

Falls Pathway, Ask Assess and Act

(a guide to preventing older people falling in three simple steps)

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Falls prevention has been identified as a key priority area for the STP due to the high costs and poor outcomes associated with falling, particularly for those who are already frail. This is accentuated when combined with increased risks of fractures.
- 1.2 People aged 65 and older have the highest risk of falling, with 30% of people older than 65 and 50% of people older than 80 falling at least once a year. Falls are estimated to cost the NHS more than £2.3 billion per year. Importantly many of these falls are preventable if appropriate interventions are in place.
- 1.3 Estimates have demonstrated that we can expect around 70,000 people to fall each year across Derbyshire. The Joint Falls Needs Assessment for Derbyshire has revealed that there are gaps in awareness raising, prevention activities, a complete falls pathway and risk identification. Actions to address these gaps are planned and will create significant system level savings across Derbyshire.
- 1.4 Actions already undertaken include liaison with Care Link and Telecare services and working with Derby County Community Trust to promote and increase referrals to the Forever Active Programme. Referral levels are currently low and capacity is available to work with many more individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To endorse the Falls pathway; all members of the HWB to understand the importance of the preventative aspects of the Falls Pathway and to become 'ambassadors' for falls prevention within their organisations.
- 2.2 To ensure that front line staff understand the falls pathway and their role within this pathway. **Older people are asked about falls when they have routine assessments and reviews with health and social care practitioners (Quality Statement 1 NICE guidance updated Jan 2017).**
- 2.3 To ensure that front line staff are supported to undertake any 'falls prevention' training and development.

- 2.4 To ensure front line staff are proactively referring people in the community who have a known history of recurrent falls for strength and balance exercise programmes (**Quality Statement 8 NICE guidance 2015**).
- 2.5 To ensure front line staff are signposting to services which promote healthy ageing such as; Healthy Housing, Safe & Well Checks, Strength & Balance Programmes and Carelink Services.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Falls Prevention is a priority within the Place Alliance and the wider STP.
- 3.2 It will support the delivery of our vision to empower people to live a healthy life for as long as possible.
- 3.3 There is strong evidence that a third of falls can be preventable.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 Falls as a priority for Place Alliances

The aim of the newly formed Place Alliances as part of the STP is to focus on supporting people to stay well for longer through a consistent set of priorities, one of which is the prevention of falls. Across Derbyshire the work stream include a range of falls prevention interventions such as raising awareness and understanding how to prevent falls among older people, developing a number of different levels of 'prevention' interventions and developing training and educational resources for workforce coming in contact with people aged 65 and over.

4.2 Background to Falls

Falls and fall-related injuries are a common and serious problem for older people. People aged 65 and older have the highest risk of falling, with 30% of people older than 65 and 50% of people older than 80 falling at least once a year (Public Health England, 2017)

The human cost of falling includes distress, pain, injury, loss of confidence, loss of independence and mortality. Falls are estimated to cost the NHS more than £2.3 billion per year.

Many groups of people are at a higher risk of falls however, the main concern is not simply the high incidence of falls in older people, but the combination of a high incidence and a high susceptibility to injury due to the risk of fragility fractures.

Effective commissioning for falls and fracture prevention will reduce demand and improve quality and outcomes and independence for older people. In addition this will also result in savings to health and care services

4.3 **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (key points from the JSNA for Derby City)**

Modelled data for Derby City and Derbyshire, using 2015 mid-year estimates and prevalence estimates from 'Falls and fractures: effective interventions in health and social care', DH indicates that 70,000 people will fall in any given year

	Derbyshire (inc. Derby)	Total for 4 CCGs
All ages	1,036,616	1,036,844
65+	203,520	201,875
Will fall	70,101	69,535

Source: ONS midyear estimates

4.4 **Key needs and service gaps from the JSNA for Derby**

- Awareness: Older people need to have improved awareness of the risks of falls and that falls are preventable.
- Prevention activities: Uptake of activities (e.g. strength and balance exercise classes) to reduce the primary risk of falls is limited.
- Falls pathway: Current absence of an integrated falls pathway across Derby City and Derbyshire to enable professionals to understand their role, refer to relevant falls prevention/ response services and coordinate on-going care. (The falls pathway has now been developed as part of the JSNA action plan)
- Risk identification: The existing processes for identifying those at higher risk of falling are limited; resulting in low referral numbers to primary and secondary prevention initiatives and services, high levels of unmet need and ultimately a high number of (preventable) falls in over 65s.

4.5 **Potential cost savings identified from the JSNA**

- Across Derbyshire 20% of Ambulance call outs coded as less serious (Green 4) may not need EMAS and could be attended by other providers e.g. Falls Recovery Service.
- 13% of admissions across Derbyshire were likely to have been avoidable because injuries were superficial. Emerging evidence from a pilot in Leicestershire suggests that further admissions could be avoided if more effective measures were in place to assess and provide support to fallers who have minor injuries.

4.6 **Care Link and Telecare services**

- Derby City Council provides both Carelink and Telecare services as part of the Falls recovery service. This includes a 24 hour monitoring and response centre as well as telecare sensors to help support individual's needs.

This is currently going through restructure and expansion of workforce which will reduce referrals to EMAS. There are also plans for further training and development in relation to assessment and support for fallers with minor injuries

4.7 **Key interventions/ approaches identified in the Consensus statement (PHE, 2017)**

Interventions should form part of a whole system approach taking place right across the patient pathway, from population risk factor reduction to complex care for severe injuries. Preventative interventions (Gov.uk, 2017) include:

- Promoting health ageing particularly adequate nutrition and physical activity. Signposting information
- Risk assessment and timely, evidence-based, tailored interventions for those at high risk of falls
- Evidence-based strength and balance programmes and opportunities for those at low to moderate risk of falls
- Home hazard assessment and improvement programmes

4.8 **Falls Prevention Classes in Derby**

Forever Active is a free 12-month physical activity programme for people over 60 delivered in partnership by Derby City Council and Derby County Community Trust. Currently the number of direct referrals from health and social care services is poor, 26 referrals in the last 6 months with the uptake being 50%. There is a need to review marketing and publicity of the programme to encourage uptake.

4.9 Promoting the Falls Pathway

- The Falls Pathway has already had a 'soft' launch at the Dementia conference in May 2018 which had over 150 attendees
- The Falls Pathway has been promoted to staff working in Talking Points and Local Area Co-ordinators attending a 2 day 'Health and Wellbeing Conversations in the Community', commissioned by Public Health
- The Falls Pathway has been promoted to staff working in Care Link and Telecare services
- The Falls Pathway is currently being promoted within Primary Care / Care Co-ordinators
- Further marketing and communication plans are being developed for wider circulation of the Falls Pathway.

Derbyshire and Derby Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Falls in Older People (2017)

Derby City Council - Ask, Assess Act, A pocket guide to preventing people from falling in three simple steps.

Joined Up Care Derbyshire (2018) A better place for health and wellbeing

Public Health England (2017) Falls and fracture consensus statement. Supporting commissioning for prevention

NICE (2017) Falls in Older people. Quality Standard (QS86)

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 N/A

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Dr Robyn Dewis, Consultant in Public Health Medicine
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

1.1 N/A

Legal

2.1 N/A

Personnel

3.1 N/A

IT

4.1 N/A

Equalities Impact

5.1 N/A

Health and Safety

6.1 N/A

Environmental Sustainability

7.1 N/A

Property and Asset Management

8.1 N/A

Risk Management and Safeguarding

9.1 N/A

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

10.1 N/A