

1. Client Situation & Holistic Assessment Concerns

Alice Lightfoot is a 76-year-old Indigenous woman with advanced multimorbidity: chronic kidney disease requiring thrice-weekly outpatient hemodialysis, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and type 2 diabetes mellitus. She lives alone, is financially strained despite Medicare and Medicaid, and is taking at least 15 medications daily. She recently missed a dialysis session due to transportation barriers, is unable to reliably get to the grocery store, has tried walking but is quickly exhausted, and reports feeling emotionally exhausted and depressed.

Holistically, several assessment areas are concerning. Physically, her multiple chronic conditions combined with dialysis place her at high risk for frailty, anemia, electrolyte abnormalities, volume overload, falls, and hospitalization. Her quick fatigue when walking suggests deconditioning, possible anemia, cardiovascular compromise, or poorly controlled volume status. Polypharmacy (15+ medications) raises red flags for adverse drug events, drug–drug interactions, nonadherence, and inappropriate dosing in the setting of CKD. Given limited food access, there is also a serious concern for malnutrition, hypoglycemia (if on glucose-lowering agents without adequate nutrition), and overall poor disease control.

Psychosocially, she lives alone with limited transportation and financial resources, which creates isolation, dependence on others for basic needs, and difficulty accessing appointments and food. Her statement that she feels overwhelmed and depressed suggests possible major depressive disorder or adjustment disorder; this affects her motivation and capacity for self-management. As an Indigenous elder, she is also part of a population that faces historical trauma, systemic racism, and persistent health disparities—these factors can influence trust in the health care system, willingness to seek help, and access to culturally safe care. Spiritually and culturally, we don't yet know what role tradition, family, community, or spirituality play in her coping; that's an important gap in holistic assessment.

Overall, the most concerning holistic issues are: transportation barriers affecting life-sustaining dialysis, food insecurity and risk of malnutrition, polypharmacy in CKD, functional decline and fatigue, untreated or undertreated depression, social isolation, and structural inequities related to her Indigenous identity and low socioeconomic status.

2. Applying the 5M Framework to Alice

Matters Most

For Alice, “what matters most” likely includes staying independent in her home, maintaining dignity, and not being a burden to others while still getting the care she needs. She is exhausted and overwhelmed, so reducing the daily “burden of treatment” (appointments, meds, logistics) is critical. As her NP, I would explicitly ask: