



**Accessible Housing:**

**A Human Right**

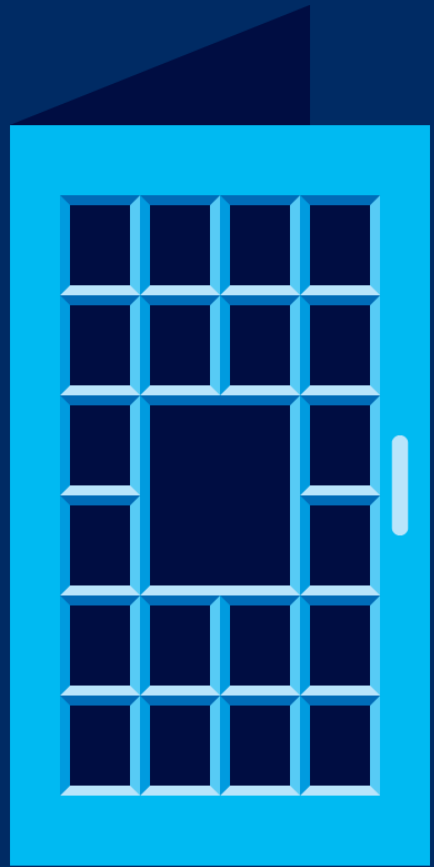
**Inglis Self-Determination Housing of PA**  
**Statewide Housing Conference**

**Presented By**



**In Partnership With**





# Removing Home Repair Barriers for Home Modifications Through Strategic Partnerships

UPMC, Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh, and Omicelo



Presented By **HIGHMARK.**   
WHOLECARE.

In Partnership With



# Today's Panelists



Adrienne Walnoha, MSW  
LSW, NAHB CAPS

Dir. of Community Health Initiatives | Omicelo LLC



Jeremy Carter

Manager of Housing Strategy | UPMC Health Plan



Rebecca Aguilar-Francis

Chief Operating Officer | Rebuilding Together  
Pittsburgh



Pierce Robinson

Manager of Innovation Portfolio | UPMC Health Plan

# Session Goals



Reimagine  
Accessibility  
Exercise



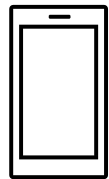
Highlight Our Pilot  
Program



Discuss Ways to  
Partner & Advance  
Accessibility



# Let's Reimagine Accessibility



**Get Your Phone Out!**



Adrienne Walnoha, MSW  
LSW, NAHB CAPS

Dir. of Community Health Initiatives | Omicelo LLC

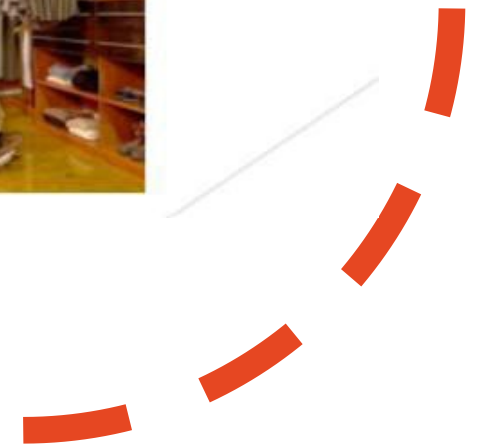
# Thinking Beyond Traditional Home Modifications

## Traditional Features and Modern Takes

- ▶ Even standard modifications can be implemented in a way that is more beautiful.



- ▶ Think more globally about what accessibility means and who are our partners.



# Build the Right **Culture**. Engage the Right **People**.

- Individuals with lived experience at the center
- SDOH lens
- Normalize Accessibility
- Who are natural, community, and industry leaders?
  - Think outside the box
- Why do we want to partner?
  - Partnership is deep.
  - Build relationships beyond the surface.
  - When we are partners, our reputation is their reputation.
- Beyond Competition





# Invest in Your Organization and the Sector

- ✓ Understanding Disability Culture
- ✓ Certifications and Licenses (Best Practice)
- ✓ Environmental, Structural and Personal Safety
- ✓ Innovations in Equipment and Specialized Equipment Installation
- ✓ General Skill Building: respectful, responsive, engaged, relevant work
- ✓ Technology and Tools






Collaborate

Communicate

Advocate

- Be a Collaborative, Active Partner
  - Engage When Policies are Forming and Emerge
  - Participate at the State Level
  - Develop Relationships at All Levels
  - Schedule Regular, Consistent Meetings
  - Shared Vision - Know What is Important to Your Partners
  - Address Issues *Before* They Become Bigger Problems
  - Be Responsive
  - Educate and Advocate
- 



# Metrics and Reporting

- ✓ If we don't measure it, do we know it works?
- ✓ Voice of individuals with Lived Experience
- ✓ Timing is Critical
- ✓ Who, What, Where, When, Why
- ✓ Satisfaction and Quality
- ✓ Using data to drive best practice and funding

# Housing Stabilization Program

*Who we are, how we organized, and what we did*





# How We Got Started



Rebecca Aguilar-Francis

Chief Operating Officer | Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh

# Origins of the Housing Stabilization Program Pilot



## Why look for outside partners?



### Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh often faces:

- Grants with difficult barriers of entrance for the applicant
- Geographic restrictions
- Prohibitive hard cost limits

### UPMC often faces:

- Physical barriers to Home Modifications that health plan benefits cannot cover
- Long home repair waitlists, resulting in people being displaced and aging in other places

### Partnerships allow Rebuilding Together to to:

- Reach a broader client base
- Shared clients often have a larger support system beyond ourselves.
- Layered funding opportunities

### Partnerships allow UPMC to:

- Provide more Home Modifications to people in need
- Prevent members moving into facilities
- Prevents avoidable emergency service utilization
- Save healthcare costs, build partner relationships

## UPMC & RTP Partnership

### Contract Structure

Official contract signed in 2022

\$1,000,000 for Community Health Choices (CHC) customers

- \$150k of this directly to overhead for RTP - \$850k directly to hard costs

Multi-year contract spanning through 2023 with option to extend as needed

#### Requirements:

- Primary applicant or household member must be a UPMC CHC client
- Income qualifications through the CHC program align with our internal requirements
- Health, safety or accessibility needs in the home

# Getting Organized



## **Frequent meetings to talk through the details of the pilot**

Comparing workflows from each agency  
– identify where there needs to be communication overlap

Developed a detailed process doc which included

Selected homeowners from RTP pipeline to test out the pilot



## **Identifying key players on both sides –**

Keeping communication strong with a small group



# Data Collection and Progress Reporting

- Budget tiers →
- Final budget numbers
- Repair needs
- Scopes
- Timelines
- Ongoing monthly meetings
  - Review issues/communication needs
  - Discuss Home Mod coordination
  - Preview pipeline projects

Tier	Funding Up to
1	\$5,000
2	\$7,500
3	\$15,000
4	\$25,000
5	\$40,000



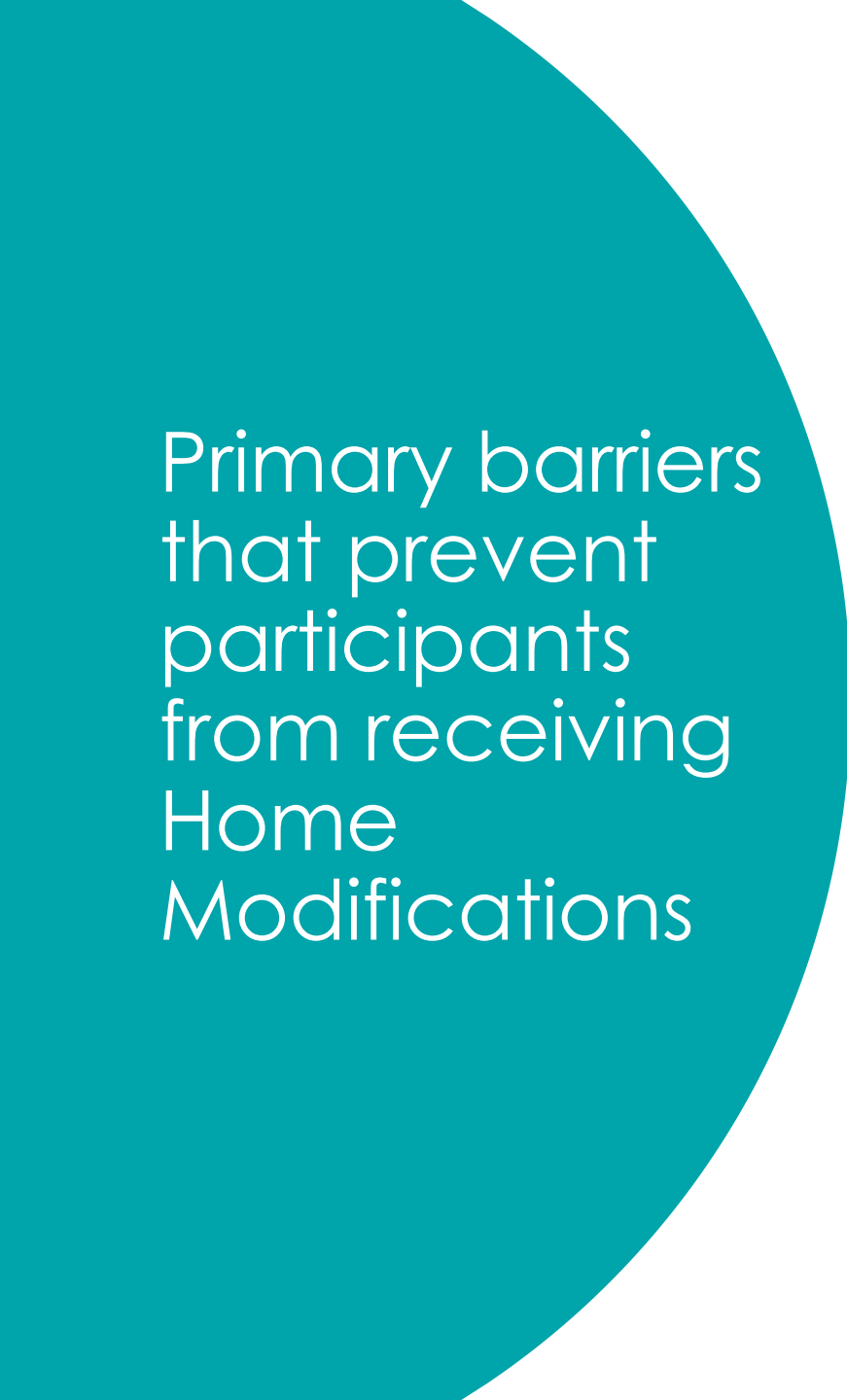
# THE BARRIER:

## Home Modifications Denied Due to the Home's Condition




Pierce Robinson

Manager of Innovation Portfolio | UPMC Health Plan

A large teal circle on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

## Primary barriers that prevent participants from receiving Home Modifications

- General homeowner maintenance issues
    - Rotting wood, structural issues, flooring, roofing
  - Environmental hazards
    - Poor building envelope, HVAC, hoarding/clutter
  - Building code violations
- 
- A decorative red dashed curved line in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Why are these barriers such a significant issue for participants?



The Home Modification benefit has limitations on what issues can be addressed in conjunction with services.

Understanding that we are dealing with one of our more vulnerable populations, it's not always feasible that participants and/or homeowners are able to pay or get the issues addressed in order for their home to be ready for a modification.

## How Often Are These Issues Encountered?

Unfortunately, we experience these issues more often than expected.

Working with an aging population with limited income, it becomes difficult for participants to maintain their residences on their own with their health ailments and this is also compounded by aging housing stock in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Has The 4<sup>th</sup> Oldest Housing Stock In the U.S.



# Home Maintenance & Repairs: A Leading Barrier to Home Mods

**2023**

**>400 Home Mod Denials**

Due to Home Maintenance &  
Repair Issues



# Home Repair Waitlists are LONG



## Allegheny County

Whole Home Repair (combined multiple home repair programs in the County)

**4,203** Eligible but deferred applications

**\$180,000,000** needed to complete work on this list

It will take “many, many years” to complete the list

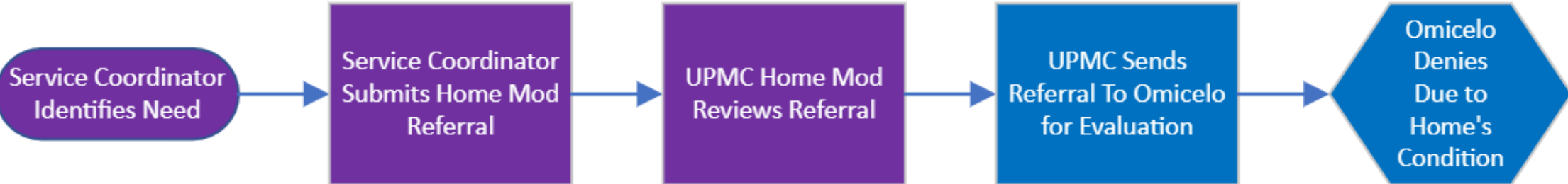


UPMC

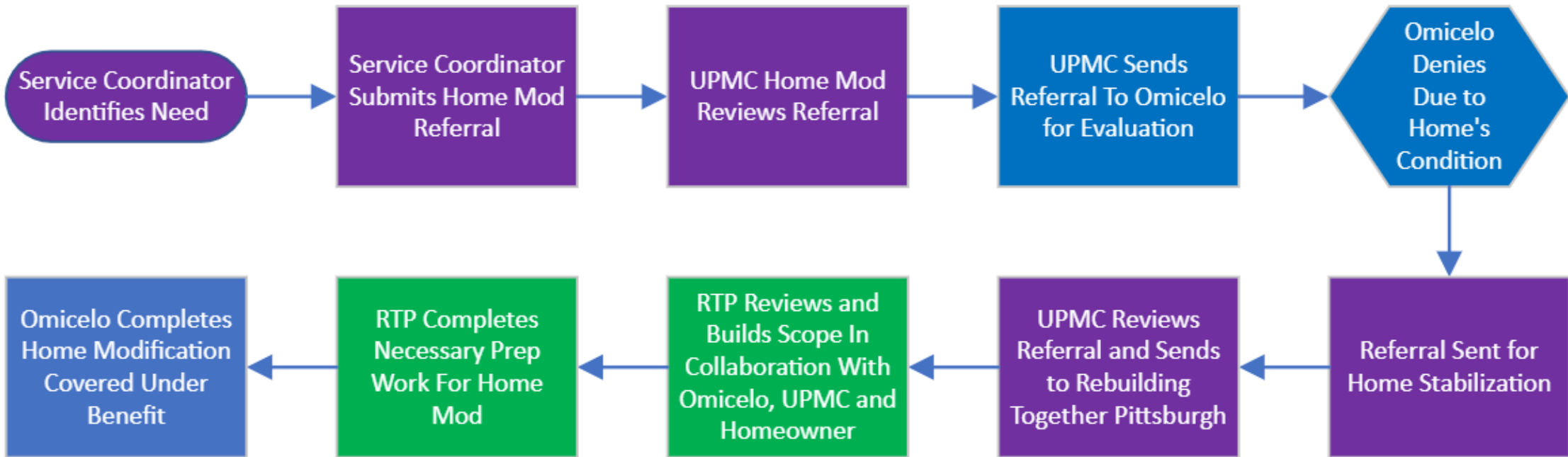
RTP

Omicelo

Typical Process



Pilot Project Process





**THE PROGRAM:**

HOUSING  
STABILIZATION

# PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND GOALS (Change Model)



Jeremy Carter

Manager of Housing Strategy | UPMC Health Plan



What  
Happened  
In Allegheny  
County To  
Trigger This?

SIGNIFICANT denials due to  
home's condition

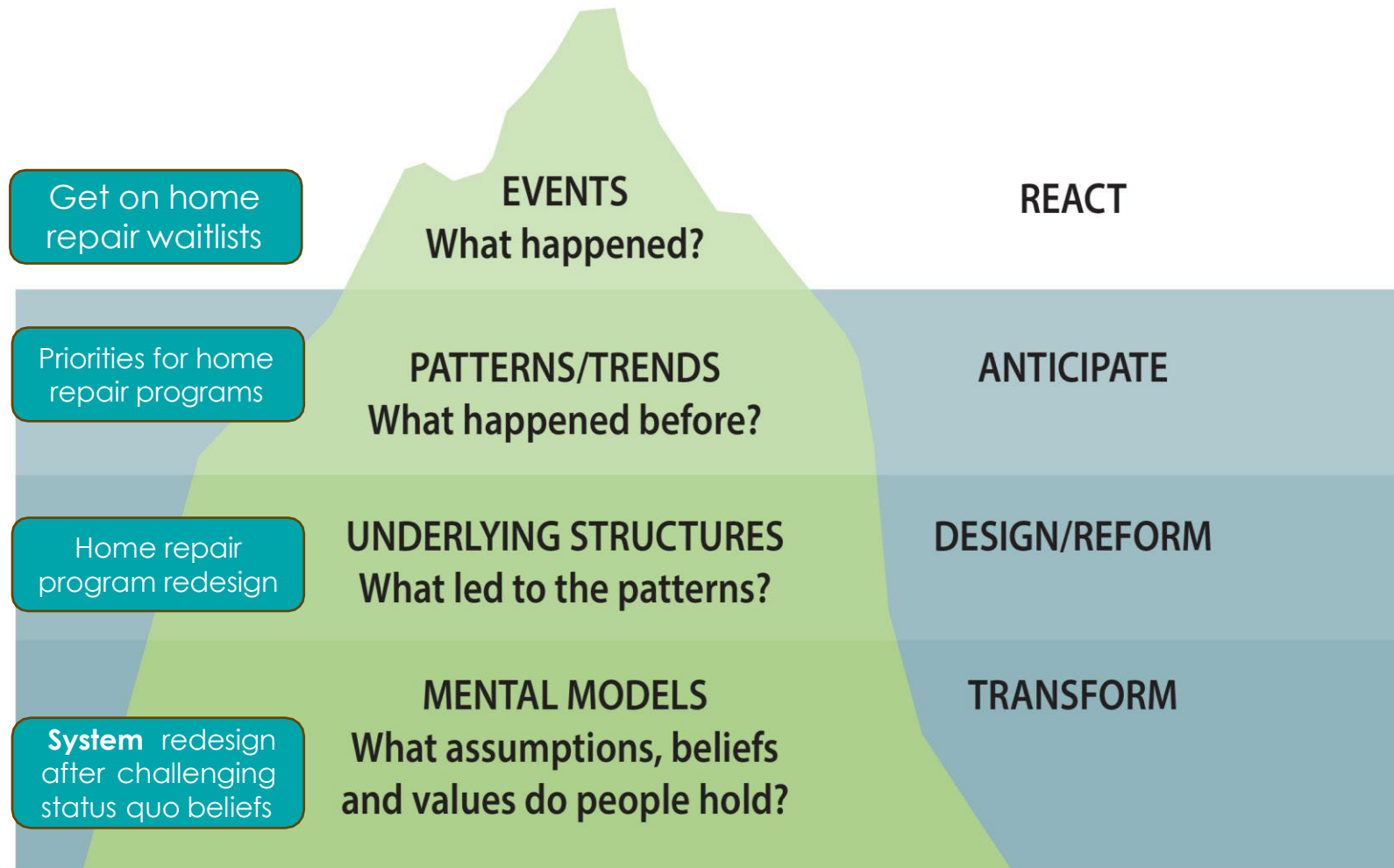
Allegheny County has the 11<sup>th</sup>  
oldest housing stock in PA

29% of houses were built before  
1939

Desire to retain homeownership  
rates in Western PA

# Systems Thinking Model

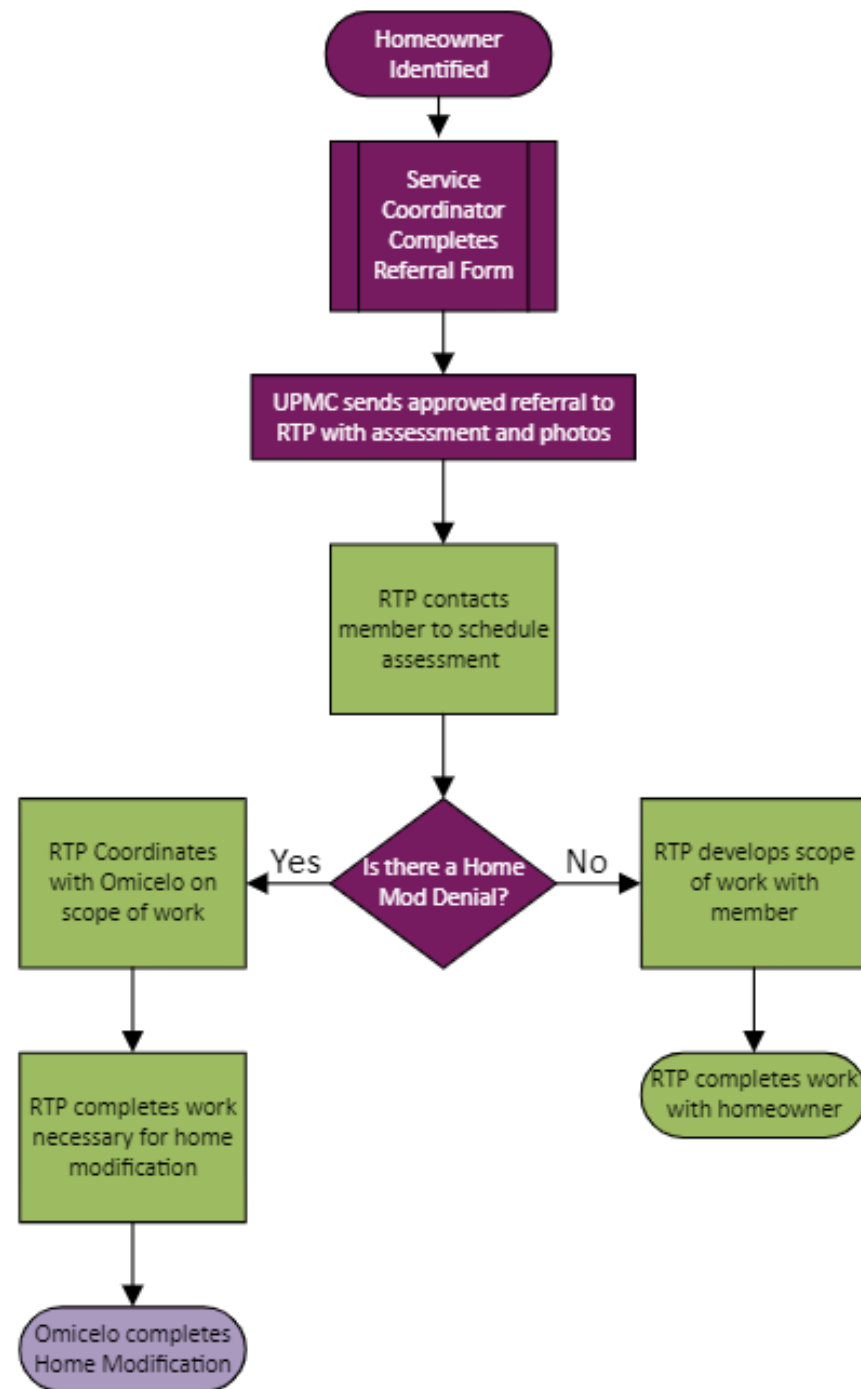
## SYSTEMS THINKING MODEL (GOODMAN, 2002)



# Home Modification - System Change Model



# Home Stabilization Process





## Access to Dialysis

- Pamela depends on an ambulance to transport her to dialysis 3x/week
- Ambulance stopped picking her up due to damage to vehicle caused by the driveway
- Pamela's health declined, and home modification was denied
- Referral to Home Stabilization Program
- RTP repaved the driveway, fixed AC in the house and repaired leaking roof.
- Pamela has not missed her dialysis appointments since the repairs

Before



After





# Independence & Safety

- Norman was worried about his safety and independence after some falls in his bathroom
- Home Modification was denied due to rotting wood and other structural and maintenance issues
- RTP was able to install an accessible step-in shower, new flooring, paint, new door, fixed his window trim so he could keep his stained glass, and repaired his steps to the basement
- Norman feels more safe and independent in his home
- Without the program, he would not be able to get resources needed for home repairs and the long waitlists means Norman would likely go into a facility or senior housing

Before



After



# Independence & Safety (2)

- Norman was worried about his safety and independence after some falls in his bathroom
- Home Modification was denied due to rotting wood and other structural and maintenance issues
- RTP was able to install an accessible step-in shower, new flooring, paint, new door, fixed his window trim so he could keep his stained glass, and repaired his steps to the basement
- Norman feels more safe and independent in his home
- Without the program, he would not be able to get resources needed for home repairs and the long waitlists means Norman would likely go into a facility or senior housing

Before



After







# Data on Housing Stabilization Program

\$1,000,000 initial grant (2022)



**31 Households Served**



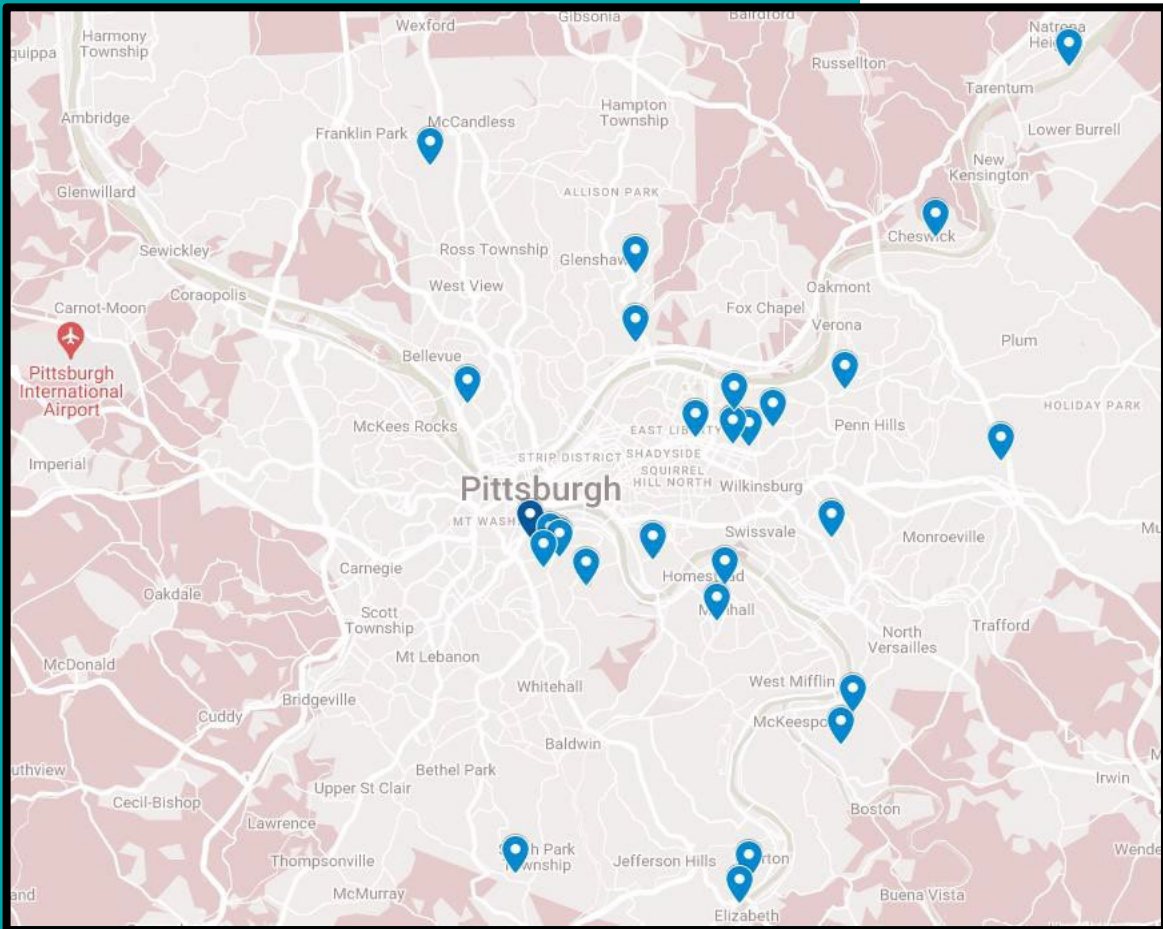
**25 Different Neighborhoods**



**Ave Cost of \$34,018**



**Estimated Savings of \$1,260 PMPM**



	Pre PMPM	Post PMPM	Difference
<b>Total Member Months</b>	192	135	
<b>Total Encounters</b>	11.46	5.70	5.76
<b>Total Unplanned Encounters</b>	0.25	0.10	0.15
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$2,787.38	\$1,527.25	\$1,260.14
<b>Total Unplanned Cost</b>	\$13.44	\$3.38	\$10.06



# Tying It All Together

**What can accessibility  
programs look like in the future?**

THANK YOU  
Questions?



Adrienne Walnoha, MSW  
LSW, NAHB CAPS

Dir. of Community Health Initiatives | Omicelo LLC



Jeremy Carter

Manager of Housing Strategy | UPMC Health Plan



Rebecca Aguilar-Francis

Chief Operating Officer | Rebuilding Together  
Pittsburgh



Pierce Robinson

Manager of Innovation Portfolio | UPMC Health Plan

**Thank you for attending this session! Please take a moment to fill out this survey**  
(Also available in your program book)



**Accessible Housing:**

**A Human Right**