



SUCCESS STORY

Client keeps up the fight with help from FastTrack Home



Howard at home

Life has thrown many challenges at Howard, including a diagnosis of COPD. But Howard is a fighter – just like his hero Muhammad Ali, whose posters decorate the walls of his apartment. “God’s not through with me yet,” he said.

Howard almost didn’t have an apartment to come home to after spending 10 days at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center for complications related to his COPD. His landlord was forced to sell the building where Howard lived, and served him an eviction notice while he was in the hospital.

Luckily, a hospital case manager introduced Howard to two COA employees who helped him locate and transition smoothly into a new apartment, with services in place to ensure he would be able to recover there, rather than in a nursing home.

One of those employees – a FastTrack Home care manager – enrolled Howard in FastTrack Home, a program extension of the Elderly Services Program (ESP). Its purpose is to help seniors avoid an all-too-common scenario: an expensive return to the hospital or nursing home stay when they aren’t prepared to care for themselves at home as they recover from an illness or injury.

It alters ESP’s traditional enrollment process, simplifying the screening process, so eligibility determinations can be made quickly in the hospital or nursing home. As a result, in-home services can be set up within 24 to 72 hours of returning home.

With home-delivered meals and laundry assistance set up through FastTrack Home, Howard successfully settled into his new apartment. FastTrack Home services remain in place for 60 days, then clients like Howard undergo a full eligibility assessment for ESP. Howard qualified for ongoing care through ESP and he now gets the home care assistance and non-medical transportation services he needs to remain independent.

Sitting in his sunny new apartment, Howard reflected on his move. He learned after the eviction that his old building was moldy. “It was so bad. The air I was breathing was full of mold,” he said. He speculates the mold contributed to his hospital stay.

He also reflected on the people who have counted him out over the years, such as a doctor who refused to run certain tests because, she bluntly told him, they would be a waste because he wasn’t going to live much longer.

After settling in to his new apartment, Howard got to work to accomplish some shorter-term goals – like being able to walk his entire apartment building hallway – in order to move on to some larger goals. He plans to go back to school to train as a chef and a dietitian. “And I am going to go looking for that doctor, and invite her to my graduation,” he said.

Don’t ever count Howard out of the fight.