “They saw a roach in the house and said they would never return. You did not come here to see my house; you came here to see me.” The statement sparked a significant moment of reflection for the team. The clinical care missed the need to focus on the patient as an individual and support what mattered most.

The comment underscored the critical need to adopt and spread the 4Ms Framework to provide holistic, patient-centered care. The 4Ms guide health care team members to focus on what matters most to the individual, ensure safe and appropriate medication management, address mental health and cognitive function, and prioritize mobility to maintain quality of life. The team pivoted towards the framework as a recovery tactic to refocus the clinician and strengthen the patient-clinician relationship to allow care to continue forward, achieving quality outcomes.

The patient’s observation emphasized the importance of treating individuals within their circumstances and incorporating frameworks that respect the dignity and complexity of every patient’s life. By using the 4Ms as the guiding framework at BAYADA, the team was able to develop a skilled plan of care to address the components of the patient’s health priorities that are crucial to chronic disease management and quality of life. The team shares that the 4Ms allowed them to truly “see” the patient.

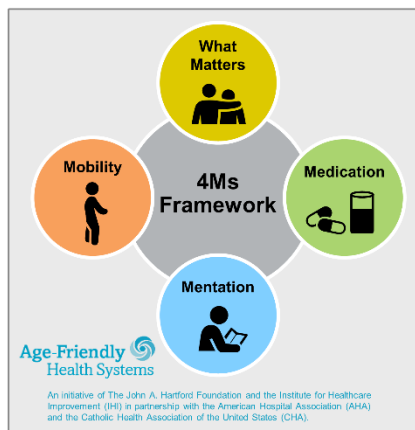
Integrating Lessons Learned

Now, the BAYADA team incorporates the 4Ms in huddles with the care team, identifying and focusing on the specific values, goals, and items of importance for the patient to ensure quality outcomes. Wendy Cerminara, MSPT, Director Clinical Ops, Visits (COS), says, “We have seen an improvement in more diverse discipline utilization, as well as improvements in preventing rehospitalizations and in both patient and staff experience. Instead of treating patients, we are getting to know patients and learning how we can best assist them.”

Acknowledgments

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4Ms Framework of an Age-Friendly Health System



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.

What Is an Age-Friendly Health System?

Becoming an Age-Friendly Health System entails reliably providing a set of four evidence-based elements of high-quality care, known as the “4Ms,” to all older adults: What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility.

Visit: ihi.org/AgeFriendly