Environment and related assistive devices in toilet and bathroom

In order to ensure safety during toileting
The environment and the facilities should match the ability of the elder and appropriate assistive devices should be used
This will facilitate self care and enhance safety
A raised toilet seat can help the elder to stand up from toilet more easily
When installing a raised toilet seat
the brackets should be adjusted to fit the toilet well
and it must be installed securely before use
Various kinds of raised toilet seats are available commercially
Consult an occupational therapist before making the decision to use such devices
Another assistive device is the toilet frame
They provide armrests on both sides that can be held by the elder when standing up or sitting down
Make sure there is adequate space beside the toilet for placing the frame before purchase
It must be installed securely on the toilet before use
Install handrails beside the toilet so that the elder can hold and maintain balance when standing up or sitting down on the toilet
"There are two kinds of handrails, fixed and foldable"
Choose according to the ability of the elder and match with the living environment
The handrail should be installed with anchor bolts by a qualified technician
For elders with physical weakness
a mobile commode on castors is more desirable
carers can push the elder seated on the mobile commode to the toilet or bathroom
When using the mobile commode on castors be sure to remove obstacles "e.g. armrests, footrests"
it should be placed close to the bed against the wall
The brakes must be locked before helping the elder to transfer to the commode
For techniques in transferring the elder from bed to commode
Please refer to part 2 of this video
After he is properly seated
you can put the armrests and footrests back into positions and release the brakes.

Before pushing the commode, put the arms of the elder inside the armrests to avoid injury.

There are various kinds of commercially available assistive devices for usage in the toilet, "with different height, dimensions and design".

Bathing is an important part of personal hygiene. But if the floor of bathroom is wet or if the elder has certain risky behaviours or habits, there is risk of fall in the bathroom.

Please note the following common mistakes:

For example:
- Using a towel rail instead of a proper handrail for support in standing up.
- The towel rail may get loosened easily and may come off when the elder is holding it.
- "As a result, the elder would lose his balance."
- Another problem is trip and fall when getting in and out of the bath tub.
- "If some elders like to sit on a stool when bathing, but the stool is too low and it is difficult to get up with a risk of falling backwards."

The above situations can all cause injury and affect the self care ability of the elder.

To address the above problems, elders and carers can use the following methods and assistive devices to enhance safety during bathing:

Bathrooms are usually fitted with shower cubicles or bath tubs. For both types, the handrail is a useful assistive device.

It can provide a reliable hold for support during transfer and ensure safety when bathing.

It should be installed properly according to the ability of the elder and matched with the living environment.

Handrails should be installed with anchor bolts by a qualified technician.

A non-slip mat can be used in the bath tub or shower cubicle.
to prevent slip and fall during bathing
A bathboard can be used on the bath tub
It allows the elder with poor balance to sit down when bathing
It is also safe for the elder to get in
and out of the bath tub while sitting
and reduce the risk of slip and fall
Please note that the brackets of the bathboard should be adjusted
to fit on the bath tub securely before use
The length of bathboard should match with the width of the bath tub
Regular check is important to avoid loosening of bathboard
In the shower cubicles
some elders like to sit on a small stool to bathe
but the stool is too low for them to get up
and there is a risk of falling backward
So it is not suitable
It is better to use a shower chair in the shower cubicle
and enable elders with poor balance to
"sit down when bathing, to prevent slip and fall"
The height of the shower chair should fit the body build of the elder
Shower chairs do not require installation
but it is necessary to ensure it is placed securely
in the shower cubicle before use
Various kinds of bathboards and shower chairs are available commercially
Consult an occupational therapist before purchase to ensure correct
application
All assistive devices should be checked and maintained regularly