

System-Wide Spread of the 4Ms at MediSys Health Network

Overview

Through their work in the [Age-Friendly System-wide Spread Collaborative](#), MediSys Health Network has achieved impressive spread of age-friendly care across their system.

Age-friendly care, as defined when the movement was established in 2017¹, aims to:

- Follows an essential set of evidence-based practices: the 4Ms – What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility;
- Causes no harm; and
- Aligns with What Matters to the older adult and their family or other caregivers.

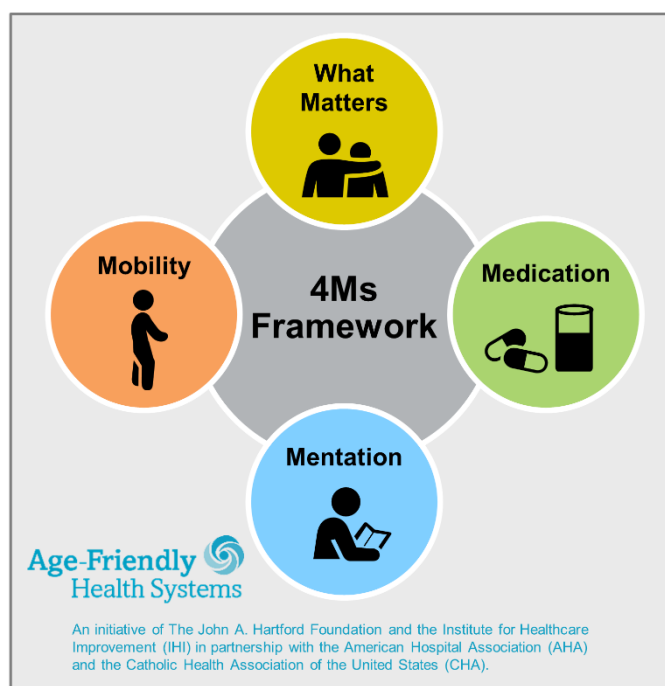
The MediSys Health Network is located in Queens, NY, the most culturally diverse county in the United States, with more than 136 languages spoken^{2,3}. Two MediSys hospitals, Jamaica Hospital Medical Center and Flushing Hospital Medical Center; one nursing home; and 16 ambulatory care sites serve a community of limited financial means and resources, with 15–20 percent uninsured, 50 percent born outside the US, and 250,000 individuals who are undocumented.

Operating under a capitated model, the health system takes full financial risk for a large portion of the patients they serve which drives a focus on optimizing outpatient care to prevent hospitalizations and enhancing inpatient care to reduce length of stay.

Approach

Age-friendly care plays a key role in helping the health system achieve their goals of reduced hospital admission and reduced length of stay by improving and personalizing care for older adults. The MediSys team approached adoption of the 4Ms Framework (see Figure 1) in three phases.

Figure 1. 4Ms Framework of an Age-Friendly Health System



For related work, this graphic may be used in its entirety without requesting permission. Graphic files and guidance at ihi.org/AgeFriendly

Phase 1: Engage Leadership

In the first phase of work, the team focused on building leadership buy-in. They convened kick off meetings with the network's CEO, chief operating officer, chief medical officer, chief nursing officer, department chairs, and program directors to discuss the potential impact of age-friendly care on the older adult patient population, caregivers, and staff. With the support of the leadership group, they designated implementation teams to operationalize the adoption of 4Ms care in each setting. MediSys achieved Participant (Level 1) [recognition](#) in November 2019.

Phase 2: Education and Data Groundwork

The focus of the second phase of work was comprehensive education on 4Ms care across the system. System-wide education was made possible through multi-department

collaboration. Designated clinical leaders were assigned to each area of spread and were responsible for educating staff on best practices to support effective implementation of age-friendly care. Training forums varied throughout the system, and all newly hired staff completed age-friendly care training as part of onboarding.

At the same time, the team worked to integrate the 4Ms into the electronic health record (EHR). The EHR would be used to facilitate reliable 4Ms care and to track implementation progress over time by documenting when team members assess and act on each M. During this phase, the team successfully submitted data about the number of older adults receiving 4Ms care and achieved Age-Friendly Health System – Committed to Care Excellence (Level 2) recognition.

Phase 3: Track and Sustain Progress

In the third phase, the team focused on ensuring accurate and robust data collection and reporting, which proved to be the biggest challenge to showing progress toward full implementation. Over time, the team identified and resolved data flaws and developed a new and improved dashboard. This phase also included continued education and training as the system employed new staff.

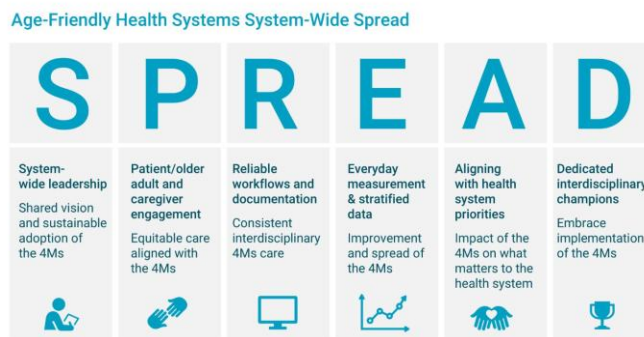
System-wide Spread

In 2024, MediSys joined the IHI Age-Friendly System-wide Spread Collaborative. This 18-month initiative comprised 30 health systems working together with IHI to pursue spread of 4Ms care across the health system, while helping IHI to test and refine an Age-Friendly Health Systems spread theory of change.

Key Drivers

The Age-Friendly System-wide Spread theory of change includes six drivers of spread across settings of care. (Figure 2). Health systems participating in the Collaborative helped to test and refine the theory to develop a guide to [Spreading Age-Friendly Care](#). Teams used a [System-wide Spread Self-Assessment](#) four times over the course of the 18 months to track and reflect on progress. Average assessments for all related drivers improved over time, increasing the degree of belief in the importance of the drivers identified.

Figure 2. Age-Friendly Health Systems System-wide Spread



Examples of Drivers in Practice

Like other participating health systems, MediSys had already made progress on several drivers prior to the launch of the Collaborative. While the team worked across all drivers, they prioritized two drivers as most impactful for their system: Reliable Workflows and Everyday Measurement and Stratified Data.

Reliable Workflows and Documentation

Previously, MediSys had transitioned from a COVID-focused care model back to a whole-person, person-centered approach supported by the 4Ms Framework. Following this transition, early data revealed gaps in tracking whether patients received 4Ms care. To address this, in each clinical area implementing the framework, age-friendly champions were designated to reassess workflows and modify them as needed. Once workflows were refined and reestablished, staff received comprehensive training.

Everyday Measurement and Stratified Data

Refined workflows supported the development of an age-friendly dashboard. Following the initial build, the team found it essential to create dashboards to monitor progress and identify areas needing improvement across the network (inpatient, emergency department, nursing home, and outpatient). These dashboards enabled area champions to develop targeted small tests of change using Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles to address their department’s specific needs.

For example, adding an age-friendly section to the Epic EHR storyboard for each patient allowed outpatient clinicians to quickly identify individuals who had not received a 4Ms

review in the prior 365 days. This enhancement contributed to the increase in completed 4Ms reviews in the outpatient setting during the second half of the year.

Early outcome data suggests that receiving an age-friendly assessment in the ambulatory care setting is associated with decreased emergency room utilization compared with not receiving the assessment, indicating a meaningful impact of the framework on patient stability and care continuity (Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3. Age-Friendly Assessment and Decreased ED Visits

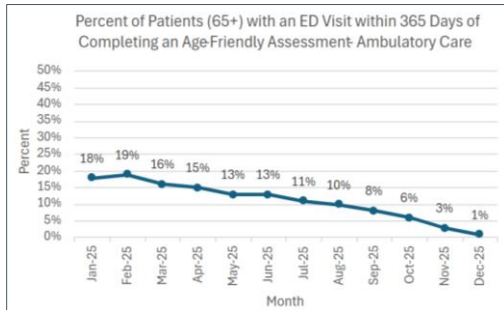
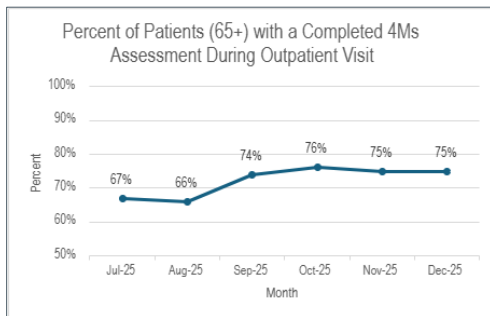


Figure 4. Age-Friendly Assessment in Ambulatory Care Visits



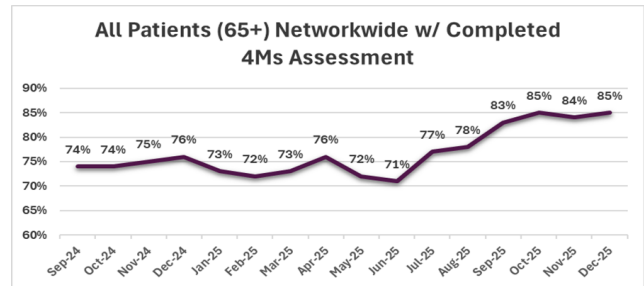
As with the 4Ms of age-friendly care, the drivers of system-wide spread are mutually reinforcing. For the MediSys team, improved workflows and measurement capabilities allow them to track improvements in patient outcomes, which in turn builds and maintains will for age-friendly care among senior leadership and staff.

The team is now analyzing 4Ms data across care settings, which will inform future improvements, including care transitions that optimize age-friendly care.

Impact

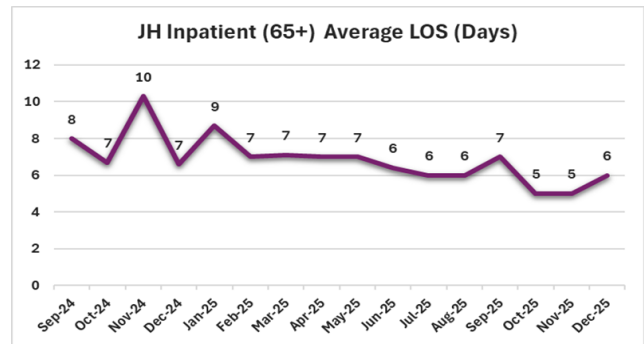
4Ms assessment rates have improved over the course of the Collaborative, driven by an increase in assessments completed in ambulatory care and the emergency department at both hospital sites. The network targeted 65 percent completion and has exceeded that, achieving more than 80 percent completion (Figure 7). In addition, 100 percent of nursing home residents (both short-term and long-term care) were assessed for the 4Ms between October 2024 and December 2025.

Figure 7. 4Ms Assessment Rates (Nursing Home)



Early signs also point to a decrease in length of stay at Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, correlating with the increase rates of 4Ms assessment (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Average Length of Stay (Jamaica Hospital Medical Center)



Lessons Learned

The MediSys team shares:

- **Embedding age-friendly care leads to reliability over time.** Integrating the 4Ms into onboarding and ongoing education has helped the MediSys team to improve care quality and staff awareness and

ensure continued progress toward health system goals.

- **Cross-setting collaboration is essential.** Success in reliable provision of 4Ms care across the health system depends on strong partnerships between clinical, IT, and reporting teams to ensure consistent processes, data capture, and analysis.
- **Continuous monitoring drives improvement.** Tracking completion rates and outcome metrics helps the MediSys team identify gaps and guide targeted interventions. Development of a data dashboard including all relevant age-friendly process and outcome measures has been a key component of successful spread.
- **Age-friendly care delivers on a commitment to equity and dignity in aging.** Providing 4Ms care promotes equitable health outcomes and dignity in aging for an older adult population, many of whom are challenged with multiple chronic conditions, social isolation, and language barriers.

Next Steps

MediSys is committed to reliably and equitably delivering evidence-based age-friendly care. Through their focus on the 4Ms, the team aims to bring a holistic, person-centered care approach into every clinical encounter, addressing older adults' needs through a comprehensive assessment of social determinants of health, personal health, psychosocial challenges, and personal priorities in what matters most.

Ensuring that older adults receive the right care tailored to their individual circumstances helps to prevent unnecessary treatments, procedures, and hospitalizations. This advanced primary care model is designed to promote health, dignity, and well-being at every stage of the aging process.

The MediSys team is working toward the opening of an integrative medicine site, where the delivery of 4Ms care will further strengthen their ability to serve older adults through a whole-person coordinated approach.

Acknowledgements

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement is grateful to The John A. Hartford Foundation and the MediSys team for partnering with us to improve care for older adults.

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

¹ Age-Friendly Health Systems. Institute for Healthcare Improvement. ihi.org/agefriendly

² Stefan D. Over 130 languages are spoken in this New York City borough. *Travel Tomorrow*. Published January 10, 2023. Accessed March 23, 2026. <https://traveltomorrow.com/over-130-languages-are-spoken-in-this-new-york-city-borough/>

³ U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Detailed Languages Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over (Table B16001)*. data.census.gov. Published 2022. Accessed March 23, 2026. <https://data.census.gov/>