

Hope in a Package: Collecting and Distributing Self-Care Supplies for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in Cincinnati, Ohio

Anna Kurk, PharmD Candidate 2026, Jessica Fredrick, PharmD Candidate, 2028, Jill Boone, PharmD, FASHP, FFIP, FNAP, Karissa Kim, PharmD, BCPS, BCACP
University of Cincinnati, James L. Winkle College of Pharmacy

Background

The David and Rebecca Barron Center for Men and The Esther Marie Hatton Center for Women are shelters in Cincinnati, Ohio, that ensure men and women experiencing homelessness in the metro area have access to basic needs such as shelter, food, emergency clothing items, and basic hygiene products. The Men's Center houses 150 men at a time, while the Women's Shelter is home to 60 residents. Since opening their doors in 1973, both shelters have provided essential support and services to our community, which would not be possible without the help of donors.

The University of Cincinnati College of Pharmacy is familiar with the work that both centers do, as pharmacy students often volunteer with medical students to assess patients, develop care plans, and dispense over-the-counter and prescription medications for residents. Knowing the patient population and the needs of our community, our Christian Pharmacists Fellowship International (CPFI) chapter had an easy choice to help the Men's and Women's shelters for our Hands and Feet Project.

Objectives & Purpose

This project was chosen due to the College's personal connection to the organization, and the urgent needs of the facility to support its population.

The purpose of this project was to address the shelter's immediate needs, uplift spirits, and show compassion to the people of our city that is in line with the Christian values of love and service. Our goal was to have each care package serve as a tangible expression of Christ's love, with the aim to enhance dignity and well-being of homeless individuals.

Methods

Student pharmacists reached out to the David and Rebecca Barron Center for Men and the Esther Marie Hatton Center for Women, to determine their most pressing needs and logistics pertaining to donations. After determining what was needed, the supplies for 'Hope in a Package' were retrieved from Amazon. Supplies were ordered by our chapter's president, Anna Kurk. The total cost of the supplies was \$785.02 (Table 1). Individual laundry detergent, dishwashing soap, scripture cards, winter beanies, gloves, bar soap, and drawstring backpacks were purchased. One of our chapter advisors, Dr. Karissa Kim, generously donated oral hygiene supplies, including toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss.

To involve the entire College of Pharmacy, the whole school was invited to pack the care packages. On Friday, March 14th, 2025, a total of 9 students organized in the College of pharmacy to package and pray over each of the bags.

Methods (Cont.)

Table 1. Materials and Budget		
	Quantity	Cost (total)
Drawstring Backpacks	200	\$149.95
Laundry Detergent	200	\$119.96
Dishwashing Liquid	216	\$174.15
Scripture Cards	240	\$9.99
Winter Beanies	200	\$123.98
Gloves	200	\$123.98
Bar Soap	200	\$49.98
Toothbrushes	200	Donated
Toothpaste	200	Donated
Floss	200	Donated
Total		\$751.98
Taxes and Shipping		\$44.44
Actual Total		\$785.02
Estimated Budget Total		\$749.78
Grant Money Received		\$750.00

Results

As a chapter, University of Cincinnati's CPFI was able to donate 200 care packages to the David and Rebecca Barron Center for Men and The Esther Marie Hatton Center for Women.

Our CPFI president ordered supplies from Amazon, and with help of the executive board and other members, packages were assembled and dropped off at the Men's and Women's centers. A total of 200 care packages were assembled, and any remaining supplies were also donated to the shelter. Both Centers were able to distribute items as needed. Due to volunteering restrictions, the chapter was unfortunately unable to distribute the care packages ourselves.

Other CPFI chapters can replicate "Hope in a Package" and bring meaningful support and Christian compassion to their own communities, by coordinating a collection drive on their campus, hosting packing events, and by partnering with local churches or shelters to distribute packages so that they reach those in need.



Results (Cont.)



Conclusions

Carrying out the Hands and Feet project as pharmacy students taught us many valuable lessons, both professionally and personally. 'Hope in a Package,' showed student pharmacists how to provide patient care with a Christ-centered approach.

Additionally, this project demonstrated the power of community service and strengthened our faith. By assembling 200 care packages, our CPFI chapter saw firsthand how pharmacists can make a difference beyond traditional pharmacy settings. The integration of faith into the profession reaffirmed our calling to serve others through pharmacy, and it provided a deeper sense of purpose and fulfillment in our career paths.

Acknowledgements

The students at the University of Cincinnati CPFI chapter would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Jill Boone and Dr. Karissa Kim, our chapter advisors. Both of our advisors have provided invaluable support and guidance throughout our service project, and your expertise played a critical role in helping us plan, organize, and execute 'Hope in a Package,' successfully. Your leadership and commitment have not only ensured the success of this project but have also inspired us to continue serving our community with passion.

