

Falls facts for allied health professionals

Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People:
Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009

Allied health professionals have an important role to play in preventing residents from falling and experiencing harm from falls. The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has produced national guidelines to inform clinical practice and assist residential aged care facilities to develop and implement practices to prevent falls and injuries from falls.

What can you do to help?

- Contribute to falls prevention interventions, which should be part of routine care for all residents.
- Develop and implement individualised falls prevention plans based on screening or assessment.
- Provide supervised and individualised balance and gait exercises.
- Review the environment for modification as part of a falls prevention strategy.

Recommendations from the guidelines

Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009 recommends falls prevention interventions based on the latest evidence and practice. Successful residential aged care facility falls prevention programs use a combination of:

- routine interventions that are delivered together as part of routine care for all residents
- targeted and individualised falls prevention care plans based on screening or assessment.

Key components from successful falls prevention trials in residential aged care facilities include:

- multidisciplinary team interventions
- comprehensive geriatric assessment
- staff education
- balance exercises
- medication review
- environmental adaptations
- hip protectors
- post-fall management.

Some interventions used in multifactorial interventions have also been shown to prevent falls and fractures as single interventions. These include:

- medication review
- vitamin D with calcium supplementation in people with low blood levels of vitamin D (to prevent falls and fractures)
- hip protectors (to reduce hip fractures).

This fact sheet has been adapted from *Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009*, developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

Falls facts for allied health professionals

Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People:
Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009

1. *Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009.*



The following resources have been developed to assist implementation of the Falls Guidelines:

2. *Guidebook for Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009.*

A Short Version of Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009.



3. *I Want to Stay Independent: Slips, Trips and Broken Hips Are Not For Me – Consumer Guide.*



4. *Fact sheets:*

- Falls facts for support staff
- Falls facts for allied health professionals
- Falls facts for health managers
- Falls facts for nurses
- Falls facts for doctors.



All publications are available from the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care website www.safetyandquality.gov.au

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
Level 7, 1 Oxford Street
Darlinghurst NSW 2010
Tel: (02) 9263 3633
Email: mail@safetyandquality.gov.au