

Interdisciplinary Team Meeting: A simulated geriatric care team meeting for discharge planning with the Cooper Family (2021)

Team Member Input on Ms. Cooper

Physical Therapist

Reports rehab status and prognosis, makes recommendations for physical requirements of residential environment

The PT is aware that Mrs. Cooper fell at home at least twice. The last time she fractured her hip. What isn't known are the causes for the falls. It could be polypharmacy or could be the influence of other intrinsic risk factors such as muscle weakness or a visual deficit. In order to make recommendations for it is important to determine the cause(s) of these falls. Mr. Cooper was unable to lift and assist her and had to call for help.

Mrs. Cooper was seen by you at the in-patient rehabilitation hospital to determine fall risk. You administered the Berg Balance Scale a test validated to identify older adults at risk for falls. In addition you tested Mrs. Cooper's strength, sensation, range of motion, and flexibility, all intrinsic variables known to contribute to fall risk. You also had Mrs. Cooper complete a questionnaire (The Activities Specific Balance Confidence Scale (ABC) to determine her level of confidence completing routine activities. Testing revealed: lower extremity sensory loss, lower extremity weakness a score of 42 on the Berg Balance Scale indicating a moderate level of fall risk and a score of 48 on the ABC. At a follow-up appointment you had Mrs. Cooper complete the Dual Task Timed Up and Go (TUG) to determine whether Mrs. Cooper's falls were due to an inability to divide attention between two tasks such as walking and carrying a cup of water. Mrs. Cooper scored very poorly on the task as it took her almost 30 seconds to complete the test, where normally it should have taken about 10 seconds. This indicates that Mrs. Cooper is unable to walk safely while performing even a simple secondary task. Mr. Cooper, due to his frail condition, is unable to assist with lifting or transferring Mrs. Cooper.

Given the findings of the examination, inability for Mr. Cooper to assist with lift and transfer, and home safety assessment you recommend that Mrs. Cooper should not be discharged to home, but would get the therapy and attention she needs in a safe environment such as in an assisted living facility.