

Age-Friendly Health Systems

The VHA Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC) joined the Age-Friendly Health Systems movement so that every Veteran is provided safe, high-quality care aligned with What Matters. In March 2020, GEC set the aim for VHA to become the largest integrated health care system in the U.S. to be recognized by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) as age-friendly.

Age-Friendly care is...

- ✓ Guided by an essential set of evidence-based practices known as the **4Ms – What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility**;
- ✓ Aligned with VHA’s mission to become a **High Reliability Organization** to continuously improve care and achieve **Zero Harm**;
- ✓ Recognized as an approach to **Whole Health Care**; and
- ✓ Centered around **What Matters** (the Veteran’s **Mission, Aspiration, and Purpose (MAP)**).

The 4Ms are not a program, but rather a framework to provide Veteran-centric care focused on what matters across all care settings. When practiced reliably as a set, the 4Ms represent a broad culture shift to focus and align care based on each Veteran’s unique care preferences and health outcome goals. In March 2021, age-friendly Health Systems became recognized as an approach to Whole Health Clinical Care. As with Whole Health, GEC’s age-friendly Health Systems initiative is driven by the recognition that what matters most to an individual is both unique and critical to our health care system.

GEC’s vision is for each older Veteran to receive 4Ms care in all aspects of their VA health care. Age-friendly is not just for GEC programs – the 4Ms can be adopted and championed by any member of the care team in inpatient, outpatient, or long-term and post-acute care settings. GEC is partnering with stakeholders across all levels of the organization for this initiative including – VHA program offices, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) and VA medical center leadership, and frontline staff.

GEC is leading the first VA Action Community October 2022 through April 2023 to accelerate the adoption of the 4Ms framework in new care settings through monthly webinars and coaching calls. As of June 28, 2022, there are 130 care settings at 70 VA medical centers recognized as age-friendly. The complete list of recognized facilities can be found on the [VA Diffusion Marketplace](#) and ihi.org.

For more information, please visit the [Age-Friendly Health Systems SharePoint](#) or contact agefriendly@va.gov.

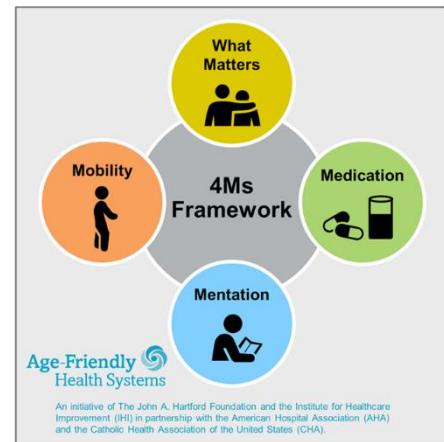


Figure 1. Age-friendly Health Systems is an initiative of the John A. Hartford Foundation and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), in partnership with the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA).

Through the 4Ms framework, each M is "Assessed and Acted On" to improve care for older adults.