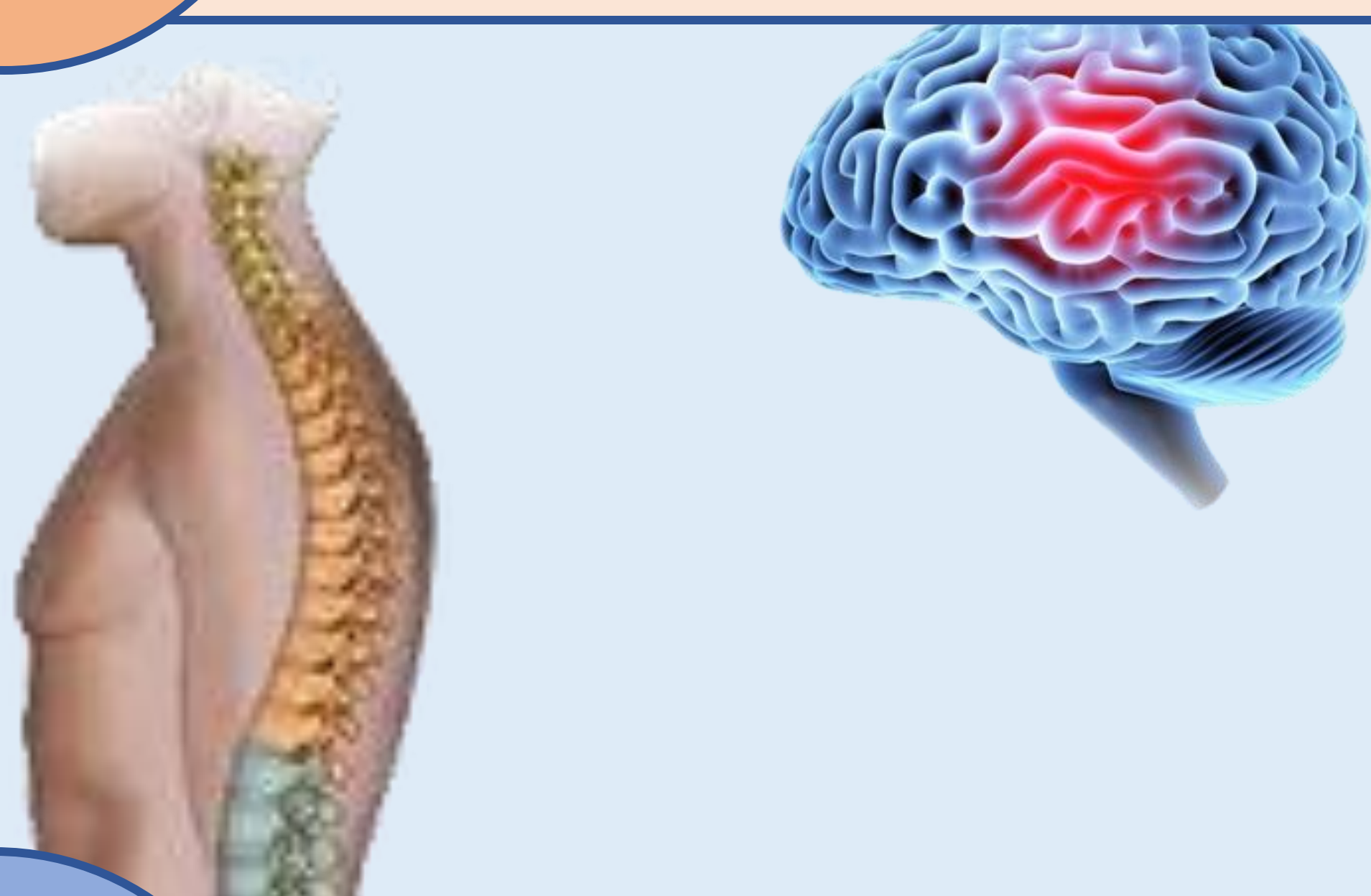


History

- Two spouses presented to our acute rehabilitation center after involvement in a motorcycle accident.
- Initially, they were admitted to different units and were receiving rehabilitation services separately.
- Upon arrival to our unit, both patients reported high levels of anxiety due to separate living arrangements.

29 YO
FEMALE

- Traumatic brain injury
- Left spastic hemiplegia
- Cognitive deficits



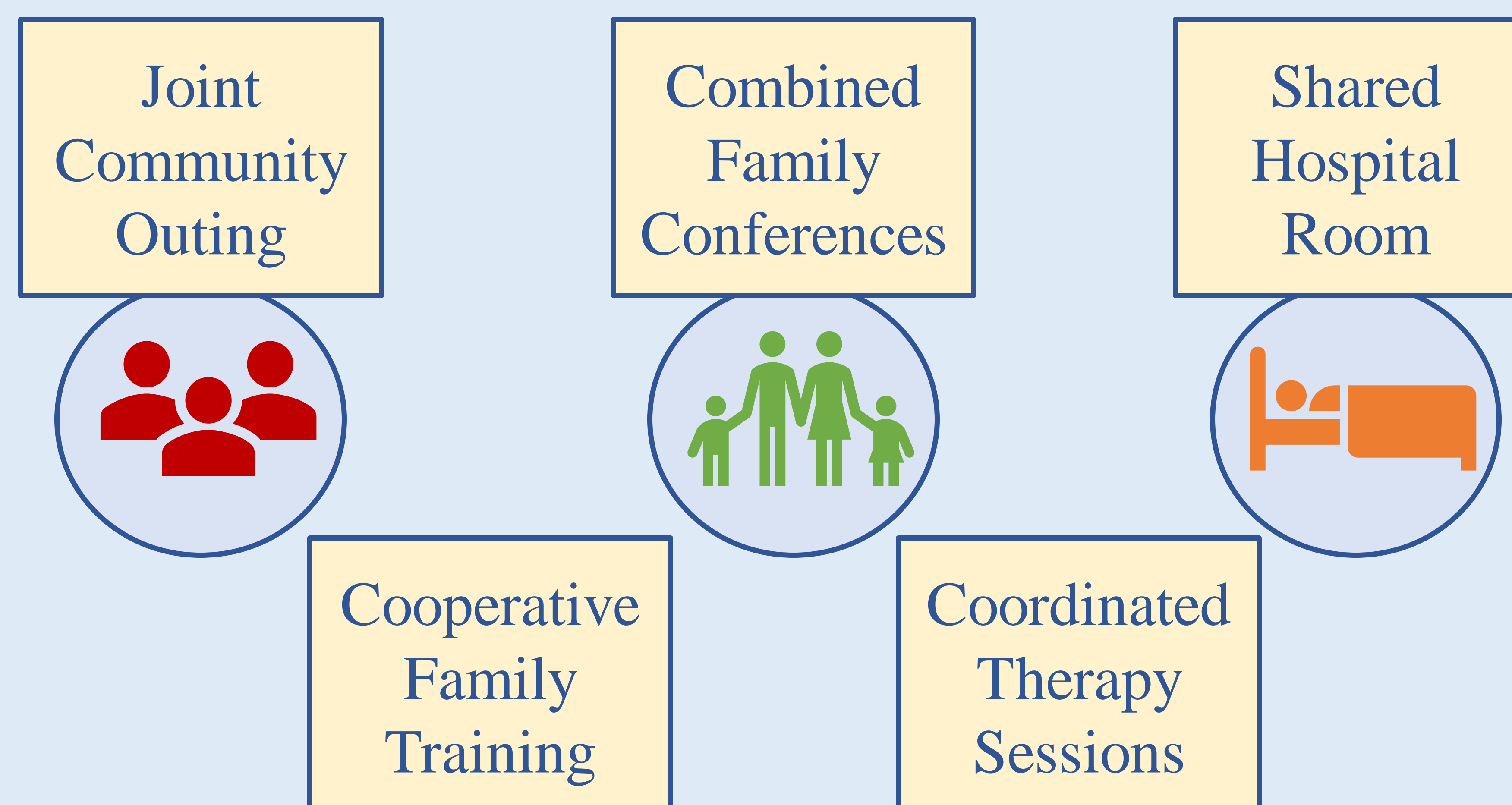
32 YO
MALE

- Traumatic spinal cord injury
- T5 ASIA B paraplegia
- Neurogenic bowel + bladder

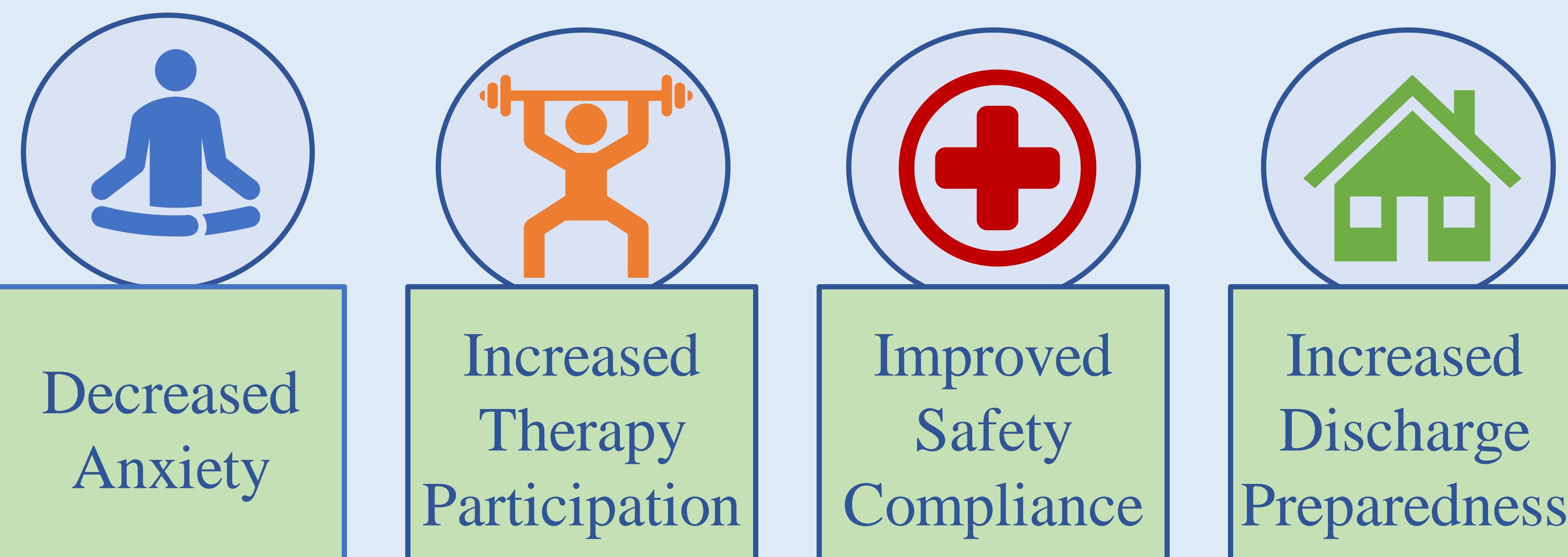
- They had two dependent young children at home.
- Female patient was 7 weeks pregnant, providing further evidence of need for functional independence.
- Both were fully independent prior to admission.

Joint Rehabilitation Model

To facilitate the concurrent rehabilitation of the couple, our brain injury and spinal cord rehabilitation teams worked with them to create a joint rehabilitation program for optimal recovery.



Patient Reported Benefits



Potential Barriers & Considerations



Discussion

- Traumatic spinal cord injuries (SCI) and traumatic brain injuries (TBI) can lead to widespread disabilities that dramatically alter family life.¹
- Majority of SCI and TBI survivors return home to families with expectations that do not align with the challenges facing the injured person.²
- Evidence supports the need for educational interventions, particularly during the acute stages that assist in managing the multiple adjustments of persons with SCI and TBI and their families.²

Therefore, to optimize recovery, it was essential to create a model to treat the couple as a family unit rather than two separate individuals.

Talking with the couple after discharge home, they reported these changes as being extremely important to their recovery, with co-habitation in the same room as the most important aspect.

Conclusions

- Family members with concurrent injuries face increased psychosocial challenges and barriers to discharge.
- Inpatient rehabilitation teams need to coordinate cohabitation and care to maximize emotional well-being and improve function.

References

