Traumatic injury is a sentinel event that can precipitate a trajectory of functional decline in older patients. A rapidly growing and active elderly population is projected to comprise an increasing fraction of trauma patients and to reach 40% of all trauma patients in 2050. In comparison to younger patients, older trauma patients suffer greater in-hospital morbidity and mortality. Trauma represents an ideal area in which to introduce new geriatric-specific quality indicators. For patients of all ages, our care model utilizes highly structured and standardized algorithms for several aspects of management. Furthermore, as elderly patients occupy half of the acute hospital beds, the group of geriatric patients that require major emergent surgical interventions is also rapidly growing. Those patients share many common characteristics with the injured trauma patients, as the surgical trauma results in similar infirmities and triggers similar systemic response. Improvements in the quality of health care provided to this group of patients and optimizing their immediate and long-term outcomes will likely have a measurable impact on our health care system. Our work focuses on the development of a standardized assessment protocol that will guide the multidisciplinary team to increase recommended processes of geriatric inpatient care.

The UCLA Department of Surgery is dedicated to training the surgical leaders of the future. We target the top 10% of academically-minded applicants and bring our residents through a structured educational program that maximizes their opportunities for post-residency training and all career models in surgery. Our program has a strong commitment to innovations in surgical education, residency training curriculum, and related research.