

Hunter New England Health is working with communities, hospitals and residential aged care facilities to reduce the risk of fall injury

For information or comments please contact Patsy Bourke on 6767 8206 or patsy.bourke@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

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Falls Injury Prevention

Welcome to the second HNE Health Falls Injury Prevention Area Newsletter.

Falls CATI

In the first half of the year, HNE Population Health conducted a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) to determine the extent to which falls prevention initiatives are implemented across HNE Health acute/subacute, community and residential aged care facilities.

A total of 193 telephone interviews were conducted with facility/unit managers who provided information regarding falls-related: policies and guidelines; risk screening and assessment; prevention interventions and referrals; and training.

Results of the survey show that fall prevention initiatives are currently implemented to varying degrees across HNE Health and that clear procedures are required to assist staff in providing appropriate prevention strategies to patients at risk of falls. The survey also highlighted a commitment from HNE Health staff to undertake prevention initiatives such as referral of at risk patients/clients to physical activity programs.

Each of the falls prevention working parties are further examining the results of the survey to identify opportunities and barriers to the implementation of initiatives in their facilities.

Thank you to all survey participants and to the working party members who assisted in the development of the survey.

*Melanie Kingsland, Program Manager.
Population Health*

Please see the recently updated HNE Health Falls Injury Prevention website at:

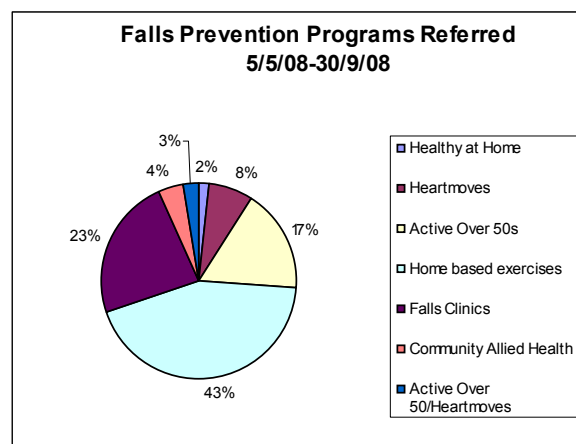
<http://www1.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/hnepf/Falls/FallsInjuries.cfm>

The HNE Health Falls Phone Coaching Program

This has been a five month project funded through the Sustainable Access Program (SAP). It identified non-admitted people aged 50 years+ presenting to Emergency Departments (ED) and refer them to strategies to reduce their falls injury risk. The participating EDs were John Hunter, Belmont and Calvary Mater hospitals. It involved telephone referral and coaching.

Clients identified as eligible were contacted one week following the ED presentation. Risk assessment identified risks and personal preferences, to develop a individual falls injury prevention plan.

During the project, 267 eligible people were contacted by phone. Of these, 39% accepted intervention at the first phone call. Of these, 19% were referred to an Active Over 50 Program, 41% to a Home Based Exercise program and 22% to Falls Clinics.



Funding has been made available with a 0.5 FTE Enrolled Nurse position until June 2009, when final recommendations will be made.

Robyn Walker, Project Manager May – Oct. 2008

Falls Injury Prevention

Australia New Zealand Falls Prevention Conference

This was held in Melbourne in October 2008.



HNE Health representation and topics included: from the left: Mel Kingsland on the CATI data results; Sue Green on the Physical Activity CATI data; Mandy Harden on the findings of the 3 year # Neck of Femur from Residential Aged Care study; Ian O'Dea on the Falls Phone Coaching Program, Patsy Bourke on the HNE implementation of the NSW plan; and Robyn Walker.

Key presentations will be soon available at <http://www.anzfpconference.com/>

Patsy Bourke, Falls Injury Prevention Coordinator

Balance Challenge

There is very high evidence that challenging balance reduces falls risk. Did you know that balance decreases from about age 45? Try this exercise to build your balance.

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart with your weight evenly distributed on both legs. Raise your heels up slowly, as far as possible several times. Raise the toes slowly as far up as possible.

Repeat with your eyes closed, and try and stay steady. Repeat using one leg only and then change to the other leg. Repeat again with the eyes closed. Be aware that your balance may be altered so stay near a wall or a table for safety.

Laraine Dunn, Active Over 50s

Active Over 50s training

HNE Health's EduCare and Population Health units have teamed up to build the capacity of the 'Active Over 50s' program.

The first achievement was the re-accreditation of the 'Active Over 50s' training as a continuing education program with Fitness Australia. Since July, 22 new fitness leaders have attending two-day training programs to become 'Active Over 50s' instructors. These leaders are starting up new 'Active Over 50s' classes throughout the Maitland, Cessnock, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Lower Mid North Coast areas.

'Active Over 50s' classes are designed to cater for a range of fitness levels and include exercises that promote cardiovascular fitness, balance, strength and flexibility- essential elements in the reduction of fall injury and chronic health conditions.

All 'Active Over 50s' classes are listed in a database managed by EduCare and supported by free call number 1300 887 776, which can be used by both community members and health professionals to find out more about 'Active Over 50s' classes.

Melanie Kingsland, Program Manager.

QuickScreen[®] Training

The Dept of Veterans' Affairs Innovative Funds Grants program is supporting a pilot program in four sites in HNE to screen Veterans and War Widows using the QuickScreen[®] tool.



Participants in the pilot program are: (from L to R) Odele Brown for Gloucester; Viki Brummell (coordinator), Pauline Welch for Narrabri; , Jenny Hagan for Glen Innes; Donella Mitchell for Wee Waa; and Patsy Bourke.