

Tools for the EMPOWER Study

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Scan this QR code to see the full Care Pathway



Scan this QR code to see the full Sustainability Tools One-Pager

Background

My practicum site was CWRU's Prevention Research Center (PRC) where I worked on UH's EMPOWER Study. This clinical trial aims to empower and help patients manage their urinary incontinence (UI) symptoms through Nurse Navigators (NNs) and CeCe, a novel AI chatbot. UI is an understudied yet prevalent condition in women, affecting over 50% of women, often with daily symptoms. Prevalence of UI increases with age with approximately 75% of women over 65 experiencing some form of UI. UI negatively impacts the physical, psychological, and social well-being of those affected.

Population

There were two populations of focus during this project: the system level and individual level of the EMPOWER study. The system level includes UH and EMPOWER leaders. The individual level includes providers, nurses, and other staff treating UI in patients as part of the study.

Learning Objectives

1. Determine project needs for sustainability and UI treatment
2. Apply feedback from preceptor, the PI of the project, NNs, and other members of the EMPOWER team to make deliverables beneficial to the study
3. Understand basic visual accessibility needs and apply them to my deliverables in order to be inclusive

Activities

- Conducted a literature review of care pathways used in other studies to learn what aspects are most important
- Learned and wrote about the vital areas of clinical sustainability
- Gained feedback from EMPOWER team regarding deliverables and project needs
- Researched visual impairments/colorblindness and tools that can be used to increase accessibility for visuals

Deliverables

- Recreated the existing EMPOWER care pathway to be more accessible and user-friendly. This care pathway outlines the treatment process for UI of which can be utilized by providers, nurses, and other staff in order to better treat UI.
- Created a one-pager stressing the importance of sustainability at the system level for the EMPOWER study and provided tools/suggestions that can be implemented in clinic spaces. Also created a generic version that can be implemented in other future studies

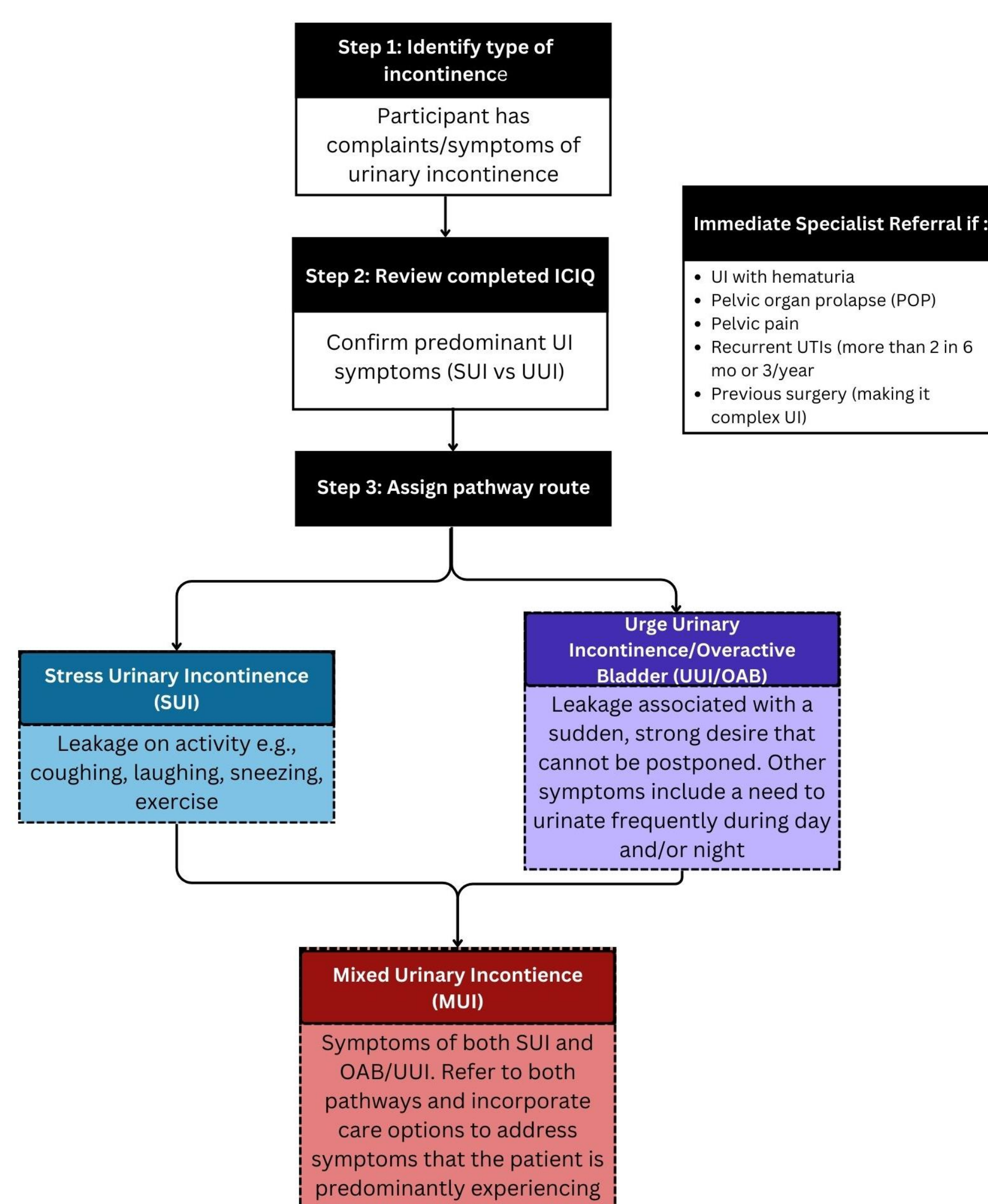


Figure 1---Page One of the Care Pathway: Determining Type of UI

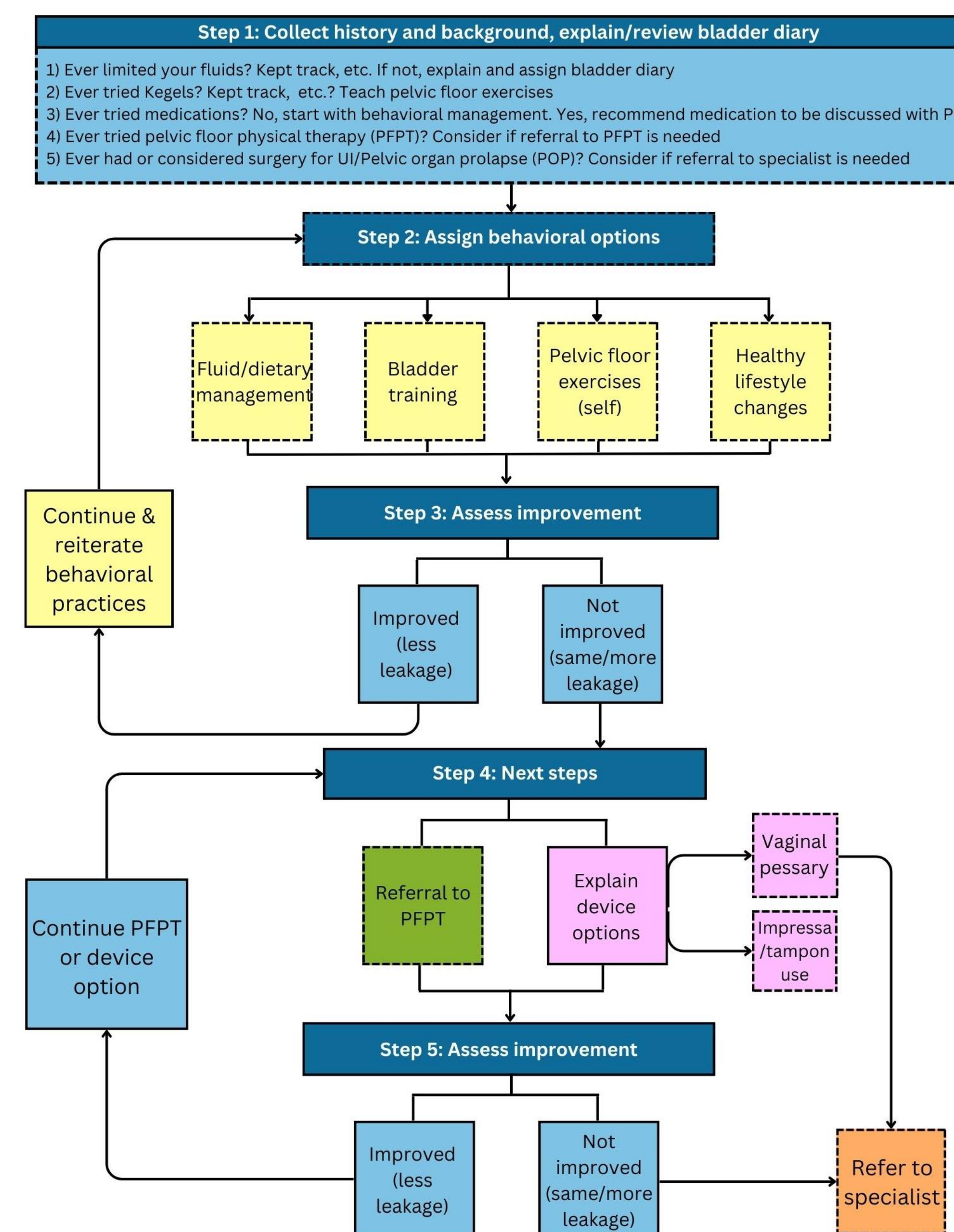


Figure 2---Page Two of the Care Pathway: Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI) Pathway

Lessons Learned

- I learned the importance of communication and feedback when creating something for an organization. Since I do not work in a clinic treating a patient for UI, I cannot assume what methods will work best without consulting with someone who is knowledgeable.
- Creating the care pathway taught me about the importance of and the need for accessibility in important documents. It's easy to make changes to be inclusive to those with visual impairments such as using a colorblindness-friendly color palette.
- I learned that receiving feedback can take time but is vital when creating pieces for an organization.

Public Health Implications

This practicum project aims to improve the recognition and treatment of UI by streamlining care for providers as there is often a disconnect on the treatment of UI due to lack of information on the subject. The care pathway creates an easy-to-use resource for providers and staff to improve quality of UI treatment in PCP and Urology offices. The care pathway has been quite successful for EMPOWER and is currently being used in a grant to further the study which will distribute the pathway to providers and staff at UH and MetroHealth hospitals. This will increase access to information and resources about UI to providers and women across North East Ohio. This will ensure that patients will be asked about their UI symptoms and that adequate treatment options will be pursued, reducing the burden of UI. The one-pager stresses the importance of sustainability for this study which will aid in UI treatment after the study ends. Sustainability will solidify that goals and gains will extend beyond the project. Using these resources can help improve quality of life in patients with UI, will help with recognition of UI in healthcare, and improve outcomes in patients.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Sarah Koopman Gonzalez for her mentorship and support throughout this project. This project ended up being successful and useful for the EMPOWER study and I attribute it to her guidance as well as the feedback from Dr. Adonis Hijaz, Elisar Khawam, Melody Loechler, and Grace Pelfrey. I also want to thank the EMPOWER project and team.

What is clinical sustainability? Why is it important?

Clinical sustainability is maintaining clinical care practices within an organization for a prolonged period. This entails adapting to change and evolving practices due to new information. It is necessary for the EMPOWER project to focus on sustainability to ensure that goals and gains extend beyond the study. Below are some conceptual domains of clinical sustainability that University Hospitals can target as well as understand how these factors impact the study.

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- Engaged Staff & Leadership**
 - Vital to accomplish long term goals, creating a unified vision, improving communication, responding to challenges, and increase clinic performance.
 - Engagement can be fostered by collaborative environments, motivation by the organization to utilize the care pathway/screen for UI, and placing value on the project
 - UH can improve engagement by making staff feel valued/supported through recognition, help them understand the impact of their work, and using concise 2-way communication
- Engaged Stakeholders**
 - Valuable in evaluation, coordination, and planning through feedback and influence
 - They create opportunities, form partnerships, and share information/resources.
 - Will help achieve EMPOWER's long term goals, aid with challenges, and increase sustainability.
 - Engaging stakeholders may entail sending periodic updates/newsletters about UI screening & management, conducting in-person contact, and create a shared commitment for consistent stakeholder engagement regarding UI treatment
- Organizational Readiness**
 - The support and resources needed to support a clinical practice.
 - Aids in developing/applying skills to run practices efficiently.
 - Includes resources about UI, policies about screening/treatment, organizational systems that aid goals and day-to-day activities. Strengthening the internal organization will create support for sustainability.
 - Improving organizational readiness includes utilizing assessment tools, identifying problems, involve key influencers can revise organizational readiness

Figure 3---Sustainability Tools One-Pager: Snippet of the Areas of Sustainability for the EMPOWER study