

LINKS Assessment System

Life skills are identified

Interest and Involvement Patterns are known

Now becomes meaningful by a link to the past

Key to successful interventions is a connection to lifelong patterns

The LINKS Assessment was originally developed in 1995. It was developed to enable life enrichment/activity directors to gather life story information to more effectively design strength-based activities for people with Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia.

As best practices have developed, and individualized approaches have become an effective practice, the LINKS forms have been revised.

Additional forms have been added that are more focused on "lifestyle preferences" and "person-centered care." The forms can be used across the continuum of care and can be adapted for different cognitive abilities.

Different settings require different assessment tools. These tools have been developed to meet the variety of needs faced by life enrichment directors.

The tools included in the LINKS Assessment system include:

1. Life Story Circles template
2. Customary Habits and Routines template (based on life story circles)
3. Customary Habits and Routines completed sample template
4. The "I Can List" of Individual Abilities for Dementia
5. LINKS for Dementia-expanded version
6. Brief Family Assessment
7. Lifestyle Preferences-a person centered care approach
8. Activity Pursuit Checklist
9. Cultural Habits and Preference Assessment
10. Habits and Preference Life Story Interview Cards

The challenges of collecting the information include:

- Lack of time
- Lack of importance
- Communication impairments
- Cognitive Impairments
- Untrained interviewers
- Cultural barriers
- Access to "informed significant others"

The fill in the blank for families is included to help obtain "basic information" and help trigger information that might not otherwise be shared. Open ended questions are difficult to answer, such as "What did your father like to do?" "What kinds of hobbies did he have?" Specific questions elicit more valuable information.

The cultural habits and preferences assessment form outlines the vital information to collect.

A great resource to help is <https://depts.washington.edu/pfes/CultureClues.htm>