

2024 NSW FALL PREVENTION AND HEALTHY AGEING NETWORK SURVEY REPORT

An online survey was prepared using Survey Monkey to obtain feedback from members of the NSW Fall Prevention and Healthy Ageing Network (NSW FPHAN) on the activities and resources provided by the network and to seek suggestions for further information, resources and activities that they would find helpful in their fall prevention roles. The survey questions are attached to the end of this report. The survey was circulated on the NSW FPHAN email list and social from the 2nd of July and responses collected until the 26th of July 2024. A total of 86 responses were collected from a network membership of 1964 people (those subscribed to Listserv).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This survey of 86 members of the NSW FPHAN found that the network provides a range of activities and information resources that are invaluable in the day-to-day practice of clinicians caring for older people and that it reaches professionals working in all Local Health Districts in NSW in a diverse range of roles and work settings. Except for the St Vincent's Health Network and Far West LHD, all Local Health Districts in NSW were represented by survey respondents.

The network has diverse membership (Figure 1) and this was evident in the respondents to the survey with 55% working in Allied Health (Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Exercise Physiologists), followed by Nursing (13%), Health Promotion Practitioners (5%), Falls Prevention Coordinator (5%), Physical Activity Providers (5%), Researchers (8%), Health Managers (4%), and Others (12%).

Network members work in a variety of settings (Figure 2), with 53% in Community Health and 23% respondents worked in the Public Hospital or MPS, 6% in the private sector or self-employed, 6% in University or Research Institute, 12% in Residential Aged Care and 15% Other. With regards to the role respondents were involved in, the majority of respondents were clinicians (96%) and spent time with patients/clients by prescribing exercise interventions of any nature (76%) (Figure 3).

Barriers to falls prevention reported by respondents included availability of resources and funding, issues of patient compliance and motivation, staffing and skill levels, and falls prevention not seen as a priority in their LHD.

The most effective mechanism to reach respondents with falls prevention information and updates was through the email list as well as the website and the e-newsletter (Figure 4).

Most respondents (67%) indicated that the website easy to navigate (Figure 5), provided sufficient information and resources and did not require any improvements. Suggested improvements included: being more user-friendly, improved layout, more information on Stepping On, strategies and recommendations to go with presented evidence, the addition of more CALD community information.

Over 75% of respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the following activities provided by the NSW FPHAN; Falls Links e-Newsletters, Falls Network website, communication on the email list, Falls Network meetings and forums and webinars. Many respondents were unaware of the social media accounts (33%) and mini-reviews (26%) that were available on the NSW FPHAN website.

A range of topics were suggested for mini-reviews including some that have already been published on the website and in the e-newsletter highlighting the importance of circulating these mini-reviews more widely. Suggested topics musculoskeletal impairments and falls, Parkinson's disease, environmental risk factors, medication, frailty and vision. Many (84%) respondents also mentioned that they would like to attend workshops/webinars covering specific topics in specific care settings.

Less than half (34%) of respondents attended the annual forum (Figure 6), with common reasons for non-attendance being travel (43%), funding (31%) and availability/leave (31%). (Figure 7)

Respondents provided suggestions for resources and improvements to the website including; more webinars and CPD options, research updates, videos and information on basic daily exercises, more resources translated to other languages.

An on-line survey response does have its limitations and many members may not access their emails, have time available, or have on-line access to respond.

SURVEY SUMMARY

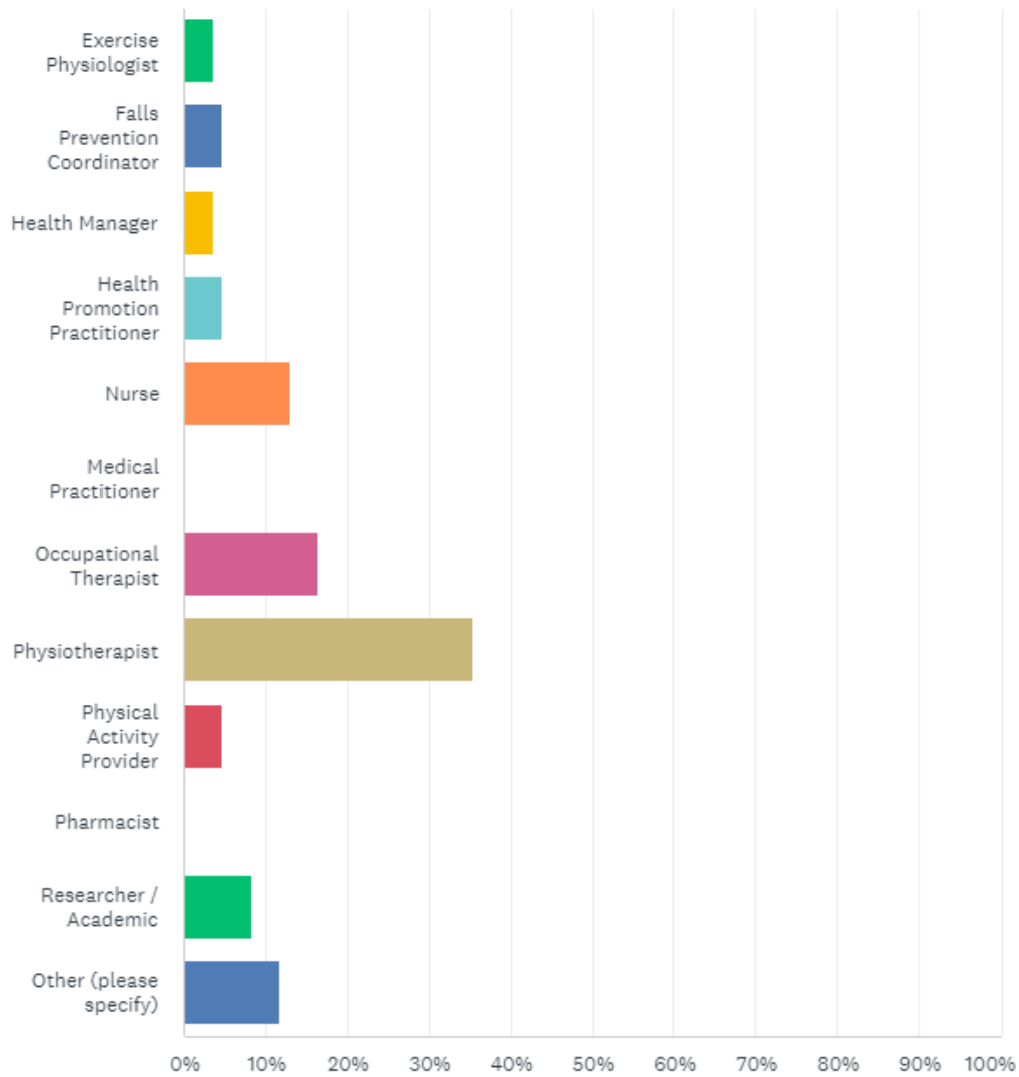


Figure 1. The professional role of respondents

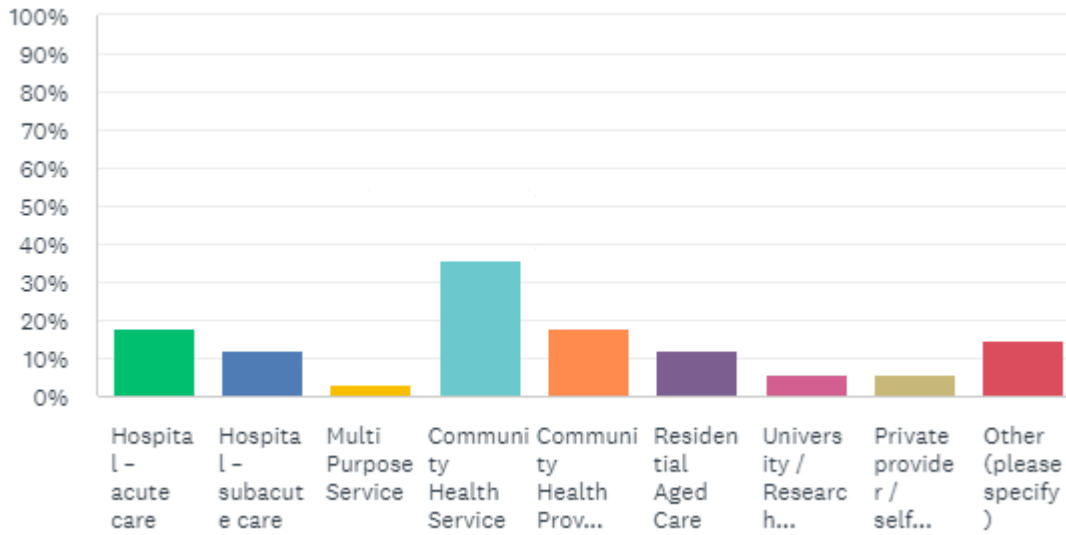


Figure 2. The work settings of the respondents

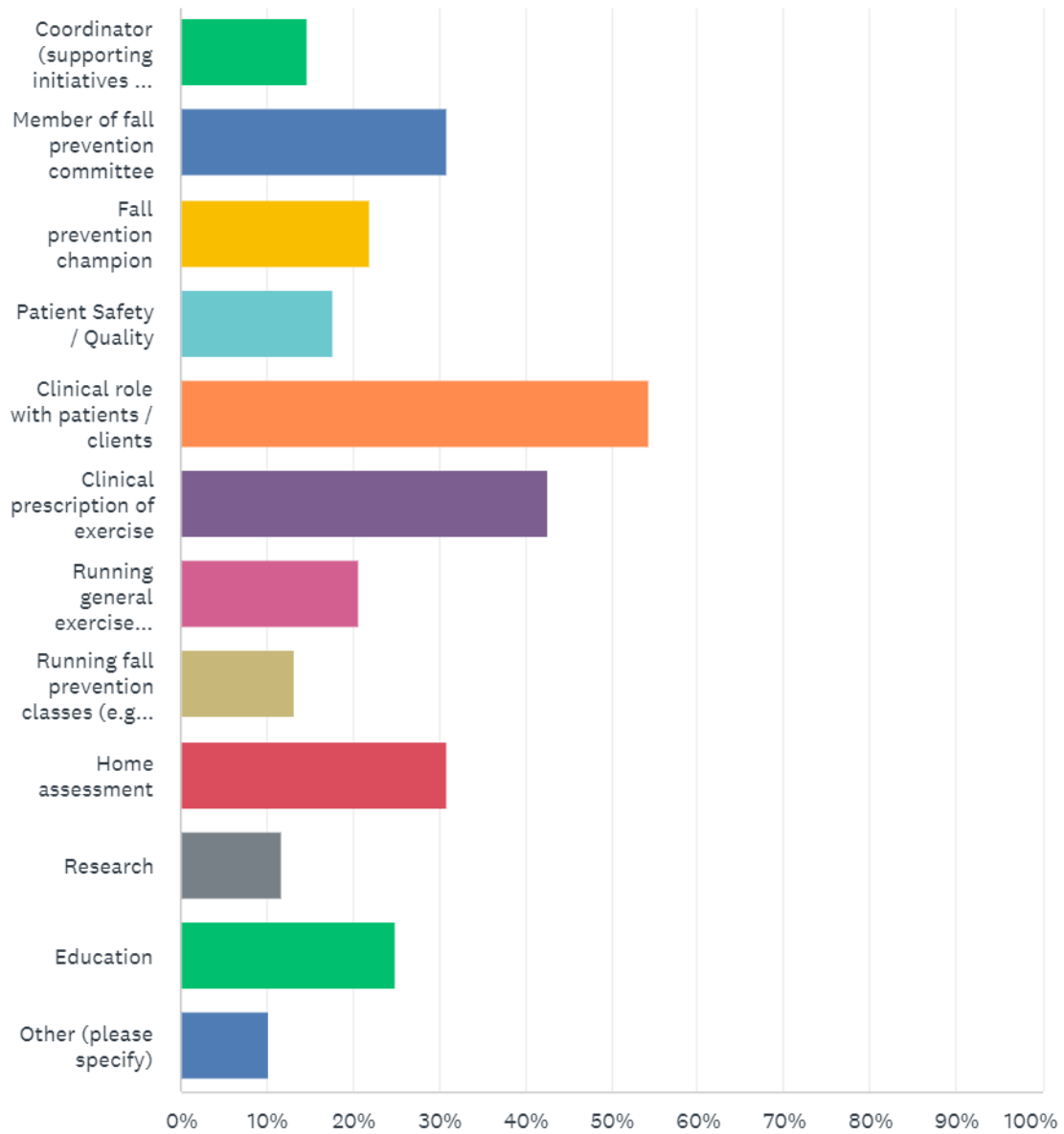


Figure 3. The fall prevention and/or healthy ageing role of respondents

What is the best mechanism to communicate fall prevention and healthy ageing information to you?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 25

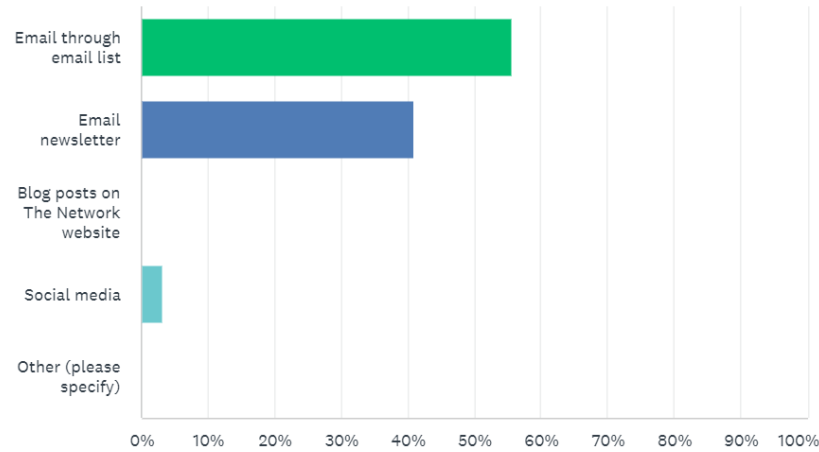


Figure 4. Preferred methods of communication

Is it easy to navigate our website?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 25

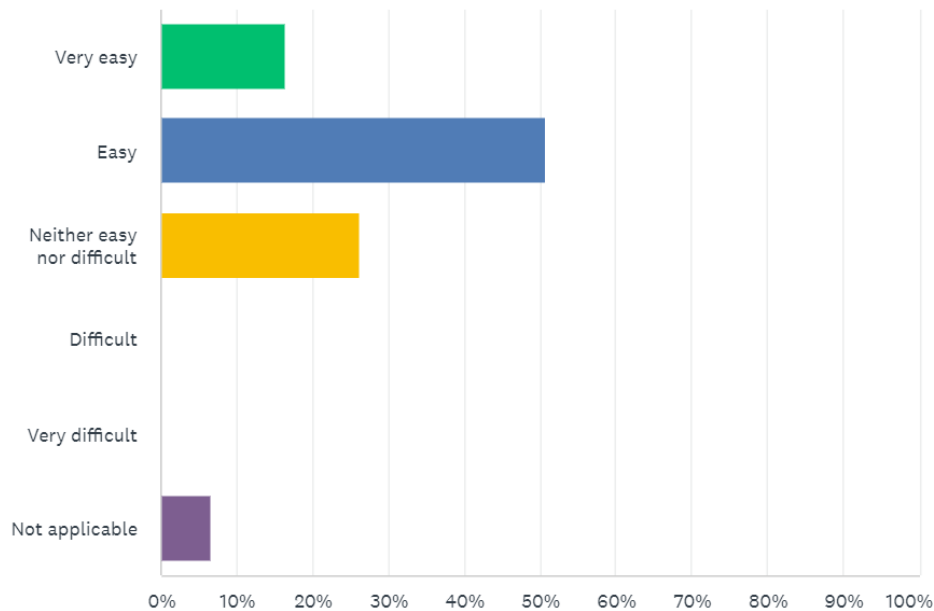


Figure 5. The website was found to be easy or very easy to navigate by 74% of respondents.

Did you attend the 2024 NSW Fall Prevention and Healthy Ageing Network Annual Forum in Sydney?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 25

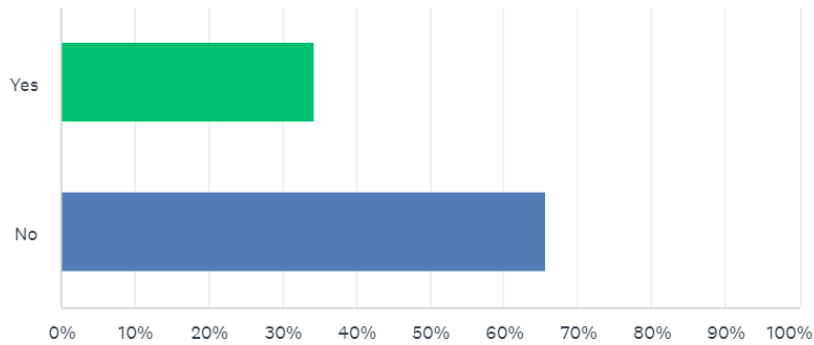


Figure 6. Attendance of survey respondents at the Annual Forum

If you didn't attend this year's forum, please let us know why.

Answered: 42 Skipped: 44

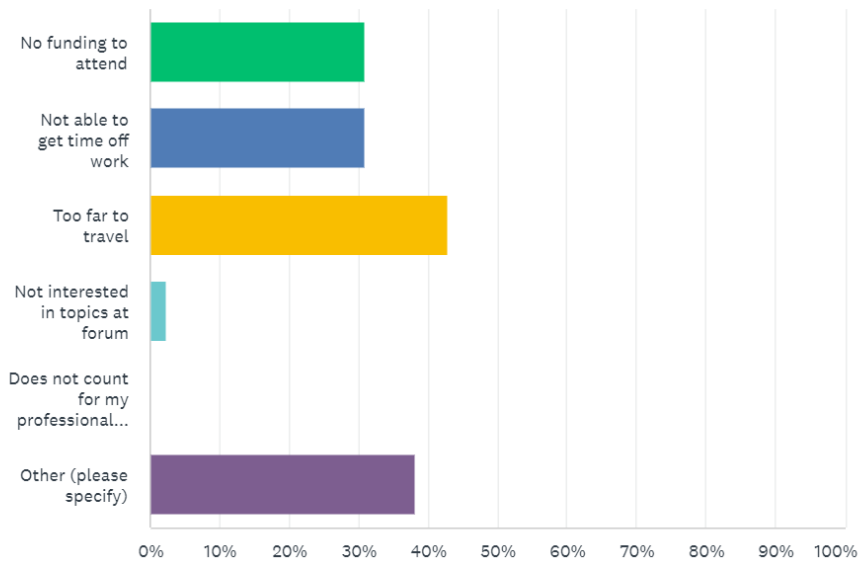


Figure 7. Reasons for non-attendance at the Annual Forum

Table 1. List of common barriers reported by survey respondents

Barrier
Resources & Funding
Patient Compliance & motivation
Staffing levels
Not seen as Priority by management or staff
Staff skill levels
Patients with cognitive impairment
Lack of follow up and/or referral
Transport to classes
Lack of time
Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Community

When asked about improvements to the NSW FPHAN website, suggestions to improve the website included:

- Having handouts for patients
- Simplify the text with icons
- Update the appearance of the website – more contemporary
- Increase the resources
- Improving the navigation
- Add Q & A section
- More research updates that can be easily interpreted
- Stepping On section

Suggested topics for mini-reviews are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Mini review topic
Cognitive impairment / delirium and falls
Medications and falls
Vision and falls
Dizziness and falls
Tele-health and fall prevention programs
Mental health and falls
Sarcopenia and falls
Tai Chi for falls prevention

Mini-reviews on Tai Chi (2014) as well as vision (2017) have been uploaded, but may require updating. A lack of awareness of these mini-reviews highlights the importance of circulating

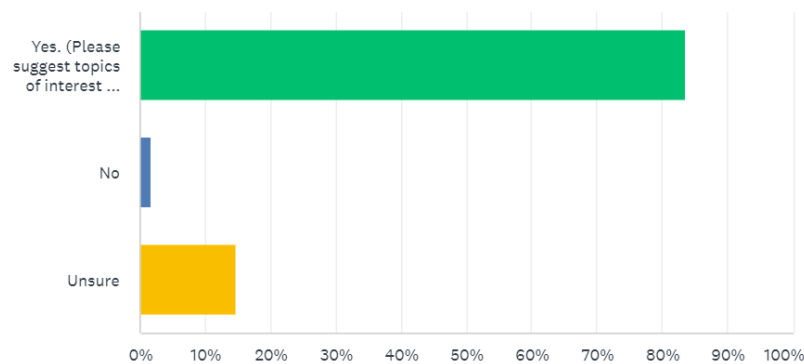
information on these reviews beyond the e-newsletter

Other suggestions for mini-reviews included: recommended physical activity programs, mechanism of falls in chronic diseases (diabetes, stroke, Parkinson's Disease), falls in residential aged care and peripheral neuropathy and falls.

Respondents also indicated that they would be interested in attended webinars/activities dedicated to specific topics/settings:

Would you like to attend workshops/webinars covering specific areas (such as exercise, dementia and falls, medication and falls, and interventions in acute, community and residential aged care settings)?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 25



In conclusion, the majority of respondents were satisfied with the activities and information provided by the NSW FPHAN and would like to see the continued provision of these activities and updates of information. Suggestions provided by respondents will be incorporated into the activities of the NSW FPHAN.