



Health
Murrumbidgee
Local Health District



Charles Sturt
University

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STEPPING ON IN THE MURRUMBIDGEE LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT

Is it a gateway for older people to increase confidence and motivation for long term physical activity?

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BACKGROUND

- In NSW, age-standardised hospital admission rates attributed to falls have continued to increase **by 2.5% per year** (Harvey & Close 2013).
- **By 2051**, the **annual Australian health costs** for fall related injury is expected to **exceed \$1.4 billion** – but this is just direct costs (Moller 2003).
- **Murrumbidgee** has a larger percentage increase of Seniors (70 to 84 yrs) compared to NSW overall **→ 11.2%** compared to 8.9% in NSW between 2011 and 2016 Census.
- **Murrumbidgee** records on average **3000** hospital admissions for falls **annually**
- Due to the large geographic area and diversity managing falls risk can be challenging within Murrumbidgee.

Stepping On - multifaceted community-based 7 week program (Clemson et.al. 2004)

- ➔ Strength and balance exercises
- ➔ Education sessions

Stepping
On



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June SO program 2016

However – evidence suggests that the benefits of these programs can be lost if older people aren't motivated to continue with ongoing physical activity (Sherrington et.al. 2016)

RESEARCH AIM

This study investigated whether a 7 – week multidisciplinary community falls prevention program motivated participants to continue with physical activity in the long term and were there sufficient services to support those interested in continuing?

RESEARCH APPROACH

- A quantitative longitudinal cohort study conducted in the MLHD
- A three phase survey → week 1, 7 and 6 – month telephone follow-up interview



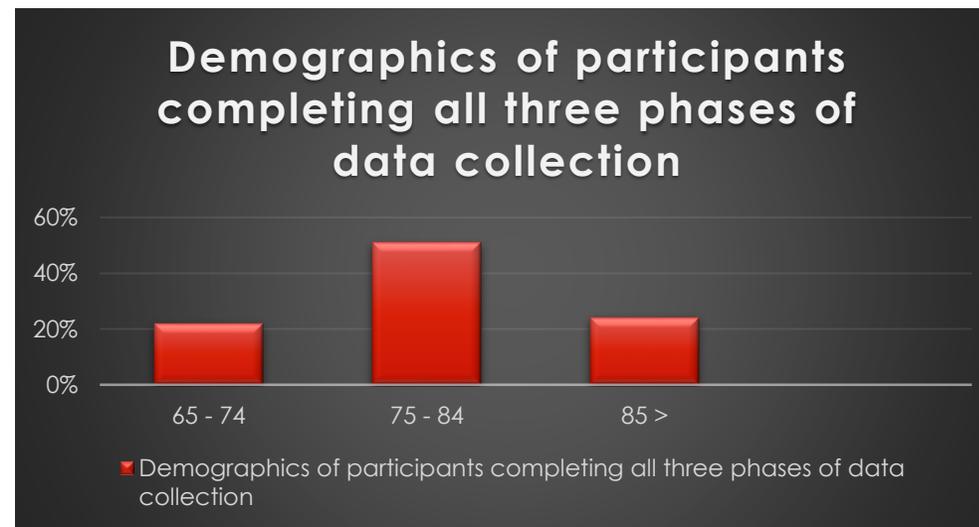
<http://clipart-library.com/survey-cliparts.html>



<http://commonpence.co/telephone-interview/>

RESULTS

- 16 Stepping On Programs across MLHD were involved in this study
- 70% response rate for participants completing week 1 and 7 surveys
- 58% response rate (80 participants) completed all three phases of data collection



KEY FINDINGS

A reduction in falls was recorded by participants:

Of participants who indicated on the week 1 survey they had fallen in the preceding 12 months 

28% indicated that they did not fall in the 6 months since completing the program

This is consistent with previous findings by Clemson et al. 2004.

KEY FINDINGS

Sustainability of physical activity levels after completing the Program

In the post program survey:

 **88%** of participants indicated they were motivated to either maintain or increase their physical activity.

In the 6 month follow up:

 **67%** of participants indicated that they were able to sustain their motivation for maintaining or increasing their physical activity

KEY FINDINGS

Availability of ongoing group exercise options within the local community

➔ **57%** of participants who were keen to continue with group exercise had options available to them in their local area e.g. gentle exercise, tai chi, aqua etc

➔ **However – 37%** of participants wanting to continue to undertake group exercise had no further options available to them in their local area

KEY FINDINGS

Encouraging ongoing physical activity in older people living in the community

Participants were asked what additional services would encourage them to continue with physical activity over the long term.

➔ **44%** indicated there should be more variety in options available in the local area

➔ **22%** wanted greater availability of gentle exercise so they can maintain mobility despite the presence of chronic disease such as osteoarthritis

DISCUSSION

- This research indicates that programs such as Stepping On can motivate people to continue with undertaking physical activity over the long term.
- But there needs to be opportunities for older people to attend physical activity within the community once they complete the program.
- There also needs to be a variety of options available to meet the individual needs and interests of older people.

Ensuring that appropriate community based physical activity options are available may assist in reducing fall related injury and ensure that older people in regional communities are able to maintain mobility and healthy ageing over the long term

CONCLUSION

Health service delivery should be expanded to include ongoing evidence based physical activity options for older people living in the community.

An integrated approach between health service and community is needed to facilitate sustainable programs over the long term.



SO program in Wagga



Leeton SO program 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Study participants
- Charles Sturt University
- Health Promotion

QUESTIONS



<http://www.afrimoms.com/questions-for-the-fastest-finger/>



<http://thrivehomecare.ca/2017/02/22/fall-prevention/>



<http://www.cpft.nhs.uk/help/older-people.htm>