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British Geriatrics Society

bgs.org.uk/topics/cga-in-acute-settings
bgs.org.uk/topics/cga-in-community-settings
bgs.org.uk/resources/nhs-rightcare-frailty-toolkit

Wessex AHSN

wessexahsn.org.uk/projects/315/wessex-acute-frailty-training-and-awareness
wessexahsn.org.uk/projects/316/frailty-screening-and-identification

Contact us at healthyageing@wessexahsn.net
or visit wessexahsn.org.uk/programmes/35/healthy-ageing





Frailty screening and identification

**A short guide on the importance of frailty
and best practice for healthcare professionals
in a hospital setting**



Why is frailty identification so important within an acute setting?

Top 10 reasons to screen

- 1 Early identification facilitates the meeting of a patient's needs, can prompt earlier decision making and collaboration with services and care providers
- 2 Identification enables the visibility and potential to support reduction in deconditioning, unnecessary bed moves, inappropriate treatment and lessens the risk of hospital related harm
- 3 It will help you identify patients who require anticipatory care planning
- 4 Potentially reduces rates of admission for older people living with frailty
- 5 Supports flow from the emergency department and "getting it right first time" by identifying people suitable for same day emergency care
- 6 Understanding the proportion of patients living with frailty within a ward area, helps identify the capacity and safe levels of staffing required to care for them
- 7 Highlights opportunities/areas of most need across the health and social care system
- 8 Contributes towards appropriate services being developed to meet the frailty profile of your local population
- 9 Assists in understanding the system-wide impact of frailty on a patient's length of stay, readmission and mortality
- 10 Helps with your organisational service/workforce development by identifying areas requiring frailty education, investment and recruitment





Holistic approaches for assessing people living with frailty in a hospital setting

Top 10 tips for assessing people living with frailty

A resource for healthcare professionals to deliver a best practice approach

1



The person's needs and expectations should be at the **heart** of your assessment

2



A **holistic** assessment is a **living** document which is **shared** across different health and social care settings and will evolve during a hospital stay

3



The assessment should be started or reviewed within **1.5 hours** of a person's arrival at hospital

*Same Day Emergency Care Guidance

4



Review present and past **symptoms/illnesses** and their impact on the patient

5



Check and review **medications** and any recent changes, their indications and effects

Understand **compliance** and provide guidance on how to support this

6



Discuss recent / impending **life changes**, and the impact these may have

7



Assess **emotional health** and **cognitive status** using your usual clinical assessment toolkit

8



Consider the impact of the **environment, nutrition** and **hydration** on the person's health

9



Discuss **family** and caregiver network, recent changes and identify any unmet needs

10



Assess **mobility** and balance and document rehabilitative status and prognosis and future care plans

Best practice approaches for screening and identifying people living with frailty

For patients over 65 who have one of the five frailty syndromes; **falls, immobility, delirium, incontinence and side effects of medications**, the following approach is recommended:



Identify frailty using a tool that works for your organisation



Grade the level of frailty using one of the frailty screening tools and document the level of frailty clearly in paper and electronic patient notes, ideally adding a frailty flag



Plan and manage the patient's record using patient centre tools, e.g. what matters to you, Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) and care plans



Share the level of frailty electronically across settings and specialities and communicate with the patient and their caregiver network. Be sure to include in discharge summaries too



This leaflet should be reviewed in tandem with resources available at:

wessexahsn.org.uk/projects/316/frailty-screening-and-identification

The website includes guidance for managers, clinicians and patients, and downloadable resources for ward specialities, an electronic frailty index and clinical frailty score mapping tool