The National Cancer Institute estimates that there will be 26.1 million cancer survivors in the United States by 2040, with the majority of survivors being aged 60 years or older (Shapiro, 2018). Cancer survivorship in older adults creates unique challenges, including management of multimorbidity and long-term effects of treatment, transitions in care settings that may include long-term care facilities, and ensuring older adults are fully included in shared decision-making (Guerard et al., 2016; Mohile et al., 2016). Patients risk being over- or undertreated when their providers exclude assessments of frailty or only focus on patients’ chronologic age (Lawler et al., 2014). Care directly attuned to the needs of older adults with cancer is a critical need within cancer healthcare systems to ensure that older adults receive appropriate levels of treatment in accord with their goals of care.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2004) defines active and healthy aging as “the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (p. iv). Age-friendly health care is defined as a continuum of care that anticipates needs and engages older adults and their families in healthcare planning. Age-friendly cancer care can be defined as a person-centered approach to cancer care that focuses on quality and safety, engaging the older adult in goal-concordant care. Age-friendly cancer care focuses on the patient’s goals and values, improved outcomes, lower costs of care, and improved quality of care (American Hospital Association [AHA], 2018; Kagan, 2015). This model appreciates that older adults are sometimes invisible in society—even in their own healthcare decisions—and strives to ensure that the entire healthcare system adequately focuses on their needs (Lawler et al., 2014; Williams-Robert et al., 2018; Yao et al., 2018).

The John A. Hartford Foundation partnered with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) to create the Age-Friendly Health Systems initiative, ...