

Living with Risk: Decision Support Approach

4-STEP PROCESS

1) What is the older adult at risk of and who is concerned?

- What are the older adult, the caregiver and the clinician concerned about?
- Understand differences of opinions, and if present, power imbalances
- Determine onset, context, progression, cause and consequences

2) What is the older adult's risk status?

- Evaluate the older adult's risk status by considering the **likelihood** of the safety concern and consequences occurring and the **severity** of the consequences.
- Plot your likelihood and severity ratings into the **Risk Status Matrix**.

RISK STATUS MATRIX		SEVERITY		
		Minimal	Moderate	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	Unlikely	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM
	Moderately likely	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
	Highly likely	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH

- Additional considerations for medium and high-risk situations:
 - **Frequency:** How often is the concern happening?
 - **Immediacy:** How imminent are the consequences of this concern?
 - **Support:** Does the older adult have consistent reliable support in place?
 - **Complexity:** Are there other concerns occurring?

3) What can be done about the concerns? The context: Modify or adapt the context (timing, location, activity)

- What are the wishes and goals of the older adult?
- What can be done about
 - **The concerns:** Prevent or decrease the frequency and modify or adapt the context.
 - **The context(s):** Modify or adapt the context(s) (timing, location, activity)
 - **The causes:** Optimize the older adult's health, minimize impairments, leverage their strengths and adapt or modify their environments.
 - **The consequences:** Minimize the negative consequences, leverage the positive consequences, consider both the emotional & physical consequences.

4) How to have a conversation about risks and ways to address concerns?

- Communicate perceived risk status
- Discuss areas of agreement and disagreement
- Support priorities