

The Fountain of Health Initiative for Optimal Aging: Clinicians' Guide to Bring Health Promotion into Practice

GOALS OF THE CLINICIANS' GUIDE

The Fountain of Health Initiative for Optimal Aging helps you, the busy health practitioner, to bring evidence-based health promotion tools quickly and easily into your practice. Practice tools that systematically *link* mental health promotion into routine care are unfortunately *rare*, making this tool a unique one in our province and country. With this Clinicians' Guide (and helpful mnemonics) you will be able to help your patients to age more successfully by identifying individualized health promotion needs and setting achievable, realistic, and time-limited goals within an office visit.

Importantly, the Fountain of Health (FoH) helps to translate in basic terms the current science of healthy aging and debunks negative aging myths. For example, most people think longevity is “in your family genes” with little you can do about the length of life. Science indicates longevity and health in aging is determined largely by epigenetics¹: attitudes, stress levels and lifestyle factors are key: it is important to have strong social connections², stay physically active³, continue to learn⁴, and have meaning in life. Beliefs on aging are also really important to address too - evidence shows negative beliefs on aging can serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy⁵ and are linked to greatly increased morbidity and mortality⁶ while positive views are linked to improved health behaviours⁷ and functioning⁸. The idea is not to get rid of all negative thoughts, but rather to balance them with other thoughts that are both accurate and helpful to your health. Balanced thinking helps to increase the chance of success in setting goals and achieving healthier behaviours.

WHO IS FOUNTAIN OF HEALTH EDUCATION FOR?

All of your patients or clients who are over age 50 are ideal candidates for Fountain of Health education, but younger adults can also benefit. Those with mental and cognitive disorders or at high risk of developing brain health issues are appropriate: this includes patients with chronic mental illness including anxiety and depressive disorders, mild or subclinical symptoms of mental illness, and mild cognitive impairment. Patients with chronic medical conditions (diabetes, hypertension, cardiac disease, neurological disorders, pain), and those with sedentary lifestyles or frailty will benefit. Clients who are socially isolated/lonely, openly express negative attitudes about aging, and adult caregivers also stand to benefit.

WHAT DO I DO IN THE OFFICE?

Book up to four 10-15 minute office visits, ideally 1 month apart following the Clinicians' Guide for each visit.

VISIT 1: Use the **L.I.N.K.** model to link a presenting problem to the Fountain of Health material.

VISIT 2: Follow the **R.A.R.E.** approach and check in on: 1. Goal Attainment (10 minutes); 2. Give FoH Quiz (5 minutes)

VISIT 3: Review the FoH Quiz (5 minutes), and use results to help set SMART Goal (10 minutes)

VISIT 4: Use the **R.A.R.E.** approach and check in on Goal Attainment (10- 15 minutes)

Note about Billing: Family Physicians, please check your local fee code for billing.

For example, currently in Nova Scotia, billing code 03.03 can be used for a 10- 15 minute health promotion discussion and/ or code 08.49C for 15-30 minute lifestyle counseling session (up to two hours per patient per year).

VISIT 1: LINK into the FOUNTAIN OF HEALTH (10-15 minutes)

L: Listen empathically to presenting complaint/concern.

I: Identify the patient as being ideal for FoH education, and **Introduce** Fountain of Health (using the FoH Healthy Living Handbook, or FoH website).

Sample text of identifying patient as ideal for FoH:

“Your problems with diabetes and heart disease make you an ideal candidate for a new healthy aging program called the Fountain of Health Initiative. Could we take a few minutes today so I can tell you more about it?”

OR

“You have been struggling with your mood in recent months. Besides taking medications, there are other things you can do to help your mood. Would you like to learn more about that?”

N: Navigate one small behavioural change, such as in physical activity, social connection or in learning something new. Support the patient to choose one small health behavior change goal that is doable within the next four weeks.

Sample text of setting a small behavioural goal:

“Is there one small step could you take to increase your physical activity level in the next four weeks?”

OR

*“Is there one small step you could take to connect with someone socially in the next four weeks?” OR
“Is there one small thing you would like to learn more about in the next four weeks?”*

K: Keep a record of the goal set, and book a follow-up at 1 month.

Sample goal record:

One small step to increase **physical activity** in the next four weeks is: OR

One small thing to **learn more about** in the next four weeks is: OR

One small step to **connect with someone** in the next four weeks is:

Arrange follow up in one month to review goal:

2nd FoH Visit time: Date: _____ Time: _____

VISIT 2: “R.A.R.E.” CHECK UP ON GOAL ATTAINMENT (using R.A.R.E. approach: Review, Assess, Reinforce, Explore)

R: Review Goal

At your last visit, you set a goal in one of these areas: Physical Activity, Learning New Things or Staying Connected. What was your goal?

My Goal was:	
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A: Assess Outcome of the Goal

My outcome was: (Please check one box)	GOAL
I am at the same place/no change	<input type="checkbox"/>
I partly reached the goal I set	<input type="checkbox"/>
I completely reached the goal I set	<input type="checkbox"/>
I went beyond/did more than the goal I set	<input type="checkbox"/>

R: Reinforce learning. Review one of the following FoH tools together with the patient. Note: If patient did not achieve his/her goal review How to Set SMART Goals (Appendix A in Clinicians’ Guide, or on website) and see if the patient is willing to continue to work toward this goal.

E: Explore FoH Tools. If the patient achieved their goal, take a few minutes to explore other FoH health promotion tools that might help this particular patient. Visit <http://www.fountainofhealth>, and under the “Resources” menu see “Clinicians’ Corner” at <http://www.fountainofhealth/clinicians-corner>. For example:

- **FoH Educational Video** (3 min) at www.fountainofhealth.ca/video
- **FoH Healthy Living Handbook**- Contact us to order copies for your office or download at http://fountainofhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/fountainofhealth_positiveaging_healthylivinghandbook.pdf)
- **FoH Positive Thinking Exercise** at <http://fountainofhealth.ca/a-positive-thinking-exercise>
- **FoH Mental Health Myths and Facts Booklet** (anti-stigma/educational brochure) - Contact us to order copies for your office or download at http://fountainofhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/mentalhealthsupportforseniorsmythsandfacts_0.pdf
- **FoH Depression Educational Video** “Why Isn’t Dad Fishing Anymore?” – A story of a senior with depression (6 min) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdhPfAnm4xo>
- **FoH Mindfulness Introduction** (MP3) (14 min) at http://fountainofhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/mentalhealthsupportforseniorsmythsandfacts_0.pdf

VISIT 2: TAKE THE FOH QUIZ! (BASELINE NEEDS ASSESSMENT)

The first step to optimal aging is to find out where you are starting in each of the five areas for healthy aging. Please rate yourself in each of these five areas below:

1. Where would you rate yourself in terms of being socially connected to others? (Circle **one number only**)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
← Not at all connected					Very connected →				

2. Where would you rate yourself in terms of being interested in learning new things? (Circle **one number only**)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
← Not at all interested					Very Interested →				

3. Using your own definition, where would you rate yourself in terms of successful aging? (Circle **one number only**)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
← Least successful					Most successful →				

4. Where would you rate yourself in terms of how likely you are to seek mental health help if you needed it?

(Circle **one number only**)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
← Not at all likely					Very likely →				

5. Where would you rate yourself in terms of being physically active? (Circle **one number only**)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
← Not at all active					Very active →				

Total FoH Healthy Aging Score: _____/50

6. Please share your opinion on the following statements: (Place an X in box below for each statement)

	YES	NO	
Things keep getting worse as I get older.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I have as much pep as I did last year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
As I get older, I'm less useful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I am as happy now as I was when I was younger.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Please place an "X" in one box below:			
	Better	Worse	Same
As I get older, things are better, worse, or the same as I thought they would be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Arrange follow up in one month to evaluate progress on SMART Goal Attainment.

3rd FoH Visit time: Date: _____ Time: _____

VISIT 3: REVIEW FoH QUIZ

Review results of FoH Quiz from VISIT 2, noting areas of relative strengths and weaknesses. Encourage patient to set a goal in an area of relative weakness.

AND

SET “SMART” GOAL

Use results to help set a new or revised **SMART goal** in one of the FoH areas (Eg. physical, social, cognitive).
 Use “SMART” goal setting format below:

S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting: (completed with help of a clinician)

		“S.M.A.R.T. “ GOAL Details:
GOAL/ INTENTION:	What health goal would you like to meet in the next few weeks or months?	
SPECIFIC	How specifically can you go about achieving this goal? What concrete steps would you need to take?	
MEASURABLE	How can you measure your progress? How will you know when your goal is met? (Can you rate your progress out of 10? How often or for how long will you do the activity?)	
ACTION- ORIENTED	Does your goal rely on an action that you can take? What specific actions will you need to take?	
REALISTIC	Is this goal realistic for you to achieve? Is it doable in the next few weeks/ months?	
TIME-LIMITED	What timeframe does this goal require to achieve? (When will you start/finish? What is the best time in the week?)	

SUMMARY:

My NEW or REVISIED SMART GOAL is:	
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Arrange follow up in one month to evaluate progress on SMART Goal Attainment.

4th FoH Visit time: Date: _____ Time: _____

VISIT 4: “R.A.R.E.” CHECK UP ON GOAL ATTAINMENT (using R.A.R.E. format- Review, Assess, Reinforce, Explore)

R: Review Goal. At your last visit, you set a SMART goal in one of these areas: Physical Activity, Learning New Things, Staying Connected, Taking Care of Mental Health or Positive Thinking. What was your goal?

My Goal was:	
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A: Assess Outcome of the Goal.

My outcome was: (Please check one box)	GOAL
I am at the same place/no change	<input type="checkbox"/>
I partly reached the goal I set	<input type="checkbox"/>
I completely reached the goal I set	<input type="checkbox"/>
I went beyond/did more than the goal I set	<input type="checkbox"/>

R: Reinforce Learning. Review one of the following FoH tools together with the patient. Note: If patient did not achieve his/her goal, review How to Set SMART Goals (Appendix A in Clinicians’ Guide, or on website) and/or Examples of Setting SMART Goals (Appendix B in Clinicians’ Guide)

E: Explore FoH Tools. If the patient achieved their goal, take a few minutes to explore other FoH health promotion tools that might help this particular patient. Visit <http://www.fountainofhealth>, and under the “Resources” menu see “Clinicians’ Corner” at <http://www.fountainofhealth/clinicians-corner>. For example:

- **FoH Educational Video** (3 min) at www.fountainofhealth.ca/video
- **FoH Healthy Living Handbook**- Contact us to order copies for your office or download at http://fountainofhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/fountainofhealth_positiveaging_healthylivinghandbook.pdf)
- **FoH Positive Thinking Exercise** at <http://fountainofhealth.ca/a-positive-thinking-exercise>
- **FoH Mental Health Myths and Facts Booklet** (anti-stigma/educational brochure) - Contact us to order copies for your office or download at http://fountainofhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/mentalhealthsupportforseniormythsandfacts_0.pdf
- **FoH Depression Educational Video** “Why Isn’t Dad Fishing Anymore?” – A story of a senior with depression (6 min) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdhPfAnm4xo>
- **FoH Mindfulness Introduction** (MP3) (14 min) at http://fountainofhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/mentalhealthsupportforseniormythsandfacts_0.pdf

IN FOLLOW UP, PLEASE REPEAT ANY OF THESE 4 STEPS AS NEEDED!

APPENDIX A: How to Set SMART Goals

Helping patients to set a SMART goal and follow through is a key to behavioural change. While not everyone is equally ready to make a change, research shows that even the smallest shift that moves an individual in the right direction is worthwhile, because:

- Goal setting helps people clarify their values, make decisions and monitor their progress.
- Large, long-term goals need to be broken up into small steps.
- Reaching small goals improves self-esteem and creates a sense of satisfaction and motivation to continue to move towards a long-term goal.

The creation of SMART goals is facilitated by motivational interviewing techniques. Motivational Interviewing¹ includes:

- Asking open-ended questions
- Affirming successes and expressing empathy
- Listening reflectively
- Summarizing discussions

SMART Goals are:

Specific

Measurable

Action-Oriented

Realistic

Time-Limited

When setting SMART Goals, consider:

The intention of the goal: What would your patient like to accomplish in the next few months?

Specific: How exactly can your patient go about achieving this goal? What concrete steps would your patient need to take?

Measurable: How can your patient measure their progress?

Action-Oriented: Is the goal dependent on an action the patient can take? What will those actions be?

Realistic: Is this goal realistic for your patient to achieve?

Time-Limited: What timeframe does this goal require? When will your patient start? What is the best time during the week to work on this goal?

Refer to the Sample Goal Setting Table for examples of SMART goals in each of the FoH dimensions.

¹ For more information about motivational interviewing, see: <http://www.aafp.org/fpm/2011/0500/p21.html>

APPENDIX B: Examples of Setting SMART Goals (one for each of the 5 areas)

Intention of Goal	Specific	Measurable	Action-Oriented	Realistic	Time-Limited
<p>What would you like to accomplish in the next few months?</p> <p>(Often starts out with a vague goal but this process helps to make it more specific)</p>	<p>How <i>specifically</i> can you go about achieving this goal? What <i>concrete steps</i> would you need to take?</p>	<p>How can you <i>measure</i> your progress? How will you know when the goal is achieved?</p> <p>(Can you rate your progress out of 10? How often or for how long will you do the activity?)</p>	<p>Is the goal an action that you can take? What specific <i>actions</i> will you need to take?</p>	<p>Is this goal <i>realistic</i> for you to achieve? Is it doable in the next few weeks or months?</p>	<p>What timeframe does this goal require to achieve?</p> <p>(When will you start/finish? What is the best time in the week?)</p>
<p>Socially Active:</p> <p><i>Attend the Seniors Lunch Social.</i></p>	<p>I can talk to a neighbour for more information or I could sign up on the sheet for the next Seniors Lunch Social in my community.</p>	<p>Seniors Lunch Socials are held once a week at the Seniors Centre, on Thursdays for two hours (11-1) and are ongoing through the year.</p>	<p>I would need to put it in my calendar to sign up and attend the Seniors Lunch Social.</p>	<p>Yes, I'm free on Thursday from 11-1. The Social takes place at the Seniors Centre, and I can afford the costs associated with it.</p>	<p>I will attend the next four Seniors Lunch Socials over in the next month and just see what happens.</p>
<p>Physically Active:</p> <p><i>I need to get more exercise.</i></p>	<p>I can find out where there are safe, level walking paths or trails in my area from the recreation guide or call the recreation dept.</p>	<p>I can go in the mornings before 10 am or late afternoon, for 30 minutes</p>	<p>I will add a walk at least three mornings a week to my calendar and do it!</p>	<p>Yes, I can go as long as the weather is good and the path/trail is clear.</p>	<p>I will walk for 30 minutes three mornings a week for one month.</p>
<p>Change How You Think about Aging:</p> <p><i>I'd like to think more positively about getting older.</i></p>	<p>I can make sure I think about the good things in my life and document them. I can get a small notebook at the Dollar Store.</p>	<p>I can write three things I'm grateful for in my life.</p>	<p>Every Sunday, after I have supper, I can write in my notebook.</p>	<p>I have time to do this on Sundays.</p>	<p>I will write three things that I'm grateful for in my life on each Sunday evening for one month.</p>
<p>Take Care of My Mental Health:</p> <p><i>I want to feel better.</i></p>	<p>I can review my medications with my doctor and we can talk about the best times to take them during the day.</p>	<p>I will take my medications on time each day.</p>	<p>I can put a medication schedule on my fridge and set a reminder alarm on my computer/phone.</p>	<p>I can do this for two weeks to start.</p>	<p>I will take my medications at the same time each day for two weeks.</p>
<p>Learn New Things:</p> <p><i>I would like to learn to cook.</i></p>	<p>I could ask a friend to show me or I could take a cooking class, but I don't know where. (Together phone the local recreation dept. to find out about classes.)</p>	<p>Community cooking classes are three hours per week, on Wednesdays from 9-12, for six weeks.</p>	<p>I need to put it in my calendar, and attend classes each week for six weeks.</p>	<p>Yes, I am free on Wednesdays, have a car to drive, and can afford the cost.</p>	<p>I will complete 18 hours of the cooking classes within the next two months.</p>

References

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Online: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21767729>
- 4 Waldinger R, et al. Neural activity, neural connectivity, and the processing of emotionally-valenced information in older adults: Links with life satisfaction. Cognitive, Affective & Behavioral Neuroscience 2011; 11(3): 426-436.
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6. Levy BR, Slade MD, Kunkel SR, et al. Longevity increased by positive self-perceptions of aging. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 2002; 83(2): 261-270.
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7. Wolff JK, Warner LM, Ziegelmann JP, Wurm S. Psychol Health. What do targeting positive views on ageing add to a physical activity intervention in older adults? Results from a randomised controlled trial. 2014, 29(8):915-32.
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