Evaluating the Home Environment

Use this worksheet to review safety issues in the home. Based on your responses, you may need to address hazards or inconveniences within the home to improve safety and comfort. Not all items apply to all situations. It is sometimes necessary to find a balance between optimal safety with the wishes of the person whose home is being assessed.

Entryways, Hallways, Stairs	**Yes**	**No**
§ Is the home easily accessible?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are access doors typically locked?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is it necessary to climb stairs to gain entry to the home?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are entry doors easy to open and close?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are locks and door handles easy to manipulate?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Can you view and/or speak to visitors without opening the door?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are entryways well lighted?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are light switches in hallways easy to locate and reach?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are hallway stairs and / or carpets in good condition?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are there thresholds in doorways that might cause tripping?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Can screen doors, patio doors and balcony doors be locked?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are entryways and hallways free of clutter and obstacles?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Do all steps and stairways have handrails?	[ ]	[ ]
Living Room, Dining Room, and Family Rooms		
§ Does the arrangement of furniture allow for walkers or wheelchairs?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are there slippery floors or loose rugs that might cause tripping?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is the furniture sturdy?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Can the phone be easily reached?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is there sufficient lighting?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Might shadowy lighting or patterned carpeting cause tripping?	[ ]	[ ]
Bedrooms		
§ Are rugs and floor coverings secure?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are beds too high?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Can the first floor accommodate a bedroom to avoid use of stairs?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are there night lights positioned between the bedroom and bathroom?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is there a phone available in the bedroom?	[ ]	[ ]
Bathrooms		
§ Is there a full bathroom that is accessible without climbing stairs?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are water faucets in sink and tub / shower easy to use?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is bathroom floor slippery when wet?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are there secure grab rails near the toilet, tub and shower?	[ ]	[ ]

Bathroom, cont.

	Yes	No
§ Is the hot water temperature less than 105 degrees so it won't scald?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are grab bars or other safe supports available where needed?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Can toilet paper be reached without twisting or turning?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are medications labeled in clear print?	[ ]	[ ]

Kitchen and Laundry

§ Are work surfaces easily reached?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is the floor surface smooth and free from obstacles?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is the floor slippery when wet?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is there work space where a person can sit down if needed?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is laundry easily and safely accessible?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Is storage arranged so there is no need to stoop, reach or use a ladder?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are electrical outlets grounded to avoid shocks and fire hazards?	[ ]	[ ]

Outdoors

§ Are sidewalks even and well drained?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are walkways to and from the garage, driveway or street well lighted?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Do all steps have rails?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Does the landscaping create blind spots or hazards?	[ ]	[ ]

Other

§ Are there working smoke detectors in every room and hallway?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are emergency numbers easily available?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Can the temperature be controlled easily and effectively?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Do windows open and close easily?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are windows easily locked?	[ ]	[ ]
§ Are heating and cooling systems easy to use?	[ ]	[ ]

Making Accommodations

If you have concerns about the current living environment, use the following checklist to identify modifications that could be made to improve safety and comfort.

- q Add non-slip rugs or rug pads
- q Widen door jams
- q Get easier-to-access furniture
- q Add raised toilet seat(s)
- q Get and use an emergency response system
- q Hire outside yard help
- q Hire periodic housekeeping
- q Get help with cooking
- q Find transportation alternatives
- q Get help with shopping
- q Add access ramps
- q Add hallway handrails
- q Install smoke detectors
- q Add bathtub / toilet grab bar
- q Switch to unbreakable dishes
- q Hire person for home repairs
- q Get help with bill paying
- q Get help with laundry
- q Get help with exercise
- q Get help with snow removal / mowing

Evaluating the Home Environment, cont.

- q Eliminate need for stairs
- q Change or modify cooking appliances
- q Add stairway handrails
- q Add door or window locks
- q Add / change lighting
- q Add phones / get cell phone
- q Secure towel and shower rods in bathroom
- q Eliminate door thresholds
- q Install accessible door knobs
- q Get help with medications
- q Trim hedges or plantings
- q Repair walkways or flooring
- q Lower water temperature setting

q Other ideas:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Other Considerations

Is the person willing to relocate or have someone move in? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If *Yes,* what alternative arrangements have been discussed?

[ ] Living with adult children

[ ] Living with another family member

[ ] Moving to a more congregate setting

[ ] Moving to an assisted living facility

[ ] Moving to a nursing home

[ ] Other _____

Is a new living arrangement financially feasible? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Will the person be able to contribute to the cost of his or her care? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If *Yes,* how much? $_____

Will other people help contribute to the cost of a new living arrangement? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If so, how much will be contributed? $_____

Whose idea is it to relocate? [ ] Older Adult [ ] Adult Children [ ] Other