

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

Team Member Input on Ms. Cooper

Physician

Gives prognosis and comments

Her recent hip fracture has taken a lot out of Mrs. Cooper and she has declined quite a bit. In your opinion, Mrs. Cooper has now progressed from MCI to early stage Alzheimer's disease dementia, which means frequent recent memory loss, particularly of recent conversations and events; repeated questions, some problems expressing and understanding language. Mild coordination problems: writing and using objects becomes difficult. Depression and apathy can occur, accompanied by mood swings. She needs reminders for daily activities.

The next or middle stage leads to pervasive and persistent memory loss, including forgetfulness about personal history and inability to recognize friends and family. Mobility and coordination are affected by slowness, rigidity, and tremors. Mrs. Cooper is likely to progress to this stage in the next two years given her current rate of decline. She will need structure, reminders, and assistance with the activities of daily living.

Given the progressive nature of the disease and the frail condition of husband/primary caregiver Mr. Cooper, you advise more help (either assisted living or paid help in the home). A facility has a couple of "levels of care" (e.g. a CCRC) might be a good option for the couple as she is likely to be more impaired and need more help than he does. Such a facility might allow them not to be separated in the years to come.