

P&S 201 Assignment- Service Learning, Social Determinants of Health and Advocacy

Class- Physician and Society 201

Assignment purpose and overview

As part of your identity as a physician, society will look to you for leadership and advocacy on health care issues.

The AAMC, the AMA and the American Academy of Family Physicians have all included the expectation that trainees and physicians engage in advocacy for patients as part of professionalism. It is not enough to know about SDOH or experience them in Service learning. The ultimate objective is how knowledge and experience can be used to improve the health of patients and communities.

As part of developing your professional identity, it is important to learn the basics of advocacy. Some of you will choose to make it an important component of your career but everyone should understand key elements of the process.

In this assignment, you will work with your LC group and use your service-learning work last year as the foundation for learning about advocacy.

CMA six-point frame to physician advocacy- modified for this assignment

Step one- Clearly identify the topic that you are educating about or advocating for	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community partner• Social determinant of health• Population impacted• The specific challenge to health and wellbeing.• You may not be able to address all challenges.
Step two- build a coalition or working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your LC• Possibility your community partner
Step three-set your objective who do you want to connect with and what do you want to explain or change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who – City Council• What – your topic or challenge• How – Your LC decides, e.g., ask for more funding, greater visibility, inclusion in an ongoing project or proposal.
Step Four - Strategy and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Webpage• Presentation to City Hall• Your LC can consider others that you would like to pursue
Step Five- How will you identify yourself/your group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UCCOM M2 students• By your LC group• By your community partner
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who did you effectively reach out to?• How many people heard your message?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tools did you create to continue your message? • What changed, how did your advocacy advance your cause.?
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Based on your M1 service-learning work, you have a broad perspective on community non-profits that address SDOH in Greater Cincinnati. As future physicians, your perspective is particularly valuable because you are the doctors who will work to remedy these health disparity challenges.

In 2021 the M2 P&S class sent a cover letter with a link to their class assignment website to the Governor's office. As a result, they were invited to City Hall to discuss advocacy with the Vice Mayor of Cincinnati and the Cincinnati Commissioner of Public Health.

In 2022 the M2 P&S class created an advocacy website that was sent to the Vice Mayor of Cincinnati and to City council

In 2023 the M2 class website was sent to Governor DeWine's task force and five LCs presented their advocacy campaign to Cincinnati City Councilmember Reggie Harris.

Your Assignment details

Your advocacy project will be built on the foundation of the service-learning work that you did during your M1 year.

Specifically, you will meet with your LC, review your M1 service-learning Key findings reports and poster,

<https://bit.ly/44REse4> and craft your advocacy work on the CMA framework outlined above.

Assignment part one 8/3/22 9-10:20 am

In your LC group breakout

1. Review your LC Key Findings report from last Spring and Governor DeWine's SDOH report <https://files.constantcontact.com/c531ef7f701/da3e86b5-73e8-428b-b315-9b665e18e38e.pdf> Refresh your memory on your Community Partner, the clients they serve, pertinent aspects of the community and the social determinant of Health that you focused on.
2. Review the website that the 2022-23 M2 class created for guidance <https://med.uc.edu/education/medical-student-education/office-of-medical-education/service-learning/physician-and-society-community-advocacy-projects>
3. Optional you can watch 2021 M2s advocate for their community partner before the Vice Mayor and Health Commissioner of Cincinnati <https://archive.org/details/14210413-lps>
4. Divide your LC into three subgroups of approximately 4 people each
Consider having each subgroup take responsibility for one of the following three questions

Use these three questions to address step one of the CMA framework:

A What was the mission of your community partner? Which SDOH did they address? How do they address it? did COVID impact execution of that work? How is their work supported (partnerships, financially etc.)

The mission of Over the Rhine Community Housing (OTRCH) is to provide stable housing for individuals experiencing chronic housing insecurity in the Over the Rhine neighborhood of Cincinnati.

OTR Community Housing is most focused on addressing the social determinant of housing instability. By purchasing, renovating, and leasing apartments at reduced rates, as well as advocating for the construction of new affordable units, OTRCH is relieving the burden of housing instability for the members of OTR experiencing homelessness. Housing as a SDOH is intimately related to other issues. Many of the residents in OTRCH units (particularly those in their harm reduction shelters) also experience mental health and substance abuse issues, compounding their vulnerability. Furthermore, having a permanent address is a prerequisite for many social services that are otherwise inaccessible to those in need of them most.

One of the many ways that OTRCH addresses housing instability is by advocating for those who do not have access to affordable housing. Many people who are served by OTRCH suffer from biases that come with substance use, homelessness, and living in unstable conditions. OTRCH seeks to create a welcoming environment for its residents to live in stable housing situations without the fear of bias.

Thankfully, OTRCH was not severely affected by the COVID pandemic. However, the Cincinnati community was greatly affected, and the rates of homelessness increased during this time. Some estimates put the increase at 30% (1). OTRCH ventures, such as the Jimmy Heath House, functioned normally throughout the initial epidemic, but were unable to meet the growing need for safe and stable housing. They had to implement the use of masks inside their buildings. However, they continued to provide housing for those in need.

OTRCH is a nonprofit charity group supported through several sources. Their main source of income is from the small amount of monthly rent charged to residents as well as government subsidies for rent. The organization applies for many grants through the department of housing and urban development (HUD), the State of Ohio, and the city of Cincinnati. The organization's latest project, a housing first apartment building, was funded mainly through a HUD grant. The group is also supported by a private downtown Cincinnati development corporation, 3CDC, which aims to provide more affordable housing as they move to develop properties downtown. The organization also has donors from the community.

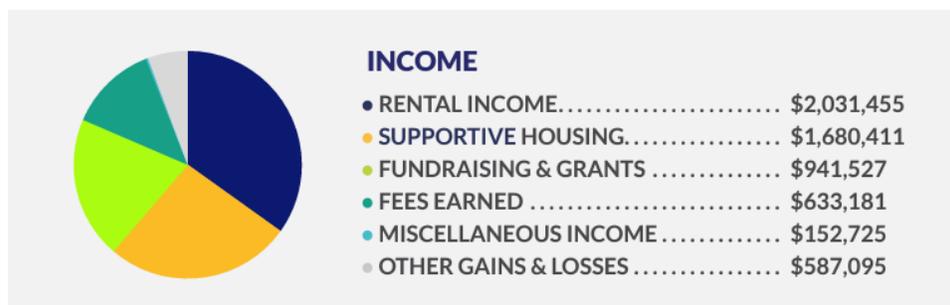


Figure 1: 2021 OTRCH Financial Income Report

1. **The Current State of Homelessness in Cincinnati. Strategies to End Homelessness (2021, October 30).** Retrieved October 16, 2021, from <https://www.strategiestoendhomelessness.org/the->

current-state-of-homelessness-in-Cincinnati/

B How does the SDOH that your community partner addresses impact the Cincinnati community in general and their clients specifically? How do they make Cincinnati better? Are there any new or increased needs as a result of post COVID or as a result of current socio-economic pressures?

The social determinant of health, specifically housing, plays a critical role in the well-being of individuals and communities. Over-the-Rhine Community Housing (OTRCH) addresses housing needs in Cincinnati, and its impact is significant in several ways:

1. **Stable Housing and Health Outcomes:** Access to stable and affordable housing directly influences health outcomes. When individuals and families have secure housing, they are more likely to experience improved physical and mental health, reduced stress, and better access to healthcare resources.
2. **Reduced Homelessness:** OTRCH's efforts in providing housing solutions help reduce homelessness in Cincinnati. By offering safe and supportive housing options, they contribute to a decrease in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the community.
3. **Economic Empowerment:** Affordable housing initiatives by OTRCH allow families to allocate resources toward other essential needs, such as education, healthcare, and nutritious food. This, in turn, promotes economic stability and empowers individuals to improve their overall quality of life.
4. **Client-Specific Impact:** For their clients, OTRCH provides not only housing but also supportive services and resources to help individuals and families thrive. This comprehensive approach addresses the root causes of homelessness and housing instability, leading to more successful outcomes for their clients.

COVID-19 and current socio-economic pressures have intensified the need for housing support in Cincinnati:

1. **Economic Challenges:** The pandemic has caused financial hardships for many individuals and families, making it even more challenging for them to afford stable housing. This has increased demand for affordable housing options.
2. **Mental Health Strain:** COVID-19 has resulted in heightened stress and mental health challenges for individuals. Secure housing can act as a stabilizing factor and promote overall mental well-being.
3. **Homelessness Prevention:** The pandemic may have led to a surge in individuals at risk of homelessness due to job losses or economic insecurity. Preventing homelessness and providing safe housing options have become even more crucial during this time.
4. **Eviction Prevention:** Eviction moratoriums during the pandemic have protected many renters, but there could be an increased need for support in preventing evictions as these protections lift.

In summary, Over-the-Rhine Community Housing positively impacts the Cincinnati community by providing stable housing, reducing homelessness, empowering individuals economically, and contributing to community revitalization. Post-COVID and current socio-economic pressures have likely increased the need for affordable housing, homelessness prevention, and eviction support in the region, making OTRCH's work more essential than ever in making Cincinnati a better place to live for its residents.

C. How might students and physicians advocate to Cincinnati city government on behalf of the needs of your partners and their community? How can the work of your community partner be better supported and expanded? (Educating city officials on the need and the value is part of advocacy) What needs particularly require support at this time?

To advocate for the housing needs of the Cincinnati community and support Over-the-Rhine Community Housing:

1. Research and gather data on housing conditions.
2. Partner with local organizations and form coalitions.
3. Raise public awareness through campaigns and events. Use various platforms like social media, public events, workshops, and town halls to raise awareness about the housing needs in Cincinnati and the importance of supporting organizations like Over-the-Rhine Community Housing. Educate the public and city officials on the value of stable housing for community well-being.
4. Engage with city officials, present research, and propose policy changes. Request meetings with city council members, the mayor, and other relevant officials to present the research and data you have collected. Make a compelling case for the need for increased funding and policies that support affordable housing initiatives. Highlight the positive impact that housing stability can have on healthcare outcomes, education, and the overall economic growth of the community. Work with city officials to propose and support policies that promote affordable housing development, tenant protections, and homelessness prevention. These policies may include rent control measures, incentives for developers to build affordable housing, and strengthening tenant rights.
5. Mobilize grassroots efforts and community involvement.
6. Support fundraising and donations.
7. Focus on emergency housing, affordable housing, tenant protections, and healthcare-housing partnerships.

At this time, some specific needs that may require support include:

1. Emergency housing and homelessness prevention programs to address immediate housing crises.
2. Initiatives to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families.
3. Support for rehabilitation and renovation of existing housing stock to increase the availability of safe and habitable housing units.
4. Advocating for stronger tenant protections and eviction prevention measures to keep vulnerable populations in stable housing.
5. Promoting partnerships between healthcare providers and housing organizations to address the social determinants of health and improve health outcomes in the community.
6. Educating healthcare providers on how to support their patients experiencing housing insecurity.

5. Please see the resources below to stimulate thought on each question. Part of the assignment is to search for other resources that may be even more relevant to your specific Community partner.

Five topics for LC 9:

- Question A
 - How has affordable housing in the Cincinnati area been affected post COVID?
 - How has gentrification impacted the availability of affordable housing to those experiencing homelessness?
 - What are the comorbidity rates of homelessness with other social factors like substance abuse issues and mental health issues?
 - What percentage of OTR's housing units are zoned for single families vs high-density, mixed-use purposes?
 - Are there enough grants and financial support to fund the projects that OTRCH is working towards?
- Question B
 - Evidence based practices to gain housing once lost
 - Evidence based practices to prevent housing from being lost
 - Impact of case management / social work on housing retention and access
 - Impact of COVID-19/public health measures on homelessness
 - Impact of COVID-19 on housing costs
- Question C
 - The impact of the housing bubble/inflation in urban cities on homelessness rates nationally
 - The impact of housing insecurity on continuous access to healthcare
 - The impact of legal action stifling the use of funds made available to housing projects (grants expire despite being available)
 - Importance of city council buy-in on housing project construction success
 - Education of healthcare providers on how to support their patients experiencing housing insecurity

As a group you can organize yourselves however you prefer, however a suggestion is that for the initial assignment work 8/3/23, each LC will divide themselves into three subgroups. Each subgroup will address one of the three questions listed above. **On 8/3 each subgroup will craft a list of five topics to help focus the reflection on their question.**

For example, a subgroup covering question 1 might chose to explore topics such as:

1. The financial and funding impact of current economic conditions
2. The impact of social dislocation on need for services post COVID
3. The impact of increased client demand for service etc.

The five-topic list will guide the subgroup's focus as they research and write their reflection.

Here are a few resources to start the discussion process. Each LC is expected to find research to support their SDOH topic and area of advocacy

Here are a few resources to get you started.

Health Equity

<https://www.aamc.org/search?keys=sdoh>

https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/health-equity/covid-19-health-equity-resources?gclid=Cj0KCQjw852XBhC6ARIsAJsFPN3JVk-0T17HM065WTAsD-pUkvFVvc_c7N88GWgk4aNzGyazWeMg-caAvIzEALw_wcB

Advocacy

<https://www.ama-assn.org/residents-students/medical-school-life/how-get-involved-advocacy-work-medical-studentMinnesota>

https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/health-equity/covid-19-health-equity-resources?gclid=Cj0KCQjw852XBhC6ARIsAJsFPN3JVK-0T17HM065WTAsD-pUkvFVvc_c7N88GWgk4aNzGyazWeMg_-caAvIzEALw_wcB

Cincinnati City Council and Public Policy

[Government - City of Cincinnati \(cincinnati-oh.gov\)](https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov)

Assignment part two 8/25/22 9:50-11:10am Mandatory Session

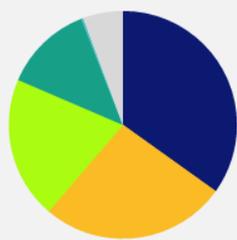
1. Each LC meets again and each of the three subgroups will review their five topics and interim work on responses. Each subgroup will then craft their 300–400-word response collaboratively in the LC Google doc.

Over the Rhine Community Housing's (OTRCH) mission is to provide stable housing for individuals experiencing chronic housing insecurity in the Over the Rhine neighborhood of Cincinnati.

OTRCH is most focused on addressing the social determinant of housing instability. By purchasing, renovating, and leasing existing apartments at reduced rates and supporting the construction of new affordable units, OTRCH seeks to relieve the burden of housing instability in OTR. Housing is intimately related to other important social issues - many of the residents of OTRCH (particularly those in their harm reduction shelters) also experience mental health and substance abuse issues, compounding their vulnerability. Furthermore, having a permanent address is a prerequisite for many social services that are otherwise inaccessible to those in greatest need.

OTRCH addresses housing instability by advocating for those without access to affordable housing. Many people who are served by OTRCH suffer from biases that come with substance use, homelessness, and living in unstable conditions. OTRCH seeks to create a welcoming environment for its residents to live in stable housing situations without the fear of judgement or rejection.

OTRCH is supported through several sources. Their main source of income is from the reduced monthly rent charged to residents as well as government subsidies. The organization applies for many grants through the department of housing and urban development (HUD), the State of Ohio, and the city of Cincinnati. The organization's latest project, a new housing first apartment building, was funded mainly through a HUD grant. The group is also supported by a private downtown Cincinnati development corporation, 3CDC, which aims to provide more affordable housing as they move to develop properties downtown. The organization also has donors from the community.



INCOME

● RENTAL INCOME.....	\$2,031,455
● SUPPORTIVE HOUSING.....	\$1,680,411
● FUNDRAISING & GRANTS	\$941,527
● FEES EARNED	\$633,181
● MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$152,725
● OTHER GAINS & LOSSES	\$587,095

Figure 1: 2021 OTRCH Financial Income Report

Thankfully, OTRCH was not severely affected by the COVID pandemic. However, the Cincinnati community was greatly affected, and the rates of homelessness increased during this time, perhaps as high as 30% (1). OTRCH ventures, such as the Jimmy Heath House, functioned normally throughout the initial epidemic (with the addition of masking) were unable to meet the growing need for safe and stable housing.

Housing instability can manifest in various ways including homelessness, frequent moves, inability to pay rent or mortgage, and substandard or unsafe housing. An inability to access safe, permanent housing has been recognized as a significant social and public health issue, with far-reaching implications for individuals' physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Individuals who struggle to afford housing often have limited access to healthcare due to challenges with cost of healthcare services, leading to decreased utilization of preventive care, and a concomitant increase in utilization of high-cost medical interventions. High stress levels due to housing instability also results in exacerbation of chronic health conditions including hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease.

Cincinnati has a significant affordability gap, with 2021 data showing a deficit of nearly 30,000 affordable units in Hamilton County (3). OTR Community Housing has developed both affordable housing properties as well as supportive housing projects, significantly lowering the burden of housing instability on OTR's vulnerable residents.

OTRCH's commitment to clients encompasses more than housing—it extends to comprehensive support and resources. By addressing the fundamental factors triggering homelessness and housing uncertainty, OTRCH transforms lives. Some of the services offered include assistance accessing physical and mental healthcare, connecting with educational resources, securing employment, and maintaining utilities (4). By offering these services and fostering holistic growth, OTRCH secures triumphs that resonate far beyond four walls, illuminating pathways to brighter, sustainable futures for those they serve.

Addressing these affordable housing needs has been challenging due to national economic circumstances. According to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency's 2024-2025 annual report, rental costs are currently at their highest, excluding 2021, when adjusted for inflation. Moreover, high cost in construction materials has emerged as a major obstacle in developing affordable housing in Cincinnati and statewide (5). The convergence of these economic challenges, coupled with the recent COVID-19 pandemic, has exacerbated preexisting disparities in housing access and stability, further increasing the demand for affordable housing.



Figure 2: Services offered by OTRCH

Furthermore, by providing these essential community services, OTRCH enables individuals and families to free up economic resources to allocate towards education, healthcare, and nutritious food. OTRCH helps its clients to shift their focus from day-to-day stressors to personal goals, empowering people to improve their quality of life. The National Low Income Housing Coalition reports that children who move from a higher to lower poverty neighborhood had a 31% increase likelihood of increased economic prosperity and lowered likelihood of becoming a single parent (6).

Despite the availability of funds through grants and the advantages housing first-initiatives can bring to a community, bureaucratic hurdles and legal challenges have hindered their use. Grants offered for affordable housing projects expire before implementation due to delays or legal disputes regarding where they are built. This highlights the necessity for streamlined regulatory processes and proactive legal frameworks to ensure that funding translates into tangible housing solutions. City council buy-in is crucial for the success of housing projects in Cincinnati. Their support is needed to allocate resources, navigate zoning regulations, and build community consensus. Without city council engagement, housing initiatives might face opposition from local communities, hampering progress and perpetuating the crisis. Decisions regarding where and how affordable housing projects are built should be made through partnerships between community organizations and the City of Cincinnati based on evidence – with the general welfare of all of its citizens in mind.

Students and physicians can arrange meetings with Cincinnati City Council members and local government representatives. They can present data on homelessness rates, housing affordability, and the impact of housing instability on healthcare outcomes specifically in Over-the-Rhine. Sharing personal anecdotes from the community can help humanize the issue.

Housing insecurity in Cincinnati has also taken a toll on healthcare access. The lack of stable housing makes it difficult for individuals and families to maintain consistent healthcare routines. Without a permanent address, scheduling medical appointments, accessing

prescriptions, and receiving follow-up care become challenging. Consequently, individuals experiencing housing insecurity are at a higher risk of developing chronic health issues due to inadequate medical attention. Physicians may support patients by removing system penalization for no-show appointments; policies such as these further inadequate health access for patients (Andermann). This not only affects patient well-being but also places an additional burden on healthcare systems when patients only utilize emergency care for catastrophic health issues. Healthcare-housing partnerships can address health-related aspects of housing insecurity while saving on healthcare costs. Educating healthcare providers on supporting patients facing housing challenges is one path towards a healthier community. Healthcare providers can provide housing justice to patients by providing medical recommendations for housing for patients with disability, documenting social needs of patients, and making effective social work referrals with follow up (2).

In summary, the impact of the housing price inflation in urban areas on national homelessness rates must be addressed locally. Action must be taken to prevent the consequences of legal actions hampering the utilization of available housing project funds. Political support from the city council is crucial for successful housing project construction. Lastly, educating healthcare providers on how they can aid patients experiencing housing insecurity is an important piece of advocating for the well-being of those individuals.

References:

1. The Current State of Homelessness in Cincinnati. Strategies to End Homelessness (2021, October 30). Retrieved October 16, 2021, from <https://www.strategiestoendhomelessness.org/the-current-state-of-homelessness-in-Cincinnati/>
2. Andermann A, Bloch G, Goel R, Brcic V, Salvalaggio G, Twan S, Kendall CE, Ponka D, Pottie K. Caring for patients with lived experience of homelessness. *Can Fam Physician*. 2020 Aug;66(8):563-570. PMID: 32817028; PMCID: PMC7430777.
3. Costello B. New Data: Cincinnati's Affordable Housing Gap Is 19,230 Units. 91.7 WXVU News. Published April 28, 2021. New Data: Cincinnati's Affordable Housing Gap Is 19,230 Units.
4. <https://otrch.org/resident-services/>
5. <https://ohiohome.org/news/documents/2024-25-AnnualPlan.pdf>
6. <https://www.nlihc.org/explore-issues/why-we-care/problem>
7. How investing in housing can save on health care - nhc.org. Accessed August 25, 2023. <https://nhc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/How-Investing-in-Housing-Can-Save-on-Health-Care.pdf>.

2. If there are any questions you would like to consult your community partner about, you may do so in the extra time between 8/25 and the 10/8 assignment due date.

We do not have any questions for our community partner.

You can consult with your community partner for this assignment, but it is not a requirement.

Final Assignment Due date 10/8/23. By 10/8 a 300-400word summary from each of the three subgroups will be combined to form a single LC group document of *900-1200 words with relevant images, tables, and references.*

The completed document must be emailed to Dr. Kelly at lisa.kelly@uc.edu by 11:55pm on 10/8/23

A single group grade will be given.

Timeline Summary

8/3 - LCs review Key Findings report, divide into three subgroups and craft a list of five topics related to their question

8/25- Mandatory virtual session LC subgroups meet again to research and craft their 500-word summary. This allows time and opportunity to contact/consult with community partner if desired between 9/4 and 10/17

10/8- Due Date-Final compilation of three subgroup summaries and submission email to Dr. Kelly lisa.kelly@uc.edu

October-November 2023- Education staff will compile your assignments into a publicly accessible Service-Learning website.

Spring of 2024 –

Assignment to create a 5-minute PowerPoint presentation.
Presentation to Local Legislators and Health policy officials

