

Beyond Grab Bars: How the CAPABLE team leverages home modifications to increase function and independence

THE CLIENT

Mrs. R is a 76-year-old retired music teacher. She lives with her husband in a ranch style home and until recently had been very active. Participating in her daily activities and socializing is now more difficult, given her advanced arthritis, tremor, and lung disease, resulting in fatigue, breathlessness, and pain.

Mrs. R's doctor spoke to her about a local CAPABLE program and helped her enroll. She shared her challenges with her CAPABLE occupational therapist and nurse. Together, with the aid of the handy worker's expertise, they came up with solutions to address her goals.

GOAL #1: Prepare meals without shortness of breath



The handy worker lowered the cabinets so Mrs. R can reach items and organize her spices using less energy.

The handy worker installed an above stove mirror so Mrs. R can see food in pots and pans while seated.

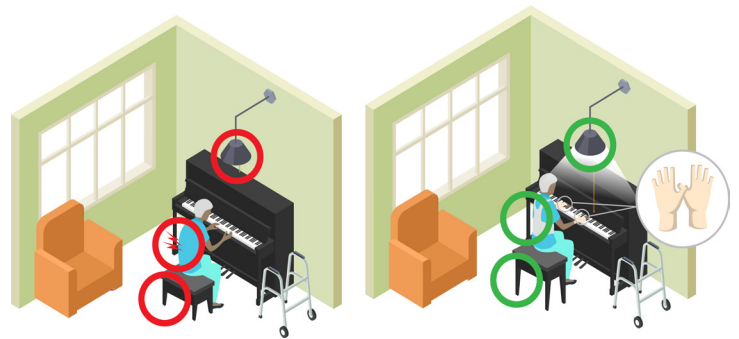
A reacher gives Mrs. R better control to pick up items.

GOAL #2: Feel less pain while playing the piano

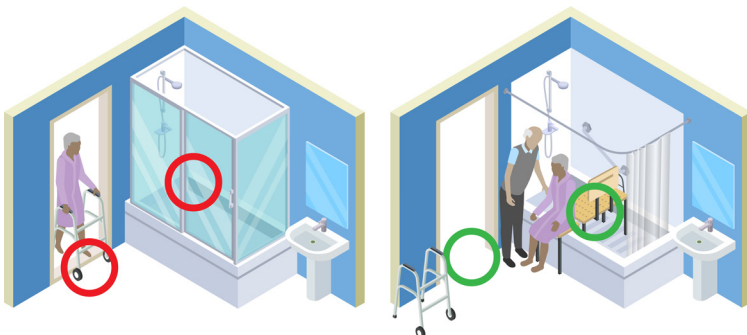
The handy worker added an extended chain to her light and switched the bulb to an LED. Mrs. R can now operate the light safely without her husband's help and she can read the sheet music better.

Wearing arthritis compression gloves and a back brace decreases her pain.

The handy worker constructed a higher bench to prevent back pain when playing the piano.



GOAL #3: Be able to bathe with less effort



The handy worker smoothed out the bathroom entry threshold so Mrs. R can push her rolling walker in the bathroom with ease.

The shower doors and frame were removed by the handy worker and a secure shower curtain rod was installed, allowing more room to access the tub area safely.

The new tub transfer bench allows Mrs. R to get in and out of the tub safely and reduces her husband's assistance.