Prince of Wales Hospital Falls Pathway for Older Outpatients

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But we know older people fall
But falls are preventable

Leaves are supposed to fall.
People aren’t.
• We know there is strong evidence based programs to prevent falls.
• Getting vulnerable people into clinical pathways to best practice in a timely manner still appears a challenge.
In a nutshell

Referral to Falls Prevention group

7-week Stepping On program

12-week strength & balance maintenance grp

Referral to community-based exercise grp
Identification of high-risk fallers and referral to the Stepping On program is based on a model of care at POWH that has built links between the

- Falls Balance and Bone Health Clinic,
- Emergency Department,
- GP’s,
- inpatient teams
- community-based services
How we did it

- An interdisciplinary team was formed utilising clinicians and managers from Geriatric Medicine, Falls, Balance and Bone Health, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy
• The POWH falls pathway is a successful and sustainable model of care for falls risk minimisation.

• Our experiences can assist other health districts to establish a similar model of care in regard to falls prevention strategies for older populations.
• Stepping On is an evidence based program that aims to minimise falls risk factors in older populations. POWH has been offering the Stepping On program since 2005.

Stepping On

- Community-based program conducted in a small group learning environment
- Part of our out patient department at POWH
- Sessions apply the most current research on falls prevention delivered utilising adult learning principles
- Facilitator-led within an interactive group environment
Program facilitators and speakers

• Programs are held in outpatient treatment rooms and include presentations by local health professionals including:
  – Physiotherapist
  – Occupational Therapist
  – Roads Safety Officer
  – Podiatrist
  – Vision expert
  – Dietician
  – Pharmacist

Clemson & Swann, 2008
Inclusion
• People living in the community
• Over 65 (unless clinical judgment dictates otherwise)
• Falls history
• Walk independently
• With or without a w/s
• Fear of falling
Exclusion from the evidence

- Progressive neurological condition
- Stepping On was not tested on Parkinson clients or severely visually impaired clients
- Behavioral problems
- Memory problems
- Long term frame users
- Living in a hostel
- Living in a nursing home
• Is a highly evidence based program
• 7 weeks & 2hrs a session
• Stepping On delivers a 31% Reduction in falls over a 14 month period
What about the people who don’t fit into the criteria for Stepping On

- Low Vision Clinic OT Home visit services
- Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC)
- Healthy Ageing AIM for fitness
- Integrated Rehabilitation and EnAblement Programme (IREAD)
- Physiotherapy out patients
- Psycho geriatric team
MOVING ON

Referral to Falls Prevention group

7-week Stepping On program

12-week strength & balance maintenance grp

Referral to community-based exercise grp
MOVING ON
Can be duplicated

- SO funded to December 2019 by Office of Preventative medicine The program is currently funded by the NSW Ministry of Health (See: http://www.preventivehealth.net.au/steppingon.html

- There are SO coordinators in each Local Health District area who would support you to start a SO group in your out patient department

- Well resourced with manual and facilitator training readily available
• Pathway can be intercepted and phone calls made to GP to family carers eg Referrals made to Guide Dogs, OT Home visit or podiatrist
• Extra physiotherapy made be needed
• Mention how to register with myagedcare to get further services
• Finishes with a letter to the GP
• 5 patients who came from the POWH Falls clinic that go to SO get 3 month follow up extra
Stepping On is core business at POWH outpatient occupational therapy and physiotherapy services and as such, is provided on a regular basis. A high percentage of patients in South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) over 65 years who have sustained an injury due to a fall, have a secondary diagnosis of musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions (co morbidity).
More clinical pathways are being formed

• Two Leading Better Value Care (LBVC) and Musculoskeletal conditions Initiatives, the Osteoporosis Re Fracture Prevention and the Osteoarthritis Chronic Care Program, refer appropriate patients to Stepping On, an evidence-based fall prevention program delivered at POWH
Need data to change practise
Data alone will not change practice

• Also needed a dedicated group of health professionals aware of best practice and willing to go the extra mile
• Passionate and regular staff (no staff changes)
• Acknowledge Jamie Hallen, Rachel Blumenfeld
• And other PTs I have worked with
• Also the OT manager and PT manager at POWH
• Not to mention Prof Jacqui Close (Falls, Balance and Bone Health) and Stepping On SESLHD coordinator Trish Lynch
Stepping On

Congratulations Stepping On Participants