

# Becoming an Age-Friendly Health Systems Participant: A Process so Simple, even a Resident can do it!

Gabrielle Scannell, MD, Tiffany Volden, MD

## INTRO

- IHI AFHS is an initiative to improve the practice of providing evidence-based care to older adults. While there are over 2400 AFHS recognized systems across the US, significant work remains to spread this model of care.

## METHODS

- Using the IHI AFHS: Guide to Using the 4Ms in the Care of Older Adults, we analyzed the use of the 4Ms in our geriatric and home-based primary care clinics at our SLC VA. We performed a clinic walkthrough, from patient check-in to check-out and randomly chart reviewed approximately 20% of our patients' last primary care appointment documentation to assess areas of strength and need for improvement for the 4Ms.
- Using a multidisciplinary approach, we discussed the implementation of the 4Ms in clinic and where we were succeeding or needing improvement.
- We set timelines for steps in our process to keep the team accountable and on-track.

## RESULTS

- Providers were consistently addressing and documenting What Matters during clinic visits.
- Medication was addressed by our providers and pharmacists at every visit.
- Mentation was covered with reminders that were addressed by the nurse at check-in.
- Mobility assessment and documentation was lacking so we implemented the Timed Up & Go (TUG) test in our clinic by educating the LPN to perform this test on every patient upon check-in.
- To find and analyze the TUG data, we created a short, searchable note template in the EMR.
- We then completed the AFHS 4Ms Care Description on IHS website and achieved participant status.

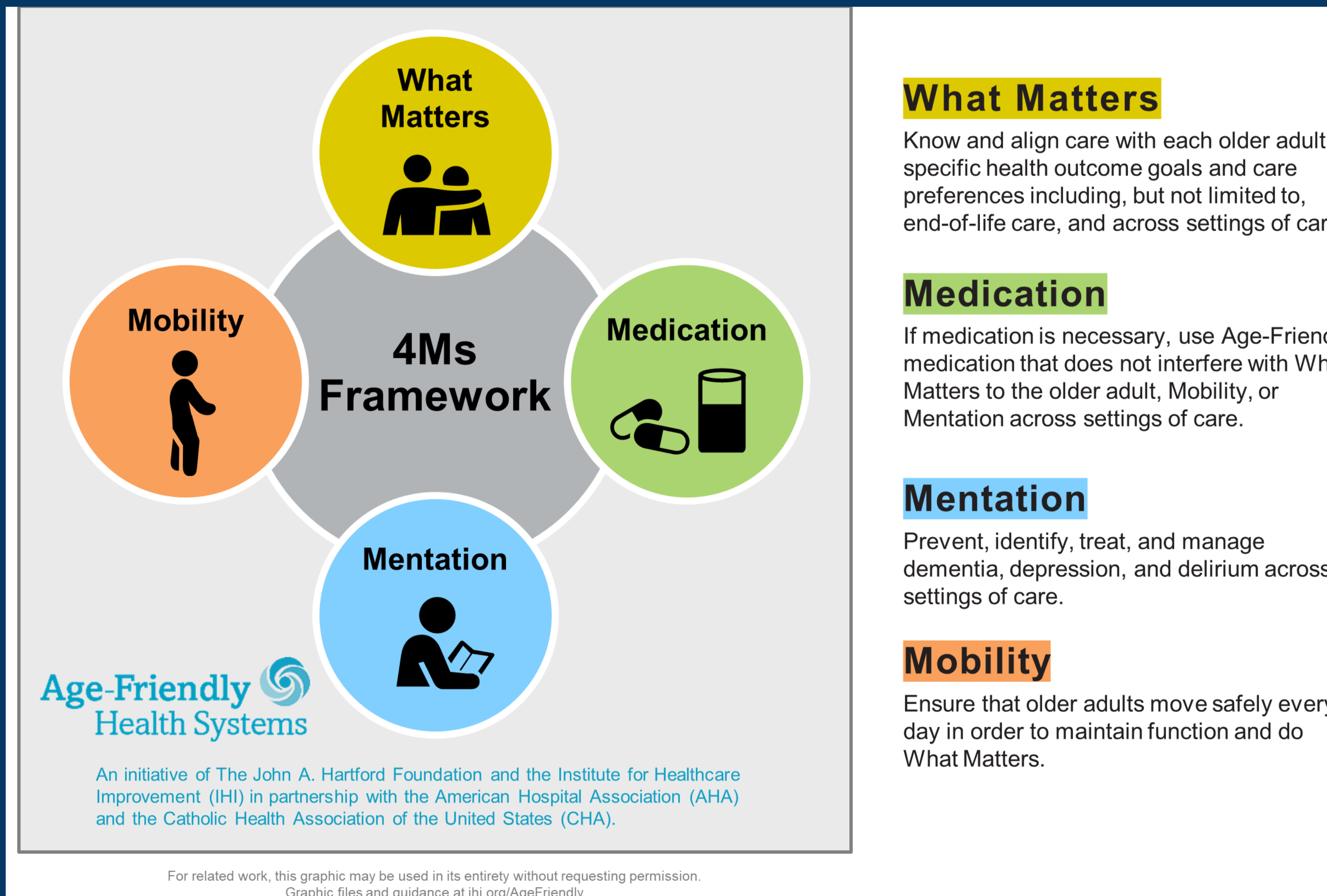
## DISCUSSION

Our goal is to share our process, utilizing a resident as the leader in this initiative, to demonstrate the ease in achieving AFHS participant status in hopes to encourage other facilities to follow suit to achieve AFHS status.

## FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

- None

# We have demonstrated the ease of an organized review and submission for our VA-based geriatric and home-based primary care clinics to encourage other facilities to follow suit to become Age-Friendly Health Systems.



## Mobility: Timed Up & Go (TUG) Test

- 2 months of analysis between October and November 2021 using the TUG test. All participants underwent the TUG at time of check-in to primary care appointment.
- Mean age in years: 80.4 (range 76-93)
- Gender: all males
- Mean in seconds: 9.1
- Excluded participants who are wheelchair bound or unable to walk and patients who have since died.
- Identified 8 patients during the first 2 months that were high risk of falling based on this test ( $\geq 14$  seconds).

Interpretation of results:

Used a cutoff of  $\geq 14$  seconds to indicate high probability for falls.<sup>1</sup>

Reference for TUG:

1. Shumway Cook A, Brauer S, Woollacott M. Predicting the Probability for Falls in Community Dwelling Older Adults Using the Timed Up & Go Test. *Physical Therapy* 2000; 80(9): 896903.

## Next steps...

- Now that we have identified the patients at high risk of falls, it is important to follow-up with these patients and identify areas for intervention, including referral to physical therapy and/or use of ambulatory device if the provider thinks that would be beneficial.
- After having achieved Level 1 Participant Status for our geriatric and home-based primary care clinics, the next step will be to achieve Level 2 Committed to Care Excellence Status. For Level 2, we will need to show 3 months of verified data in our clinics to demonstrate early impact of using the 4Ms.
- Bigger picture, we want to help spread the word, especially to other VAs around the country and to encourage other facilities to follow suit to commit to Age-Friendly Healthcare and adapt the 4Ms framework.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System