

# Socio-environmental Assessment

# Content

Social Interaction and Support: Social and family interactions, availability of caregiver support,

Environmental Safety: Home safety checklist (fall hazards, accessibility)

Special needs for daily living

# Introduction

Social environment = network of family, friends, community, culture, and social systems

Physical environment

Key determinant of healthy aging, well-being, and longevity

WHO Healthy Aging framework → emphasizes supportive environments

# Importance of Assessing Social Environment

- Identifies risks- loneliness, social isolation, elderly abuse
- Guides interventions - social support, community programs, policy planning
- Strong predictor of physical and mental health outcomes
- Impacts QoL, independence, morbidity, and mortality

## Domains of Social Environment

- Social support & networks (family, friends, community)
- Social participation (clubs, religious groups, volunteering)
- Living arrangements (alone, with family, institutional care)
- Economic & housing security
- Access to community resources & healthcare
- Cultural & spiritual connections

# Factors Affecting Social Environment in Aging

- Retirement and loss of work identity
- Widowhood, bereavement, and changing family roles
- Geographic relocation/children migrating
- Chronic illness and mobility restrictions
- Ageism, stigma, and social exclusion

## Tools for Assessing Social Environment

- Lubben Social Network Scale (LSNS-6 / LSNS-18) → measures perceived social support
- Duke Social Support Index (DSSI) → interaction and satisfaction
- Berkman-Syme Social Network Index → marital status, contacts, group memberships
- De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale
- Structured interviews, focus groups, ethnographic approaches

## Case Scenario

Mr. K, 81 years, Widower, lives alone in rural area, Children live abroad, limited contact

Chronic knee arthritis → reduced mobility

Reports loneliness, stopped attending community events

**Assessment:** LSNS score low, social participation limited, high risk of isolation

**Implications:** Referral to community day-care program, physiotherapy, caregiver support network, virtual social connections

# Tools for Assessing Physical Environment

- Home safety checklist
- Environmental Risk Assessment Tool
- Functional–Environment Interaction Tools
- Technology-Based Tools
- Specialized Clinical Tools

# Home Safety Checklists

Falls Prevention Checklist (CDC STEADI, WHO).

Housing Enabler – structured tool for accessibility barriers.

Westmead Home Safety Assessment (WeHSA).

SAFER-HOME v3 (Safety Assessment of Function and the Environment for Rehabilitation).

# Environmental Risk Assessment Tools

- Falls Hazard Assessment Tool (FHAT).
- Check for Safety: A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults (CDC).
- Home Falls and Accidents Screening Tool (HOME FAST).

## Functional–Environment Interaction Tools

- Lawton's Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) Scale – includes environmental interactions.

Person–Environment Fit Assessment – evaluates whether living spaces meet functional abilities.

Enabler 2.0 – assesses physical accessibility barriers.

## Technology-Based Tools

Smart home monitoring systems – sensors, fall detectors, ambient assisted living.

Mobile apps for falls risk and environmental safety assessment.

Wearables to track activity and detect hazards.

## Specialized Clinical Tools

Environmental Skill-Building Program (ESP) for dementia patients.  
Occupational Therapy Environmental Assessments tailored to ADLs/IADLs.  
Community/Home Safety Assessment Forms used in geriatric nursing.

## References

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# Thank you

