

## Instructions Overview

The *Falls Toolkit* is designed for all facilities whether they already have a falls prevention program or would like to start one. There are several ways to use this toolkit. You can start on one of the scenarios listed below and turn to specific sections that you think will address your needs. You can also use the toolkit to develop information packets for patients and staff about falls and fall prevention.

Wherever you start, we recommend looking through the entire booklet — you may find some new information that would be useful for your current program.

### **A. Scenario 1: Starting a Falls Prevention Program**

If you do not have a falls prevention program, the best place to start is the beginning and work your way through. The toolkit is designed to help you walk through the process from start to finish. Start by reviewing Chapter 1, Background.

### **B. Scenario 2: Falls Prevention Program in Beginning Stages**

If you have begun a falls prevention program, you should start in the Falls Team section (Chapter 2).

### **C. Scenario 3: Comprehensive Falls Program in Place**

Even if you have a successful program in place, you can still benefit from the Falls Toolkit. You may want to look at the Fall Prevention Policy (Chapter 3) for more ways to measure the success of your program. For more information on possible interventions, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's [\(AHRQ\) toolkit: Preventing Falls in hospitals](#)

Don't forget to look through the whole toolkit for more ideas on how to keep improving your program.

## **II. Suggested Information Packages**

The toolkit can be a resource for educating staff, patients and their families about falls prevention. Because only two toolkits are provided to each facility, we suggest copying or printing out specific parts of the toolkit that would require wider dissemination in educating staff and patients. The following are examples of information packages that can be put together using information in the toolkit. These packages are for specific people within your facility.

## **A. Supervisors and Management**

Supervisors and management need to understand why they should support falls prevention programs and interventions. You will need to justify the additional resources for the program.

### *1. Notebook:*

#### **Background**

This provides information on the importance of falls prevention.

#### **Falls Team**

This chapter provides information about member of clinical fall prevention teams along with key members of your organization's fall prevention program.

#### **Falls Policy**

This chapter covers several areas that need to be included in a falls prevention policy:

- Definitions of a Fall, Type of Falls, Severity of Injury
- Fall Risk Assessment for Inpatients
- Fall Risk Assessment for Outpatients
- Environmental Rounds
- Responsibilities of Staff
- Intervention Strategies
- Post Fall Procedures/Management

## **B. Clinical Staff: Nursing and Rehabilitation Staff**

Nursing staff need to know which interventions are available to them. Additionally, they should be provided with information regarding the effectiveness of those interventions.

### *1. Notebook:*

The chapters provide team member roles, interventions that they can use to prevent falls and fall-related injuries. It may help caregivers in developing care plans based on the needs of specific patients.

### *2. Resources*

This section can provide a general overview of articles relating to fall and injury prevention. You can select some of these articles that you think specifically relate to the interventions that are being implemented.

*3. Video:*

“Hip Protectors in an Inpatient Setting”

This video is designed to educate staff about hip protectors, should your facility choose to implement them.

*4. CD-ROM/Web site:*

Educational Materials – Hip Fracture Education PowerPoint

Provides information on the consequences of hip fractures and some information on the prevention of hip fractures.

Related Web sites

If your staff would like more information, you can direct them to some recommended Web sites.

### **C. Doctors and Prescribing Providers**

Doctors, physician assistants and prescribing providers are often order and oversee implementing recommendations regarding the medications and treatment of patients. Chapter 2, Falls Team, and Chapter 3, Falls Policy review content for roles and responsibilities of clinical team members as well as contributions to overall fall and injury prevention programs.

### **D. Rehabilitation Therapists**

Rehabilitation therapists (RTs) often make recommendations to help patients function more independently in their environment. The following information can be used to help RTs better assess and recommend interventions that best fit their patients’ needs.

*1. Video:*

Performing a Balance Assessment

This video explains how to perform and score a comprehensive balance assessment.

*3. Video/Web site and Balance Assessment Handbook*

This should be used in conjunction with the video Performing a Balance Assessment. It will help RTs follow along and give more detailed explanations of the tests shown in the video.

Web sites – [Cornell University Aging Web](#)

Especially [this section](#), which provides information on design as well as a program that shows how patients can interact in their home using their assistive devices.

## **E. Biotechnology and Facility Management Staff**

Biotechnology staff are responsible for maintaining equipment which can affect patient falls. The information below can help biotechnology staff in maintaining equipment.

### *1. Notebook:*

Chapter 3: Falls Policy: Interventions: Equipment Safety Checklist. The checklist provides a guide for biotechnology staff to assess equipment for its potential to cause falls. This list should be used on current equipment. New equipment should have more comprehensive tests done.

## **F. Patients/Family**

Patients and family should be involved in their care. The following information will be helpful for them.

### *1. Video:*

Protecting Your Hips with Hip Protectors

This video can be used to “sell” the idea of hip protectors to patients and families.

### *2. Brochures:*

“Hip Protectors”

Provides information about hip protectors to patients, including laundering instructions.

“Fall Prevention at Home”

Provides information on conducting a home assessment for some key areas. This can get patients started on evaluating their home.

### *3. CD-ROM/Web site:*

## Web sites

Many of the Web sites provide information for patients on falls and fall prevention. The AARP and CDC Web sites are good places to start.