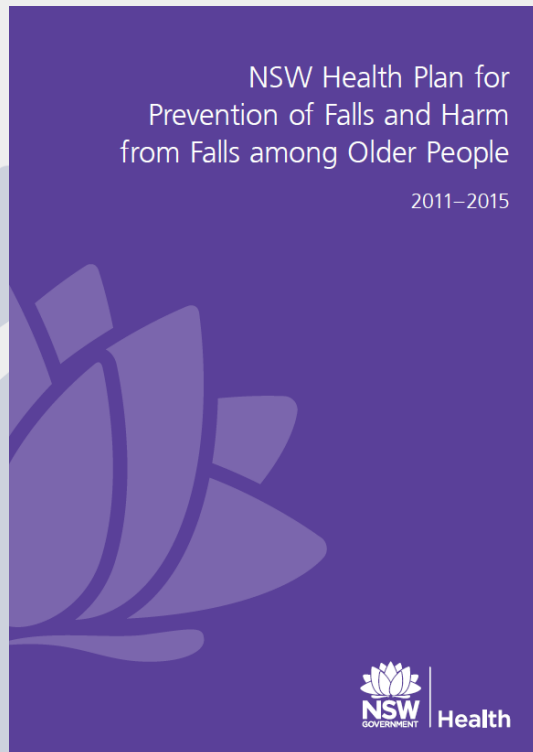


# Prevention of Falls and Harm from Falls Among Older People: 2011-2015



Joanne Smith  
Centre for Health Advancement

May 2011

# Falls in older people – key statistics

In NSW:

- Over 25% of those aged 65 and over fall at least once per year
- More than 27,000 hospitalisations a year
- The rate of fall-related hospitalisations among older people has been steadily increasing
- More than 400 deaths a year
- The rate of fall-related deaths has been steady over recent years
- In NSW in 2006/07 the total cost of health care associated with fall injuries in older people was estimated at \$558.5 million.

# NSW Health Falls Prevention plan

*NSW Health Plan for the Prevention of Falls and Harm from Falls Among Older People, 2011 to 2015.*

- the second statewide falls prevention plan for NSW Health
- builds on the supporting infrastructure established by the first statewide plan, and takes into account :
  - current evidence about effective strategies to prevent falls
  - updated and expanded national falls prevention best practice guidelines for clinical settings
  - recommendations from the evaluation of the first plan
  - the current organisational context of NSW Health

# Inputs to development of the plan – examples of work commissioned

- Evaluation of implementation of the first NSW Health falls plan
- Interviews with key stakeholders and experts and review of literature to inform strategies to support exercise for falls prevention
- Development of best practice recommendations for physical activity to prevent falls in older adults
- A review of the characteristics of NSW Health physical activity falls prevention programs
- Study of the incidence and cost of falls injury in New South Wales
- Survey of 5000 older people on falls risk and protective factors
- Development of a prospective monitoring and evaluation framework

New South Wales Falls Prevention  
Baseline Survey

2009 Report



NSW HEALTH

[www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/publichealth/surveys/hso\\_09falls\\_pdf.asp](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/publichealth/surveys/hso_09falls_pdf.asp)

The Incidence and Cost of  
Falls Injury Among Older People  
in New South Wales 2006/07

A Report to NSW Health



NSW  
GOVERNMENT | Health

[www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2010/costoffall.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2010/costoffall.html)

NSW  
GOVERNMENT | Health

# Inputs to development of the plan – consultation

- Consultations sessions were held with:
  - The 8 former Area Health Services
  - Ambulance Service of NSW
  - Clinical Excellence Commission
  - Justice Health
  - Area Falls Prevention Coordinators Network
  - within the Department of Health
- In addition, discussions regarding the plan were held with representatives of:
  - Injury Risk Management Research Centre, University of NSW
  - Neuroscience Research Australia

# Falls Prevention Plan – aims and scope

## Aims:

- To reduce the incidence and severity of harm from falls among older people
- To reduce the social, psychological and economic impact of falls injuries on individuals, families and the community.

## Scope:

- To describe key NSW Health actions over the next 5 years
  - Dept of Health, Local Health Districts, Ambulance, Clinical Excellence Commission, Agency for Clinical Innovation

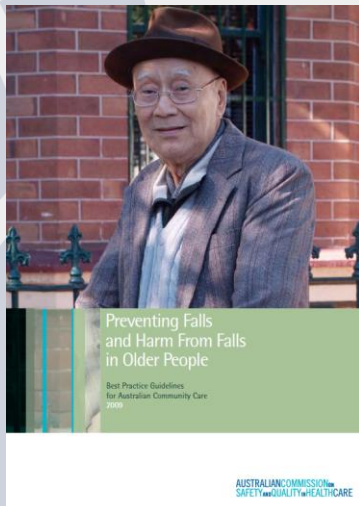
# Action in multiple domains

- Health-care services and settings
- Community-based and population health initiatives
- Cross cutting priorities
  - Addressing the needs of particular population groups
  - Research and evaluation, including dissemination
  - Identifying opportunities for partnership to achieve falls prevention objectives

# Health care settings and services

- Focus on supporting best practice in provision of falls prevention within NSW Health clinical settings
- Guiding document is the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) guidelines

*Preventing Falls And Harm From Falls In Older People: Best Practice Guidelines For Australian Hospitals, Residential Aged Care Facilities And Community Care 2009*



# Example: Action Area 1

- *Provide or arrange for screening, assessment and management of falls risk factors among older people presenting to NSW Health services following a fall, or at high risk of a fall, in accordance with best practice guidelines.*
- 18 specific strategies and initiatives 2011-2015.
- Disseminate and promote ACSQHC guidelines, support implementation in NSW
- Issue a Policy Directive defining mandatory requirements of falls prevention for Local Health Districts

# Example: Action Area 1

- Links falls programs with other initiatives eg. Essentials of Care program
- Identify opportunities to apply clinical practice improvement supporting falls prevention
- LHDs will support regular collection of data
- Develop standardised falls information for Aged Care Assessment Teams, Aged Care Emergency Teams and the Chronic Care Provider Network
- Lead development of models of care for screening, assessment and management of falls risk

# Health Promotion / Population Health domain

- Support provision of appropriate exercise programs for older people at risk of falls, and promote uptake of these programs
- Provide older people and their families and carers with information about action they can take to reduce the risk of falls, as appropriate/relevant to their circumstances
- Support the conduct and dissemination of research to advance falls prevention policy and practice
- Tailor information and programs to meet the needs of all groups within the population

# Centre for Health Advancement – key focus on falls prevention

The Centre for Health Advancement :

- part of the Population Health Division, NSW Dept of Health
- leads health promotion policy and planning, strategic partnerships, research and development, and state-wide programs
- works in partnerships with regional Health Services, other government agencies and non-government organisations
- falls prevention in older people is one of the three key priority areas for the Centre

# Centre for Health Advancement – initiatives for falls prevention (1)

The Centre for Health Advancement will continue to lead falls prevention initiatives in the health promotion / population health domain at the state level, for example:

- Develop a statewide social marketing strategy to support falls prevention objectives, including strategies for implementation at local levels.
- Provide guidelines and training to assist community based providers of exercise programs to safely incorporate balance and strength training components within classes.
- Maintain a statewide service directory of exercise programs with an evidence-based falls prevention component, accessible to older people and health professionals.

# active & healthy



[Home](#) [Your Active & Healthy Guide](#) [Information for Professionals](#) [Find a Program](#) [Contact Us](#) [FAQ](#) [Search](#)

## Find an Exercise Program in NSW...

Location

Distance

[Find Now!](#)

search this website

**ATTENTION PROGRAM PROVIDERS!**  
Get your physical activity program listed.



[Register Now!](#)



### Staying Active and Healthy

Staying physically active is **the** single most important thing we can do to stay fit and independent as we get older. Physical activity is good for our bodies and our minds. It also helps us to remain independent and to get the most out of life.

Research shows that we can substantially reduce our risk of a fall by doing moderate exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week, and by incorporating balance and leg strength exercises such as those you will find on this website, into our daily routine.

[Click here to read more.](#)

### Finding an Exercise Program in Your Local Area

There are three simple steps to finding an Exercise Program in your local area. All you need to do is:

1. Enter your Town or Suburb in the **Location** field in the orange box on the left of this screen.
2. Enter a search distance in the **Distance** field underneath. The system will automatically default to 5kms (recommended) but you can choose between 1km and 50kms if you wish.
3. Click the **Find Now** button.

This website will then identify and list registered Exercise Programs that have specific exercises to improve balance and strength, available in your local area.

If none are available, you may wish to consider widening your search by adjusting the **Distance** field to a greater distance.

Done

Internet 100%

[www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au/)



Health

# Staying active and on your feet



20 page consumer resource:  
copies can be ordered via  
[www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au](http://www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au)



Health

# Centre for Health Advancement – initiatives for falls prevention (2)

- Support implementation of the Stepping On program for older people experiencing falls.
- Conduct evaluations of key statewide initiatives.
- Commission research into the needs of special populations with respect to falls prevention i.e. formative research on the context and salience of injury and falls among Aboriginal people.

In addition, the Centre's ongoing support of initiatives to address physical inactivity, poor nutrition and smoking throughout life will ultimately contribute to promoting healthy and active ageing.

# Funding provided to support falls prevention

In addition, the Centre provides funding in support of a broad range of falls prevention activities, such as:

- eight falls prevention coordinators
- the Clinical Excellence Commission falls prevention program
- the NSW Falls Prevention Network
- Health services to implement specific programs e.g. Stepping On
- production and dissemination of printed resources, such as the *Staying Active and On Your Feet* consumer resource.

# Governance and Roles

- Population Health Division – health promotion
- Health System Quality, Performance and Innovation Division and Strategic Development Division – clinical settings
- CEC – work in partnership with Department to support program and policy in clinical settings eg. support ACSQHC implementation
- Department will fund Area Falls Coordinators
- LHDs will have a Falls Management Committee
- Governance committee to monitor progress

# Release of the plan

- Done! Today!
- It is a Policy Directive.
- It will be available from Monday 30 May on the NSW Health website.
- The plan will be disseminated electronically through the NSW Health Policy Distribution System.
- Planning across the Health system early 2011/12
- Monitoring and evaluation framework due for release later in 2011...More to do!

