

Housing as Health: Fall Prevention in Cincinnati



LC4, in partnership with People Working Cooperatively, has identified the potential impact of falls in Cincinnati and the relationship between falls and housing.

FALLS ARE COMMON AND HIGH-RISK

More than

1 out of 4

adults over the age of 65 have at least one fall **every year** in Ohio.^{1,2} Falls are the leading cause of **injury-related deaths** in this population, and the rates are rising.^{1,2}

17%

of Hamilton County's population is aged 65 years or older, and therefore at high fall risk.³

FALLS ARE COSTLY



In 2020, the total healthcare cost associated with non-fatal falls in older adults was

\$80 billion

Most of this burden was **paid by Medicare**.⁴

FALLS ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO HOUSING

The CDC lists

home hazards

among the major risk factors for falls.²



What's in the way of fixing these issues in our community?

- **High cost** of implementing extensive home interventions
 - Socioeconomic status is correlated with fall risks.⁵ Almost ¼ of Cincinnati residents fall under the poverty line.³
- **Lack of awareness** among residents of the potential risks in their own homes
- **Barriers to accessing healthcare** and addressing housing from the perspective of preventative healthcare
 - These barriers to care may include a lack of reliable transportation, high healthcare costs, and inadequate time or resources to address fall risks during routine encounters.

What changes are we recommending?

PWC teaches courses in fall prevention to Cincinnati residents through **Stepping On**, a validated program to mitigate fall risk. Through appreciative inquiries, our LC learned the impact the Stepping On program has made in the community, empowering patients to maintain their independence.

We analyzed objective mobility scores and subjective outcomes from program participants to demonstrate the impact of these programs. We found that the program **reduced falls**, **improved functional strength**, and **improved confidence** among participants.

We propose that the City of Cincinnati allocate dedicated funding to support free and easily accessible fall prevention classes such as Stepping On for its residents. Importantly, these programs would be most impactful if offered close to home, such as at local recreation centers.



References

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2. Older Adult Falls Data. cdc.gov. Published October 28, 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/falls/data-research/index.html#cdc_data_surveillance_section_3-deaths-from-older-adult-falls
3. U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Hamilton County, OH <<http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US39061-hamilton-county-oh/>>
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