Understanding aging and frailty

A workbook for adults with intellectual and development disabilities and those who support them
As we age, our needs start to change, and we are at risk of becoming frail.

People who are frail have worse health, and may not be able to do what they used to do. Because of this, they need different supports.

This workbook helps you think about what needs to be done when you are becoming frail.
A person-centred approach is needed.

It is important that the help you get is the help that you need and want.

Have you told the people who are helping you about:

- your goals?
- what is important to you?
- what makes you feel good?
- the things that are hard for you?
- the help you want?
Ageing in place means being able to live in your own home even though you may need extra support.

Changes in your health or life does not always mean that you have to leave your home.

How important is it to you to remain in your own home as you age?

- Very important
- Important
- Not important

What could make it easier for you to stay at home as you age?
For example, getting help with housework or making meals?

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Ageing in place means being able to live in your own home even though you may need extra support.

Changes in your health or life does not always mean that you have to leave your home.
Frailty does not just happen to very old people. It can happen when you are 40 years old.

Have you noticed any changes in your health? What are they?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Have you talked to your doctor about changes in your health?

☐ Yes  ☐ No
Improvement is possible

Just because things get worse or harder, it doesn’t mean they can’t get better. Think about what supports can help you.

What things would you like to get better at?
For example: remembering things

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Are some things getting harder or worse?
For example: going up stairs

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Safety

It is important that you feel safe.

As you get older, some things might make you feel unsafe.

For example, you might feel unsafe getting into the bath, or walking on the sidewalk.

1. Do you feel safe in your home?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Do you feel safe in your neighbourhood?
   - Yes
   - No

3. Who can you call in case of an emergency?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   Yes
   No
Collaboration is Needed

Frailty is complex. Many people will be involved. It is important to work together.

1. Who are the people that help you? For example, family, personal worker, doctor, therapist.

________________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Do they all know each other?
   - Yes  - No

3. Do they know how each person is helping you?
   - Yes  - No
Helpers Have Needs Too

When your needs change, the help you need changes too.

The people who help you might not always know what to do. It is important that they get help too.
1. Do your helpers need help?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. What do they need help with?
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________

3. Do your helpers get help?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Who helps your helpers?
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________

5. Who else could help your helpers?
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
   __________________________________
Planning for the future is important.

Your needs can change with age.

It’s important to think about what you might need in the future.

1. Have you talked to anyone about what happens if you can’t stay in your house?
   - Yes
   - No

2. What will you do if you can’t stay in your house? For example, where will you live? Who will help you?

   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
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   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
3. Have you talked to anyone about what happens if you get sick?

4. What will you do if you get sick?
   For example, how do you want to be helped? Who will help you?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
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5. Have you talked to anyone about what happens if you need money?

6. What will you do if you need money?
   For example, who will you call? Who will help you?
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More Research is Needed

We are very interested in ageing and frailty and do a lot of work on these topics.

Please visit our website to learn more about our work.

www.mapsresearch.ca