

# Assessing Barriers to Housing and Health Dialogue Between Service Organizations and Healthcare Providers

University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Cincinnati, OH in collaboration with People Working Cooperatively, Cincinnati OH  
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## Introduction

People Working Cooperatively (PWC) is a nonprofit organization that organizes and executes home repair services for low income homeowners in the Greater Cincinnati area. Their mission is to provide safe and secure homes for people who cannot afford or perform maintenance and repair services.

### Housing and Health

- Poor housing quality is detrimental to overall health.
- Environment-related falls are among the top five causes of fatal and non-fatal injuries in the geriatric population.
- Evaluating and ameliorating the home environment can help prevent fall-related injuries and positively influence health outcomes.
- Dialogue between social services and healthcare organizations has been limited.

### Objective

To identify the communication barriers that exist between healthcare and social service agencies and facilitate a collaborative discussion between the two sectors to find potential avenues for intervention.

## Methods

### Phase I. Interviews

Healthcare professionals were interviewed based on their proximity to our target patient population and level of knowledge regarding social service resources. Interviews were performed in two parts:

- Standardized, non-biased data collection
- Qualitative open discussion about the resources available to physicians within the UC Health system to positively affect the home environment of patients.

### Phase II. Grand Rounds Discussion

A grand rounds panel-type discussion was held in coordination with the Center for Clinical and Translational Science and Training (CCTST) on the subject of "Fall Prevention and Home Intervention in the Geriatric Population". The panel consisted of the following:

Aaron Grant	People Working Cooperatively
Dr. Jeffrey Schlaudecker	Department of Geriatrics, UCMC
Jamie Tu	Director of Care Coordination, UCMC

Attendance included members from UC Nursing Trauma Prevention, the UCMC Care Coordination Department, and Cincinnati Fire, among others.

## Results

### PHASE I

Lack of collaboration due to:

- Inadequate communication
- Absence of physician awareness of possible resources
- Inadequate physician time
- Financial restraints

Most important risk factors associated with falls include:

- Chronic health conditions
- Age-related degeneration in balance and coordination
- Physical fitness
- Patient investment

Working models:

- Surgeons refer directly to social worker
- "Health leader" model

### PHASE II

- Chose to focus on falls in the geriatric population.
- Organized Grand Rounds session through CCTST
- Panel Focused on:
  - Defining the problem
  - Identifying the barriers
  - Providing solutions and next steps

## Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to facilitate an interdisciplinary discussion between healthcare and social service agencies regarding housing and health outcomes, while addressing barriers of communication between these two sectors. Through our interviews with key informants and our Grand Rounds session, we were able to identify education initiatives, environmental interventions, and modifications to EMR and hospital protocols as potential next-steps for addressing the problem of falls among elderly patients. We hope that the discussion within UCMC and between UCMC and community organizations such as PWC will continue, such that a multifactorial system is put into place to give patients the knowledge, support, and resources they need to avoid injury and live healthier lives.

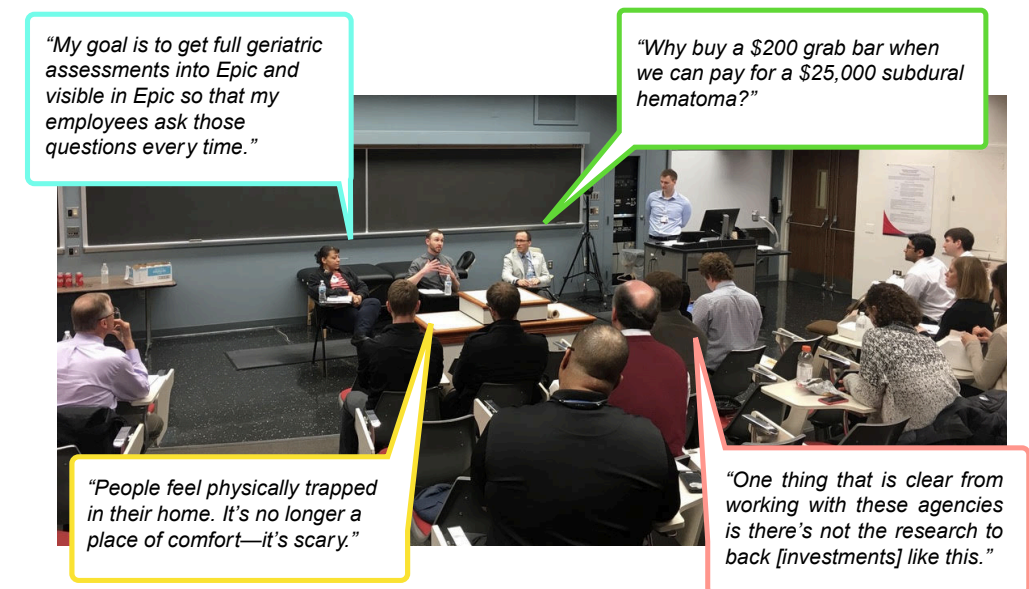


Figure A: Grand Rounds session on "Fall Prevention and Home Intervention in the Geriatric Population" with key quotes highlighted