



NURSES IMPROVING CARE FOR HEALTHSYSTEM ELDERS

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Partnership for Quality Measurement
505 King Avenue
Columbus, OH 43201

Re: Support of Age-Friendly Hospital Measure in the CMS Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) Program.

For over four decades, Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE), has advocated for and advanced improvements in the quality of care delivered to older adults in hospital settings. NICHE, a nursing practice and geriatric care model, positions nurses to play a key role in ensuring that older adults benefit from evidence-based care. As a nurse-led program, NICHE aligns with other national quality initiatives such as the Age-Friendly Health Systems initiative of the John A. Hartford Foundation (JAHF) and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI); the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Geriatric Surgical Verification Program; and the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation program.

NICHE supports the inclusion of an Age-Friendly Hospital measure within the CMS Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) Program. This new type of measure, a “programmatically composite” measure, considers the full program of care needed for geriatric patients in the hospital. This measure is meant to help build a better, safer environment for older adults and will help patients and caregivers know where to find good care. In response to the growing US population of older adults, nurses in the US healthcare system advocate and innovate to care for older adults.

The combined Age-Friendly Hospital measure includes domains that target high-yield points of intervention for older adults—Eliciting Patient Healthcare Goals, Responsible Medication Management, Frailty Screening and Intervention (mobility, mentation, malnutrition, social vulnerability, ageism, abuse, caregiver stress, economic vulnerability), and Age-Friendly Care Leadership. The new measure encourages hospital systems to reconceptualize the way they approach care for older patients with multiple medical, psychological, and social needs at the highest risk for adverse events. It also emphasizes the importance of defining patient and caregiver goals not only for the immediate treatment decision but also for long-term health and aligning care with what the patient values.

The proposed Age-Friendly Hospital composite measure is a critical piece in the optimization of care for older patients by using a holistic approach to create a quality program that better serves the needs of this unique population. We believe that these measures will help build a better, safer environment for older patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen M. Mack".

Karen M. Mack, DNP, MBA, APRN
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mattia J. Gilmartin".

Mattia J. Gilmartin PhD, RN, FAAN
Executive Program Faculty
2020-21 Health and Aging Policy Fellow