THE 5 DOMAINS OF SFCARE

- Organizational Support
- Physical Environment
- Processes of Care
- Emotional & Behavioural Environment
- Ethics in Clinical Care & Research

Senior friendly care (sfCare) is care that is optimized for the unique needs of older adults. During a pandemic, infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures such as personal protective equipment (PPE), decreased contact with patients, isolation, and visitor restrictions change the way care is provided, and it can be challenging to think of ways to optimize care for older adults.

The sfCare Framework provides a simple and systematic way of thinking through this challenge.

HOW THE SFCARE FRAMEWORK HELPS ADDRESS THE CHALLENGE OF ⬆ DELIRIUM RATES

Delirium has been described as the "epidemic within the pandemic". All around the world, providers have reported a **70% rise in delirium rates during COVID-19**. Delirium is a preventable medical emergency but COVID-19 precautions can make the management of delirium across the care continuum challenging.

PROCESSES OF CARE – How can I prevent and manage delirium with IPAC measures and time constraints?

1. **Have brief conversations regularly around goals.** As illness changes, goals may too. Understanding what's important and aligning care accordingly can help older adults and the care team set up mutual expectations and optimize their limited interactions together. For tips on COVID-19 conversations, use VitalTalk's COVID-19 Ready Playbook .

2. **Assess for delirium and proactively prevent it by providing support in 6 key areas.** In an older adult, COVID-19 may present with atypical symptoms, including delirium. Find the root cause of acute confusion; they may have delirium, COVID-19, or both. Prevent and support delirium by ensuring 1) use of hearing aids and glasses, 2) nutrition, 3) hydration, 4) mobility, 5) sleep, and 6) mental stimulation and orientation. Use our 2-page resource Considerations for Preventing and Managing Delirium in Older Adults during the Covid-19 Pandemic, Across the Care Continuum.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT – How can I stay up to date on best practices?

3. **Designate someone to disseminate practical senior friendly educational resources and point of care tools that are specific to COVID-19**. Misinformation and information overload have been key challenges during the pandemic. Ask if someone within your organization is, or can be dedicated to disseminating ready-to-implement information. We have created and curated ready-to-use resources, including a section on delirium, on our RGP COVID-19 web page. Sign up for our sfCare Newsletter to receive an email when resources are added.

EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL ENVIRONMENT – How can I communicate clearly and compassionately in PPE?

4. **Make yourself recognizable, smile when you speak, and ask for permission before approaching or touching**. Isolation protocols and use of PPE can make people feel even more fearful and confused. To overcome the challenge of being unrecognizable in PPE, ensure that with each interaction you introduce yourself, call the person by name, and explain your role/what you are going to do, and consider adding a laminated photo of yourself with your name and role to your gown. Use our 1-page tip sheet Communication Tips for Clinicians Caring for Older Adults Experiencing Delirium during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

ETHICS IN CLINICAL CARE & RESEARCH – How can I support older adults and family or caregivers when there are visitor restrictions?

5. **Create a communication plan and provide support for virtual visits**. Both Delirium and COVID-19 precautions create vulnerability. When visitor restrictions are in place, support for an older adult's identified care partner should include a clear communication plan between the care team and the care partner; clear, written information on COVID-19 related policies; guidance on how the care partner can provide support virtually; and the facilitation of virtual visits. Share our 1-page tip sheet How to Prevent and Support Delirium in an Older Adult In Hospital or a Care Home, When You Can't Visit In Person.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT – How can I make an older adult's space more calming and orientating when isolation and limited contact are necessary?

6. **Provide clear cues for day / date / time** by having the lights on / blinds up during the day only, and making clocks and calendars available.

7. **Ensure an object of familiarity or comfort is close by**, such as a photo of family or friends, or favourite blanket.