Functional Status: the Sixth Vital Sign

- Functional Assessment is a comprehensive evaluation of the physical and cognitive abilities required to maintain independence.

Assessment tools provide objective measures of
- physical health
- activities of daily living (ADLs)
- instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
- psychological and social functioning (AADLs)

Definition of Functional Impairment

Difficulty performing or requiring the assistance of another person to perform, one or more Activities of Daily Living (ADL)

- Basic ADLs (Katz ADL Index)
- Instrumental ADLs
- Advanced ADLs

Basic ADLs

- Bathing
- Dressing
- Toileting
- Transferring
- Continence
- Feeding

"essential elements of self-care"
Instrumental ADLs

- Administering own medication
- Grocery shopping
- Preparing meals
- Using the telephone
- Driving and transportation
- Handling own finances
- Housekeeping
- Laundry
- Maintaining a home and property

“Independent living in the community”

Advanced ADLs

- Social functioning:
  - Ability to fulfill societal, community and family roles
  - Ability to participate in leisure, recreational or work activities
  - Subjective well-being
  - “How do you spend your day?”
- Psychological Functioning:
  - Measuring cognitive mental and affective functions

Importance of Function

- Initial Assessment
  - Function = Starting Point
    - Diagnosis
    - Care Plan
    - Predicting adverse outcomes and mortality in hospitalized older patients
- Episodic Assessment
  - Change in Function
    - “Is there anything you can’t do now, that you could do since the last time I saw you?”
    - Sign of Medical Problem
    - Concept of Diminished Functional Reserve

Percentage of adults aged 65 and over who need help with personal care from other persons: United States, 1997-September 2011
Mobility Impairment

- Medical
  - Cardiovascular
  - Pulmonary
  - Musculoskeletal
- Neurologic
  - Stroke
  - Neurodegenerative
- Sensory
  - Vision and Hearing loss

Cognitive Impairment

- Dementias
  - Alzheimer’s disease
  - Vascular dementia
  - Other
- Mental illness
  - Chronic
  - Late-life

Assessment of Function

- Self-Report
- Surrogate Report
- Direct Observation
  - “Did anyone help you get ready to come here today?”
  - “Get up and go” test
    - Clinic
    - Home
    - Hospital
  - Home Safety Assessment

Functional Status Scales

- Katz Index of Independence in ADL
- Barthel Index
- SF-36
- Functional Independence Measure (FIM)

ADL/IADL Assessment
Functional Goals

- Optimize Independence
  - Recognize strengths
  - Treat Impairments
  - Apply Adaptive Strategies
- Support ADL, IADL, and AADL Needs
- Least Restrictive Setting

“The great secret that all old people share is that you really haven’t changed in seventy or eighty years. Your body changes, but you don’t change at all. And that, of course, causes great confusion.”

Doris Lessing, 2007 Nobel Prize in Literature