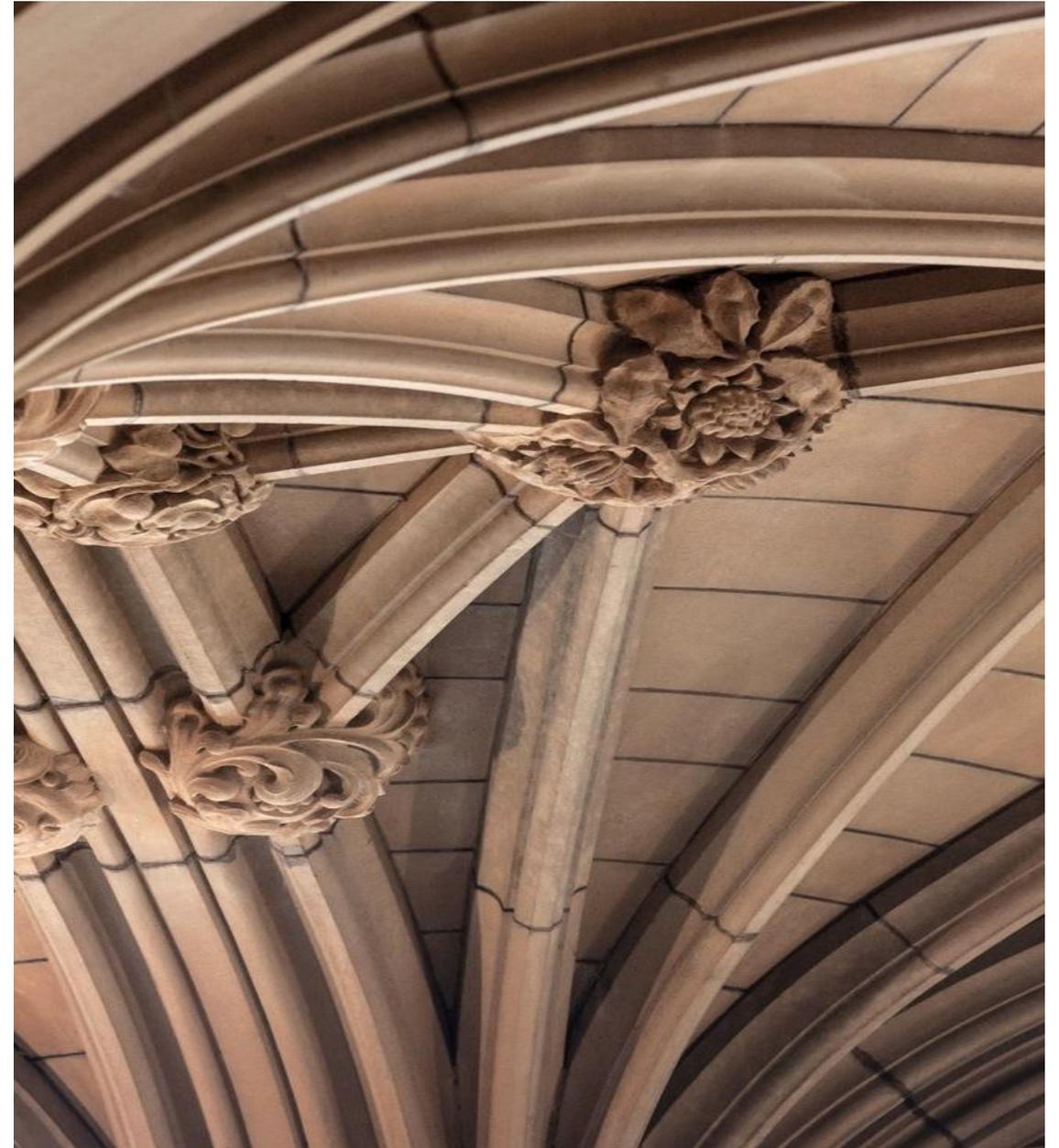


Long term fall prevention behaviour after participation in the *Stepping On* program

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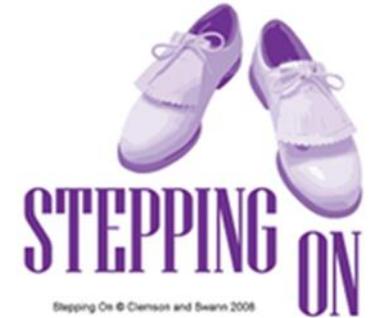
Stepping On fall prevention program

Building self-confidence, making decisions, behavioural change

Program includes 8 face to face sessions covering the following topics:

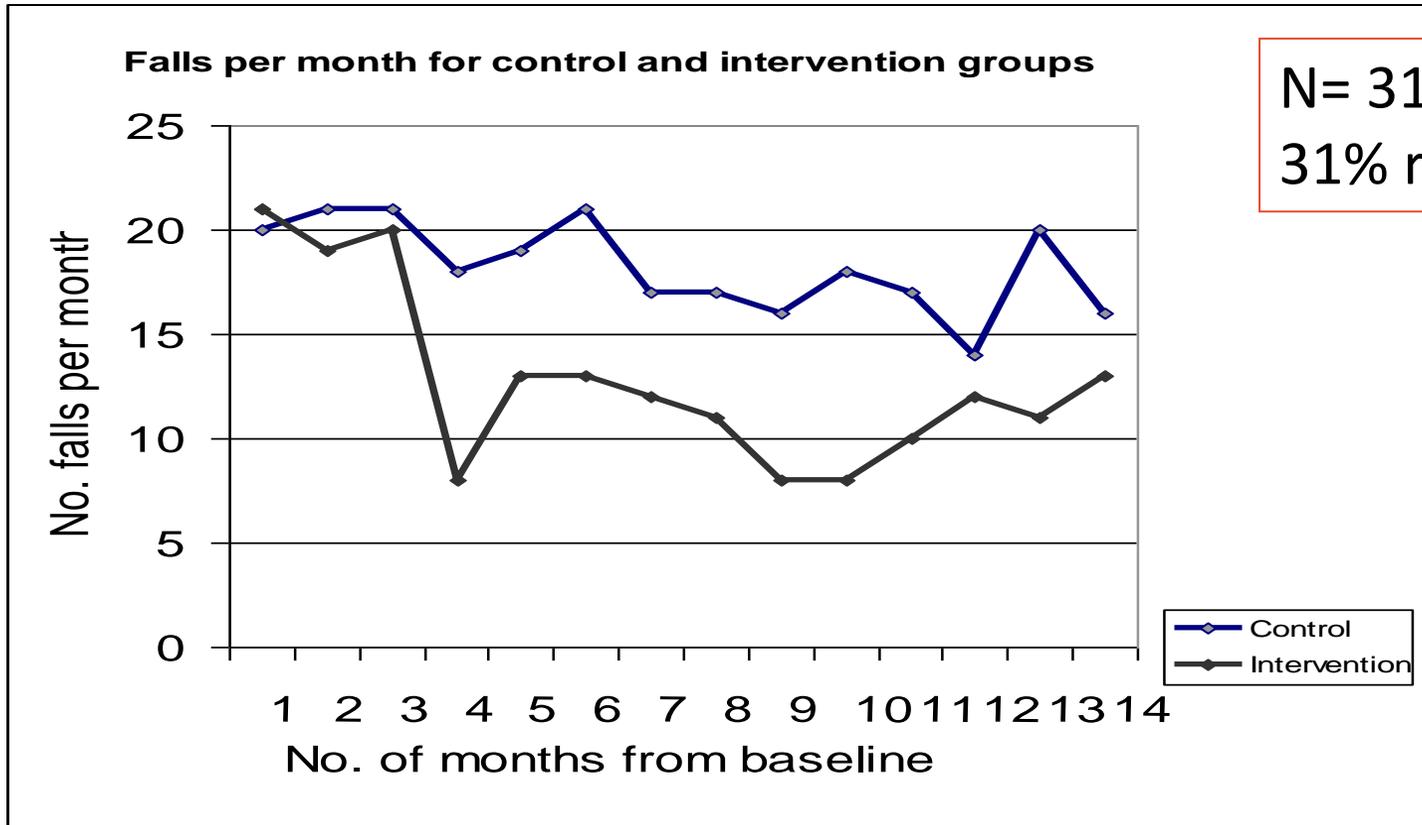
1. Introduction, overview, risk appraisal
2. Exercise and moving about safely
3. Home hazards
4. Community safety and footwear
5. Vision and falls and vitamin D
6. Medication management and mobility mastery experiences
7. Review and plan ahead
8. 3-month booster session

Plus home-based exercises based on *Otago Exercise Programme*



Stepping On program evaluation

Clemson et al. *J Am Geriatr Soc* 2004;52:1487-94



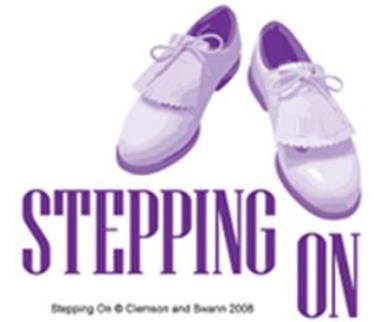
N= 310, aged 70+ years
31% reduction in falls

NSW Ministry of Health has funded the implementation of the *Stepping On* program across NSW Local Health Districts as a key falls prevention initiative since late 2008.

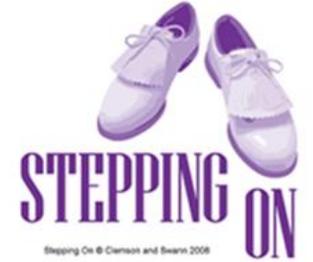
Study aims

What is the impact of Stepping On when delivered in the ‘real world’?

- a) To document ongoing participation in evidence-based fall prevention interventions and behaviours in *Stepping On* participants six months after program completion
- b) To determine barriers and enablers to ongoing participation in fall prevention interventions and behaviours



Methods



Design: Pre-post survey

Participants: People who commenced *Stepping On* in 2015 and 2016

Recruitment method: Study information provided to new participants at first or second session by *Stepping On* program leader, follow-up by research staff

Study measures:

1. Baseline questionnaire at commencement of *Stepping On*
 2. Follow-up questionnaire 6 months post completion of *Stepping On*
- Questions about current fall prevention behaviours
 - *Falls Behavioural Scale (FaB)*- validated tool to assess day-to-day actions that increase risk or offer protection from falling
 - *Incidental and Planned Exercise Questionnaire (IPEQ)*- physical activity
 - Barriers to uptake of fall prevention behaviours

Results



PARTICIPANTS

- n=458, 345 (75%) females, mean age 77 (SD 6.7)
- 121 (26%) born overseas
 - UK- 11%
 - Netherlands- 2%
 - New Zealand- 2%
 - Italy- 1%
 - Plus 30 other countries
- 268 (59%) fallen in past year
- 305 (67%) attended *Stepping On* program in metropolitan LHD
- 291 (64%) completed follow-up
- Missing data: unable to contact (149), illness/death (8), other (6)

Results- impressions of program



- 251 (86%) **completed** the *Stepping On* program
- 284 (98%) said it **increased awareness** of falls
- 190 (65%) felt **increased independence**
- 285 (98%) **would recommend** program to others



Results- ongoing interventions and behaviour

Strategies used to prevent falls	Baseline N=291	Follow up N=291
Regular strength and balance exercises	77 (26%)	218 (75%)**
Cataract surgery	125 (43%)	33 (11%)
Safe walking strategies	152 (52%)	233 (80%)*
Improved lighting in the home	65 (22%)	62 (21%)
Improved home environment safety	129 (44%)	111 (38%)
Medication review by GP or pharmacist	83 (29%)	69 (24%)
Vitamin D supplement	158 (54%)	87 (30%)
Checked shoes and slippers to ensure safe	209 (72%)	215 (74%)

**p<0.001

*p<0.05

Results- change in FaB and IPEQ



Falls Behavioral Scale (FaB), score out of 4

Baseline: mean 2.9 (0.5)

Follow-up: mean 3.1(0.4)

$p < 0.001$

Physical activity (IPEQ)

Structured exercise, hrs/week

Baseline: mean 2.0 (3.3)

Follow-up: mean 4.0 (4.7)

$p < 0.001$

Total activity, hrs/ week

Baseline: mean 28.6 (18.3)

Follow-up: mean 29.7 (19.4)

$p = 0.3$

Results- barriers and motivators



Barriers to exercise

- ill health
- cost/availability
- transport
- identifying suitable programs
- caring responsibilities

Factors that would motivate to exercise

- advice from doctor
- low cost, local program
- more energy



Summary

- High level of acceptability and satisfaction with the program
- Significant impact on some important fall prevention behaviours six months after program completion:



participation in regular strength and balance exercises



in use of safe walking strategies

Stepping On appears to have an impact when delivered in the ‘real world’

Acknowledgements

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- *Project Officer*: Kate Purcell
- *Study participants*



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