

Falls Prevention Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Infographic – Accessible version

Definition

“A fall is defined as an event which results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or floor or other lower level”

Perspective:

"It takes a child one year to acquire independent movement and ten years to acquire independent mobility. An older person can lose both in a day" Professor Bernard Isaacs

Health Impacts

- 30% of those aged 65+ fall at least once a year
- 50% of those aged 80+ fall at least once a year
- Evidence suggests up to 75% of falls go unreported
- Mortality rate from accidental falls has continued to increase year on year nationally and locally
- 40% to 60% of recorded falls result in major lacerations, brain injuries, or fractures
- Hip fractures have a high mortality risk – 9.4% at 30 days and 31.2% at 1 year
- Complications arising from falls include: distress; pain; loss of confidence; reduced quality of life; loss of independence; reduced physical activity

Risk factors

- A history of falls is one of the strongest risk factors for a fall
- Interplay of multiple risk factors:
 - Muscle weakness
 - Poor balance
 - Visual impairment
 - Polypharmacy
 - Environmental hazards
 - Dementia and mild cognitive impairment
 - Certain medical conditions

Inequalities

- Locally there is no clear relationship between deprivation and emergency admissions for falls
- Females are almost twice as likely to be admitted for a hip fracture than males

- Age significantly increases fall risk and mortality risk
- Caucasians are at increased risk of fragility fracture than other ethnicities
- Females have higher rates of admission due to falls
- Males have higher mortality rates from falls

Economic impacts

- Falls are estimated to cost the NHS more than £2.3 billion per year
- In Norfolk and Waveney during 2023, there were over 18,300 ambulance callouts for falls
- Hip fractures account for 1.8 million bed days per year in the United Kingdom

Falls prevention interventions

Multifactorial interventions for those identified of being at risk of falls include:

- Strength and balance training
- Home hazard assessment
- Vision assessment
- Medication review

Infographic produced by Public Health team, February 2025. For full details and sources see the full needs assessment document