Working Together to Put Fall Prevention on the Health System Agenda

The Ontario Fall Prevention Collaborative

Presented by Christine Bidmead and Susan Bonomo

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Overview

- Background
- Ontario Fall Prevention Collaborative
- Identified priorities
- Position paper
- Discussion
Definition of a Fall

A fall is “an event that results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or floor or other lower level, with or without injury”

(World Health Organization, 2016)
An Overview of Fall-related Injuries Among Older Adults in Ontario

Falls are the leading cause of injury among older Canadians
20-30% of older adults experience 1+ Fall per year\(^1\)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Fall-related injuries among older adults in Ontario caused:</th>
<th>Fall-related injuries among older adults in Ontario are associated with:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Over 250,000 emergency room (ER) visits in 2014-15(^2)</td>
<td>• Chronic pain, social isolation, confusion and depression(^1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Over 60,000 hospitalizations in 2014-15(^2)</td>
<td>• Loss of independence that often culminates in long-term care(^1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Over $2 billion in direct health care costs in 2010(^3)</td>
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Fall-related injuries among older adults CAN be prevented through range of effective strategies
A 20% reduction in fall-related injuries among older adults would save the Ontario government $400 million each year\(^3\)
Fall Prevention for Older Adults

- Encompasses a range of strategies aimed at reducing the number of people who fall, the rate of falls and the severity of injury.

- Fall prevention can include a number of components to prevent, identify and/or modify risk factors and conditions.
## Levels of Fall Prevention

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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td><strong>Primary prevention</strong></td>
<td>aims to prevent disease or injury before it ever occurs.</td>
<td>exercise classes, safe home assessments, environmental modifications (e.g., shower grab bars)</td>
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<td><strong>Secondary prevention</strong></td>
<td>aims to reduce the impact of a disease or injury that has already occurred.</td>
<td>comprehensive risk assessments, balance re-training, hip protectors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tertiary prevention</strong></td>
<td>aims to soften the impact of an ongoing illness or injury that has lasting effects.</td>
<td>rehabilitative care, physiotherapy</td>
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The Ontario Fall Prevention Collaborative

- Formed in 2017, with facilitation by the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation (ONF)

- Comprised of representatives from the key organizations involved in the planning and implementation of fall prevention interventions in Ontario
Think Tank Outcomes

• Mission: To improve the quality of life for Ontario seniors aged 65 years and over and to lessen the burden of falls on the health care system by reducing the number and impact of falls

• Priorities (provincial oversight, measurement framework, knowledge exchange, standardized interventions and fall prevention tools)

• Position papers to inform and influence policy
Purpose of Position Paper

• To guide the development of a more integrated, coordinated and efficient approach to fall prevention among older adults in Ontario

• To describe how recent innovations (e.g., the establishment of Ontario Health Teams) can be leveraged to establish a more effective and coordinated fall prevention system that will reduce the burden of fall-related injuries among older adults while improving their quality of life
Fall Prevention ‘works’, BUT

- The collective impact of fall prevention efforts in Ontario is hampered by a **fragmented system of delivery** that makes it difficult to determine:
  
  - what programs are working
  
  - how programs can be improved

  - where a greater investment of resources or an increased level of collaboration/coordination between key stakeholders is needed to maximize impact and efficiencies\(^8\)
Improved Coordination of Fall Prevention Initiatives Through Greater System Integration

Integration refers to policies and structures designed to create greater connectivity, alignment and collaboration between key components of the health system.\textsuperscript{9, 10}

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Rationale for an Integrated System Approach to Fall Prevention

• Strategies addressing multiple risk factors have been shown to reduce rates of falls by up to 24 percent\textsuperscript{12}

• Multi-component strategies require cross sectoral collaboration between multiple stakeholders

• A shift towards a more integrated approach to fall prevention has the potential to increase the reach and effectiveness by:
  o reducing levels of ‘siloing’, duplication and fragmentation
  o offering a more holistic approach that better addresses the multiple intrinsic and extrinsic causes of a fall and the often complex needs of older adults
An Approach to Integrated Fall Prevention

- While Ontario lacks a truly integrated fall prevention system, some regions of the province have made significant progress towards a more coordinated approach through adapting the Stay on Your Feet (SOYF) Framework, a model of fall prevention developed in Queensland, Australia\(^1\)\(^3\)

- SOYF is designed to reflect the movement of an older adult across different settings of community, hospital and residential aged care. Where the person is located along the continuum is dependent upon their health status and falls risk.
Stay on Your Feet (SOYF) Framework

- Healthy active ageing (low risk)
- Starting to feel unsteady (at risk)
- Increased risk
- Vulnerable (ongoing risk)
- Frail (high risk)

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Fall Prevention Framework (May 2019)

**Objective:**
To improve the quality of life for Ontario seniors aged 65 years and over and to lessen the burden of falls on the health care system by reducing the number and impact of falls.

**Approach:**
An Effective Integrated Fall Prevention Program in Each Region

**Components:**
- **Effective Governance:** A Governance Structure that is Informed by all Organizations Involved, A Multi-Sector Committee within Each Program, Clearly Outlined Accountabilities, Roles and Responsibilities, Effective Coordination and Management within Each Program.
- **Appropriate Level and Type of Assessment and Intervention:** Understanding the Current State and Risk Factors of Falls, Falls Risk Assessment and Interventions that are Comprehensive and Target Seniors at All Risk Levels, Clearly Outlined Screening, Assessment, Referral and Treatment Protocols, Leveraging Available Resources and Leading Practice Fall Prevention Programs and Tool.
- **Inclusive Local Partnerships:** Key Partnership amongst OHTs and other stakeholders, Involvement of All Relevant Health Care Organizations and Private Organizations, Effective Relationship Management.
- **Local Performance Measurement:** Indicators and Targets to be Selected at Outset of Program, Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation of Each Program, Rationalized Collection of Falls-Related Data.

**Provincial Systems-Based Structure for Fall Prevention:**
- **Provincial System-Based Strategic Coordination:** Guidance to all Regions on all Elements of Integrated Fall Prevention Initiatives, Central Knowledge Exchange Management.
- **Standardized Provincial Performance Measurement:** A Small Number of Relevant Provincial Falls Indicators to be Reviewed Regularly, Annual Review of Provincial Indicator List.
- **Alignment and Collaboration with Provincial and National Organizations & Initiatives:** Collaboration and Alignment with Existing Provincial and National Organizations and Initiatives, Continually Seeking Relevant Partnerships at the Provincial and National Levels, Informing and Influencing existing and new Provincial Initiatives Across the Lifespan.

Adapted from: Integrated Provincial Falls Prevention Framework & Toolkit by LHINCollaborative (July 2011)

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Recommendations for an Integrated Systems Approach

1. Minimum provincial standards for fall prevention through an effective, integrated fall prevention program in each region of Ontario.
2. Provincial oversight of key centralized functions for an effective fall prevention system

Recommendations (Cont.)
Recommendations (Cont.)

3. Fall prevention as a mandatory priority for Ontario Health Teams serving older adults
4. Provision of fall prevention supports and enablers for Ontario Health Teams serving older adults
Recommendations (Cont.)

5. Continued support for the fall prevention initiatives conducted by Ontario’s Regional Public Health authorities
Key Messages

1. Fall-related injuries are a leading cause of emergency room visits, hospitalizations and long-term care admissions among older adults, all of which contribute to overcrowding and hallway medicine.

2. A large body of evidence indicates that fall prevention programs and services can contribute to significant reductions in fall-related injuries, hospitalizations and associated health care costs among older adults in Ontario. However, the collective impact of fall prevention efforts in Ontario is limited by a fragmented system of delivery that makes it difficult to maximize impact and efficiencies.

3. An integrated system approach to fall prevention, with an appropriate level of provincial oversight, will be a more efficient and cost effective approach that can be expected to yield positive health outcomes among older adults.
Questions for Discussion

1. What do you think of the Collaborative’s recommendations for an integrated approach to fall prevention in Ontario?
   - comprehensive?
   - specific?
   - appropriate?
   - achievable?

2. Are there additional recommendations that should be considered?

3. What are the next steps the Collaborative should take to promote a more integrated approach to fall prevention in Ontario?
Next Steps

- Dissemination of position paper – your ideas
- Working groups (data and measurement; screening and assessment tools)
- What else?
Updates from the working groups

- Data working group
  - Using a Stay on your Feet framework the group has started to identify who is collecting what, how, why and where is it used and what for!

- Knowledge product working group
  - Using a similar framework based on the SOYF and the different levels of prevention, the group has started to identify what screening and assessment tools are being used across the sectors
Seniors Strategy

They would like to hear ideas and feedback from:

- seniors and their families
- the people who care for seniors
- organizations that support seniors

ACTIONS

Please share this information with your members and colleagues. The link for the survey is: Ontario.ca/SeniorsStrategy

- The survey closes: July 19, 2019
Get involved! Ask Questions!
Join Loop!

Hélène Gagné, Program Director,
helene.gagne@onf.org

This webinar is being recorded.
The slide deck and recording will be emailed after the webinar.

Stay in the Loop!
www.fallsloop.com
www.jr.fallsloop.com
References


