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### The Lived Experience of Older Adults Desiring to Age in Place

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# The Lived Experience of Older Adults Desiring to Age in Place

Sarah Dean, OTD/S

Faculty Mentor: Teresa Plummer PhD, OTR/L, ATP, CEAS, CAPS

Expert Mentor: Gretchen Funk MSW, Chief Program Officer



## AGENCY

FiftyForward is the leading resource for adults 50+ in Middle Tennessee who seek to live longer, more fulfilling lives. They are the premier provider of innovative programs and services for older adults and their families through a powerful leadership team of staff, volunteers, and community partners.

Mission and Vision: "To assure that our customers through interaction and participation in our centers and programs access needed services, remain active and involved, and experience the highest quality of life."

## AGENCY NEEDS

### GAP AREAS:

- Limited information available from FiftyForward participants about their personal experience with/perspective on aging in place
- Limited resources available regarding home safety and aging in place for FiftyForward participants
- Limited evidence-based home safety solutions for FiftyForward participants
- No occupational therapy perspective present within aging in place program

### PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- Interview FiftyForward participants to learn about their lived experience with aging in place
- Create a resource guide to provide evidence-based home safety tips/resources to facilitate safer aging in place and an OT perspective

## Barriers to Aging in Place



## Facilitators to Aging in Place



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Thank you to my faculty mentor, Dr. Teresa Plummer, for her guidance, encouragement, and insights in helping me to shape this project
- Thank you to my expert mentor, Gretchen Funk, for her support and dedication to the completion of this project
- Thank you to all the centers at FiftyForward for working with me and for their assistance in gathering information pertinent to completing this project
- Thank you to my family and friends for their encouragement and support

## GOALS

- To understand the lived experience of older adults desiring to age in place, build rapport, and provide FiftyForward with valuable information directly from their participants
- To research the importance of a safe home environment for older adults to effectively and safely age in place
- To provide evidence-based solutions and an OT perspective regarding home safety tips and aging in place
- To analyze data via coding and disseminate findings to FiftyForward's faculty and staff with potential future programming ideas
- To enhance professional communication and collaboration skills
- To gain further knowledge regarding choosing the best evidence-based home safety checklists
- To gain extensive experience mentoring a research team

## OUTCOMES

- Interview questions to discuss the lived experience of aging in place with FiftyForward participants
- Resource guide with home safety tips and middle TN resources to facilitate safer aging in place for older adults attending FiftyForward
- Organized list of codes determined from interview sessions with FiftyForward participants
- Presentation to disseminate findings to FiftyForward faculty and staff
- Topic suggestions for future programming or capstone projects at FiftyForward
- Developed professional skills in leadership, communication, organization, research, and mentorship
- Additional projects: second-year OTD student research, interprofessional event regarding home modification, light board presentation training