



Technology-Enabled Care for Older Adults at Mass General Brigham

EHR Optimization

Overview

Hospitalized older adults face elevated risk of complications such as delirium, medication events and functional decline. This approach embeds evidence-based care pathways for mobility, pain management, sleep, nutrition and medication safety directly within EHR workflows and care plans. By integrating standardized guidance into everyday clinical processes, hospitals can deliver more consistent and safer care for older adult patients.

Why This Matters

Adults over age 65 represent a significant share of hospital admissions and often experience complex care needs. While best practices for geriatric care are well established, they are applied inconsistently across units and hospitals. Embedding these practices within the EHR helps ensure they are applied reliably, supporting safer care and improved patient outcomes.

How It Works

This model integrates evidence-based geriatric care practices directly into everyday clinical workflows within the EHR:

- **Evidence-based care pathways:** Standardized approaches are applied to mobility, pain, sleep, nutrition, and medication safety.
- **EHR-embedded decision support:** Age-specific clinical guidance is integrated into routine workflows.
- **Standardized care plans:** Consistent documentation and coordination are enabled across units and sites.
- **Measurement and optimization:** Dashboards track performance and support continuous improvement.

What It Enables

Health systems implementing EHR-embedded geriatric care pathways often pursue improvements across several dimensions of care quality and reliability:

- **Patient outcomes:** Fewer complications such as delirium and medication events
- **Clinical reliability:** Consistent application of geriatric best practices
- **Operational efficiency:** Reduced variation in care delivery
- **Care coordination:** Stronger multidisciplinary collaboration

Proof in Practice: Mass General Brigham

Mass General Brigham implemented a systemwide care model for older adult patients supported by EHR automation and standardized care pathways. The initiative integrates clinical decision support, performance dashboards and multidisciplinary governance to support consistent care delivery across multiple hospitals.

Where It Fits Best

This approach is particularly relevant for organizations seeking to strengthen geriatric care across inpatient settings:

- Health systems looking to improve outcomes for hospitalized older adults
- Organizations reducing variation in geriatric care across multiple hospitals
- Clinical leaders integrating evidence-based care models into EHR workflows
- Systems pursuing scalable quality improvement initiatives

Implementation Considerations

Successful adoption requires collaboration among geriatric care leaders, informatics teams and operational leadership. Standardized workflows, governance structures and ongoing measurements are essential to ensure consistent use of care pathways across sites.

Next Steps

Health systems interested in strengthening care for older adult patients can connect with the West Health Accelerator at AHA's Health Research & Educational Trust to explore how EHR-embedded care tools can support more consistent and reliable care delivery.