

Frailty, Functional Assessments and Transitions of Care

Learning Objectives:

Define and Recognize Frailty

- Explain what frailty is and how it impacts clinical care, patient outcomes, and decision-making in the emergency department.
- Describe evidence-based frailty screening tools and demonstrate how to incorporate them into ED assessment.
- Illustrate how frailty-centered care pathways can be incorporated into ED setting for older patients (ex. ED geriatrics assessments, adverse-event prevention strategies, disposition planning)

Learn how to Perform Functional Assessments

- Identify the key components of a functional assessment, including mobility, activities of daily living (ADLs), and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs).
- Recognize the value of a tailored functional assessment, including observation of transitions and gait, and how it may apply to clinical decision-making.

Develop Effective Strategies to Ensure Safe Transitions of Care

- Describe the risk of adverse events and harm for older adults that result from incomplete or ineffective methods during transitions of care of older adults (ex at discharge, transfer to different floor, pre/post procedure, handover, etc)
- Understand the roles and value of allied health professionals, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, social work, transitional care coordinators, and geriatric nursing specialists.
- Illustrate the importance of clear communication methods during transitions of care:
 - Provide clear discharge summaries/notes and follow-up plans to receiving care providers, including long-term care facilities.
 - Use structured communication strategies to ensure continuity of care across settings.
 - Engage patients and families in understanding the plan of care and expected next steps.