Frailty is a progressive, degenerative long term condition characterised by loss of physical and/or cognitive resilience. This results in a four times greater risk for hospitalisation, care home admission or death (Vernon, 2018). Frailty is more effective than age as a way of identifying people with increased risks.

Frail people benefit from an holistic review based on the principles of Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (2014). Occupational Therapy uses this approach to facilitate patient well-being. Occupational Therapy helps remove the boulderous burdens of frailty from the river of well-being (Iwama, 2002) by improving functional ability, enhancing accessibility of living environment, increasing resilience and addressing individual concerns and needs.

Factors limiting life flow for people with Frailty

Forward Thinking Occupational Therapy:

- Anticipates holistic health needs
- Reduces cost through admission avoidance
- Reduces inpatient deconditioning
- Increases functional independence
- Improves occupational engagement
- Prevents occupational deprivation
- Increases quality of life years
- Improves mental health
- Prevention of occupational identity and role
- Prevents loss of resilience & Frailty
- Reduces impact of frailty through pre-habilitation

Interventions used by Occupational Therapy to Maximise the flow of life

Acknowledgement: Illustrations adapted from and used by kind permission of Dr Michael Iwama

References: