

# Putting Social Medicine into Clinical Practice

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# IOM Suggested Social and Behavioral Domains for EHR

- Race
- Education
- Financial Resource Strain
- Stress
- Depression
- Physical Activity
- Tobacco Use
- Alcohol Use
- Social Connection or Isolation
- Intimate-Partner Violence
- Census Tract Median Income

From: Adler NE, Stead WW. Patients in context-  
EHR capture of social and behavioral determinants  
of health. NEJM 372;8. 698-701.

# Proposed Domains for Extended Social History

## 1. Individual characteristics

Self-defined race or ethnicity

Place of birth or nationality

Primary spoken language

English literacy

Life experiences (education, job history, military service, traumatic or life-shaping experiences)

Gender identification and sexual practices

Leisure activities

## 2. Life circumstances

Marital status and children

Family structure, obligations, and stresses

Housing environment and safety

Food security

Legal and immigration issues

Employment (number of jobs, work hours, stresses or concerns about work)

## 3. Emotional health

Emotional state and history of mental illness (e.g., depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder)

Causes of recent and long-term stress

Social network: individual, family, organizational

Religious affiliation and spiritual beliefs

# Proposed Domains for Extended Social History

## 4. Perception of health care

- Life goals and priorities; ranging of health among other life priorities
- Personal sense of health or fears regarding health care
- Perceived or desired role for health care providers
- Perceptions of medication and medical technology
- Positive or negative health care experiences
- Alternative care practices
- Advance directives

## 5. Health-related behaviors

- Sense of healthy or unhealthy behaviors
- Facilitators to health promotion
- Diet and exercise habits
- Facilitators or barriers to medication adherence
- Tobacco, alcohol, drug use habits
- Safety precautions: seatbelts, helmets, firearms, street violence

## 6. Access to and utilization of health care

- Health insurance status
- Medication access and affordability
- Health literacy and numeracy (may be ascertained with specific tools such as “The Newest Vital Sign”)
- Barriers to making appointments (e.g., child care, work allowance, affordability of copayment, transportation)

