



FRAN AND EARL ZIEGLER

COLLEGE OF NURSING

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What Matters Most: Older Adults Living with Dementia and Other Chronic Diseases

Objectives

- Prevalence of dementia and other chronic diseases among older adults
- 4Ms → 5Ms
- What Matters Most
- Navigating “What Matters” Conversations
- Resources

Before we get started

1. How much do you know about the 4Ms or 5Ms?

- Already using it
- Read about it
- Heard about it
- No knowledge

Before we get started

2. How/where do you visit your clients?

- Home
- Clinic
- Hospital
- Community center
- By phone
- Virtual visit
- Other

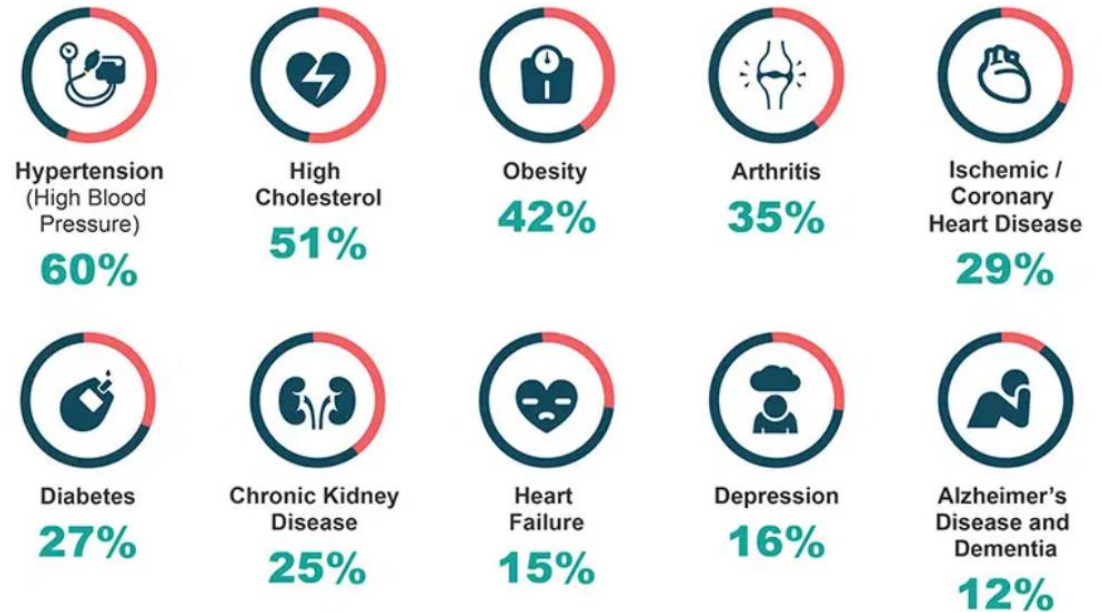
Aging in America

The U.S. population is aging, with almost a quarter of the population expected to be 65 or older by 2060.

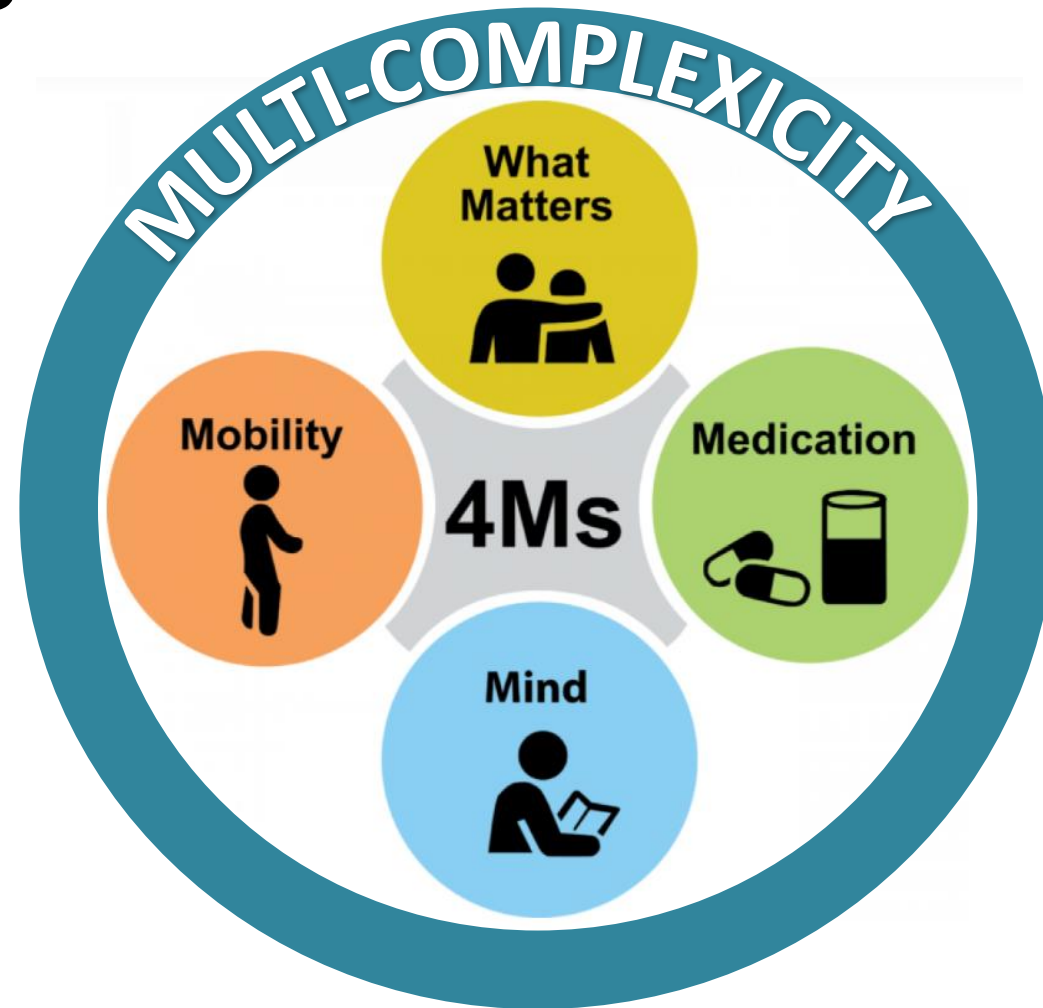
Aging increases the risk of chronic diseases like dementia, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, arthritis, and cancer.

Older adults are also more vulnerable to severe illness from infections, including flu and pneumonia.

Effective strategies for healthy aging are needed to improve the length and quality of life of older adults, and their ability to live independently.



4Ms → 5Ms



(IHI, 2020; Tinetti et al., 2017)

Recent Evidence on the 4 Ms/5 Ms

A QI approach using practice facilitation and EHR templates improved some age-friendly care measures (Wismann et al., 2024).

- Documenting what matters most to patients
- Advance care planning (ACP)
- Annual cognitive screening
- Caregiver referral to dementia community resources
- Fall-risk screening
- Co-prescription of opioid and sedative-hypnotic drugs

Success and ongoing opportunities to continue and expand age-friendly health system interventions for sustainability (Tewary et al., 2023).

Patient portal messages offer another avenue to support an age-friendly health system for persons with dementia (Gleason et al., 2024).

According to the Evidence: What Matters

What Matters Most to Older Adults with Chronic Conditions

- Preserving overall quality of life
- Social connection
- Cognitive function
- Physical health
- Financial security

What Matters Most to Older Adults with Dementia

- Independence in activities of daily living (self-care and mobility)
- Caregiver support

(IHI, 2019)

What to avoid when discussing What Matters

- Assuming you know what matters most to your clients
- Paternalistic speech and elderspeak
- Poor timing
- Rushed conversations

What to do

- Ask your clients “What matters most to you?”
- Encourage your clients to share their concerns, goals, wishes, needs and experiences with all their health care providers.
- Facilitate conversations with family and providers to discuss client wishes for care at the end of life.
- Use empowering speech (GeriTalk, Changing Talk).

Navigating the “What Matters” conversation



Pre-planning



Cultural
sensitivity



Cognitive
screening



Health literacy
screening



Motivational
interviewing



Health
outcome goals



Care
preferences



End-of-life
planning



Managing
expectations

(IHI, 2019)

Documenting the “What Matters” conversation

- IHI Checklists
- Electronic health record
- Share with the care team
- Advocate for age-friendly care implementation
- Continue the conversation

(IHI, 2019)

▶ **Your situation now** • What are the most important things in your life right now? Have there been any health or life changes since your last appointment?

SOME Being regularly in touch with the people I care about •
IDEAS Adjusting to retirement • Experiencing grief or regret •
Feeling anxious or worried

▶ **What's going well?** What activities do you like to do?

SOME Play music • Watch sports • My job • Visit my
IDEAS grandchildren • Involved in my community

Resources

- “What Matters” to Older Adults? A Toolkit for Health Systems to Design Better Care with Older Adults (IHI, 2019)
- My Health Checklist (IHI, 2024)
- Conversation Starter Kit: A guide to talking with your family about what matters to you at the end of life (available in multiple languages)
- Prepare for Your Care: A step-by-step program with video stories to put medical care wishes in writing (also in Spanish)
- Prepare for Their Care: To support you as you help other people with their medical planning and decisions
- MyHealthPriorities.org: An online tool from Patient Priorities Care to help clients identify what matters most to them according to their health priorities (Tinetti & Naik, 2024)

(IHI, 2024)

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QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

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**How do you know what
matters to your clients?**