

Falls Prevention Newsletter

Central and Northern Adelaide Health Service

A key aim of the Falls Network is to bring together health professionals with an interest in falls prevention.

In This Issue:

Thirsty for falls? Dehydration and the elderly.....	1
Recent Education Sessions and Conferences.....	3
New SA Fact Sheets.....	4
Service Directory Update.....	4
Falls Team, Central & Northern Activities 2010.....	5
Southern Falls Team Update.....	8
Education Sessions 2011.....	8
Feature Organisation – ILC.....	9

Thirsty for falls? Dehydration and the Elderly

Older people are at high risk of dehydration for many reasons. Dehydration can lead to deterioration in mental state resulting in dizziness, fainting and falls.



Why elderly are at risk

Normal ageing alters the body's ability to regulate water balance. Slowed renal function results in reduced concentration of urine in response to water deprivation. Furthermore, a decline in thirst results in older people not drinking despite being dehydrated. The risk of dehydration is further increased by hormonal changes, limited mobility, chronic illness and certain medications (diuretics and laxatives). Lastly, as the body ages, water percentage decreases as body fat increases (body fat contains almost no water whereas muscle and organs are made up of 70% water) (Schols et al 2009).

Elderly and Heat Stress

People over 60 are the most vulnerable group for heat-related illness during heat waves because of physiological impairments in the regulation of core temperature in hot conditions. The risk is further heightened by a homebound lifestyle, social isolation, decrease in mobility and certain chronic conditions including obesity, pulmonary disease and diabetes (Kenny et al 2009).

Dehydration rates

- Dehydration in the elderly accounts for one of the ten most frequent hospital admission in the US and are associated with an increased mortality, particularly for older men (Warren et al 1996).
- 25% of nursing home residents admitted to hospital are dehydrated (Schols et al 2009).

Signs and symptoms of dehydration:

Typical signs and symptoms of dehydration include:

Early Dehydration	Moderate Dehydration	Severe Dehydration
dry mouth	dry mouth	severe cramping
thirst	extreme thirst	low blood pressure
restless	flushed face	fainting
headache	headache	convulsions
mild muscle cramping	warm and dry skin	bloated stomach
	lack of urine production	lack of elasticity of the skin
	dizziness	rapid and deep breathing
	weakness	fast and weak pulse
	cramps in the arms and legs	heart failure

Australian Kidney Foundation
website www.kidney.org.au

Early diagnosis is often difficult in the older population as the more common physical signs of dehydration are often absent and can present as symptoms of delirium and/or dementia, mental confusion, dry skin, migraines, hypertension, digestive complications and persistent constipation (Weinberg et al 1995).

Important facts about our internal fluid supply

Fluid loss needs to be replaced.
 Body fluid is higher in men than in women, and declines with age.
 Fluid loss may be more in hot weather and with prolonged exercise.
 Most mature adults lose about 2.5 to 3 litres of fluid per day.
 Elderly people lose about 2 litres per day.
 An air traveller can lose approximately 1.5 litres of water during a three-hour flight.

*(Taken from the Kidney Foundation website
www.kidney.org.au)*

Treatment

Treatment depends on the severity of dehydration. Older people need to be supported and encouraged to maintain adequate levels of hydration. Dehydration must be treated as quickly as possible especially in warmer weather and illness.
 A common method of treating severely dehydrated people is through subcutaneous infusion of electrolyte containing fluids (Rochon et al 1996).

Your role



- ✓ Look out for signs and symptoms of dehydration in elderly clients especially in hot weather over the summer
- ✓ Ensure water is readily available to clients and encourage adequate fluids and
- ✓ Consider adaptive equipment to assist with fluid intake e.g straws, adaptive cups

References:

- Rochon P, Gill S, Littner J, Fishbach M, Goodison A and Gordon M, A systematic review of the evidence for hyperdermoclysis to treat dehydration in older people. *The Journal of Gerontology:Series A* (1996) 52(3);169-176
- Warren JL, Harris T, and Phillips C, Dehydration in Older Adults. *Journal of American Medical Association*(1996) 275(12): 912 - 912.
- Schols J, Groot C, Van Der Cammen T and Olde Rikkert M, Preventing and treating dehydration in the elderly during periods of illness and warm weather. *Journal of Nutrition, Health and Aging* (2009) 13;2: 150-157.
- Kenny G, Yardley J, Brown C, Sigal R and Jay O, Heat stress in older individuals and patients with common chronic diseases. *CMAJ* 2009. DOI:10.1503/cmaj.081050
- Weinberg A, Minaker K, Coble Y, Davis R, Head A, Karlan M, Kennedy W, Numann P, Spillman M, Skelton D, Steinhilber S, Strong J, Wagner H, Allen J and Rinaldi R, Dehydration evaluation and management in older adults. *Journal of American Medical Association*(1995);274:1552-1556



Recent education sessions:

Final break up

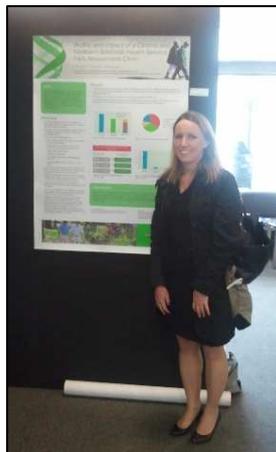
The final falls prevention network education session for 2010 "Gait and Falls", was presented by Gill Bartley (Program Manager Falls Prevention Team) and held Tuesday 30th November at Hampstead Day Rehabilitation Centre.

The session was extremely popular with 64 interested participants. Unfortunately due to limitations in venue size, the number of attendees was limited to 50. Gill discussed the mechanics and the differences in forces involved in slips and trips and how to relate this to assessment and treatment. Following a delicious afternoon tea, participants rotated through three practical stations which provided innovative treatment ideas.



A program of exciting new education sessions for 2011 is underway, details will be emailed shortly. We would love your input as to what topics or information you would like for newsletters or education sessions. Please email Gillian.Bartley@health.sa.gov.au

4th Australian & New Zealand Falls Prevention Society Conference



About 300 people from international locations attended the 4th Australian & New Zealand Falls Prevention Society Conference. The main theme for the conference was Falls Prevention: past, present and future. The amount of knowledge shared by an enthusiastic audience who all shared a passion for falls prevention was very rewarding. It confirmed our current practices in South Australia and prompted further thought around other practices used worldwide.

Many countries reported that due to change of health structure and funding this was having a direct impact on which services could continue. AHS (central & northern) presented a poster on the Hampstead Centre Falls Clinic and AHS (southern) presented a PowerPoint on the Pathways to Independence.

A copy of the plenary speakers presentations and abstracts for the conference and can be accessed at: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/fallsconference/conference.html>

New SA Fact Sheets!

Earlier this year the mammoth task of producing a new set of SA branded Falls Prevention Fact Sheets began. This process was a collaborative effort from many health providers and consumers across SA

Initially background information including current literature was assembled around each planned topic. Focus groups were then set up in each region to collate first drafts and we thank everyone involved in this. The next process involved further drafting by an expert panel of health professionals. A consumer group through Active Aging Australia were able to provide further feedback and final drafts amended.

The 9 fact sheets are:

1. Eat Well and Stay Strong
2. Eyesight and Walking
3. Medicines and Balance
4. Dizziness and Balance
5. Keeping Safe and Independent in Hospital
6. Comfy Feet Go a Long Way
7. Standing up to falls
8. Making your Home your Haven
9. Strong and Steady

A limited number of hard copies have been printed and posted to main organisations for viewing.

The fact sheets can be downloaded and printed through the safety and quality website:

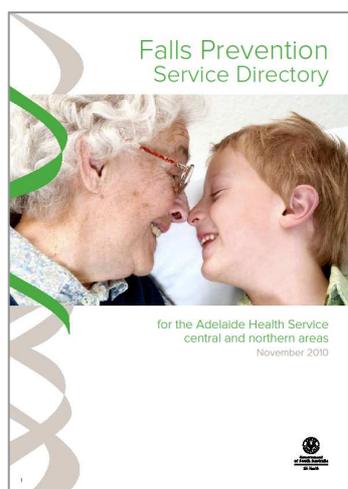
<http://www.safteyandquality.sa.gov.au/Default.aspx?tabid=157>

For further information contact the falls team 1300 0 32557 or email

Gillian.Bartley@health.sa.gov.au

Updated Falls Service Directory Now Available!

The Falls Prevention Service directory has now been updated.



New pages include:

- Contenance Services
- Resources Page
- DVA Home Front
- Private Day Therapy Options

Continued pages include:

- Day Therapy Centres
- Falls Clinics
- Vestibular Services
- Councils
- CPAA
- Strength for Life Programs
- Other Useful Contacts

Hard copies have been mailed out and electronic copy attached to this newsletter.

The next planned update will be due mid-way through 2011. Please keep us updated with any changes to your organisation.

For Further information contact Marlena.esposito2@health.sa.gov.au



AHS Falls Prevention Team, Central & Northern Region – a Snapshot of our Activities 2010 !

New Team Members

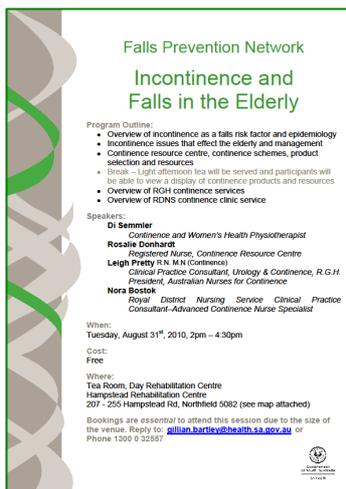
We would like to welcome 3 new members to our team:

Alison Ryan (OT), Ashleigh Scollin (OT) and Margaret Sullivan (PT) who started with us December 6th 2010.



Our office is now located at Shop 5, 221 Main North Road – our post office box address, central phone line (1300 0 FALLS) and fax line (1300 467567) remain the same.

Network



Falls Prevention Network
Incontinence and Falls in the Elderly

Program Outline:

- Overview of incontinence as a falls risk factor and epidemiology
- Incontinence issues that effect the elderly and management
- Continence resource centre, continence schemes, product selection and resources
- Break – Light afternoon tea will be served and participants will be able to view a display of continence products and resources
- Overview of RGH continence services
- Overview of RDNS continence clinic service

Speakers:

Di Semmler
Continence and Women's Health Physiotherapist

Roslie Doornhardt
Registered Nurse, Continence Resource Centre

Leigh Preddy R.N. M.N. (Continence)
Clinical Practice Consultant, Urology & Continence, R.G.H.
President, Australian Nurses for Continence

Nora Bostok
Royal District Nursing Service Clinical Practice Consultant-Advanced Continence Nurse Specialist

When:
Tuesday, August 31st, 2010, 2pm – 4:30pm

Cost:
Free

Where:
Tea Room, Day Rehabilitation Centre
Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre
207 - 209 Hampstead Rd, Northfield 5082 (see map attached)

Bookings are essential to attend this session due to the size of the venue. Reply to: gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au or Phone 1300 0 03557

We currently have 159 members in the Network.

We produced 6 newsletters and offered four education sessions throughout 2010:

- Wii Fit and Falls
- Continence and Falls
- Home Safety
- Gait and Falls

All sessions were booked out with a very enthusiastic response.

A new education program will be presented in the next newsletter and we are investigating the potential of setting up a journal club.

If you have any burning topics you would like to see in the education program or newsletters, please email Gillian.Bartley@health.sa.gov.au

Falls Clinics

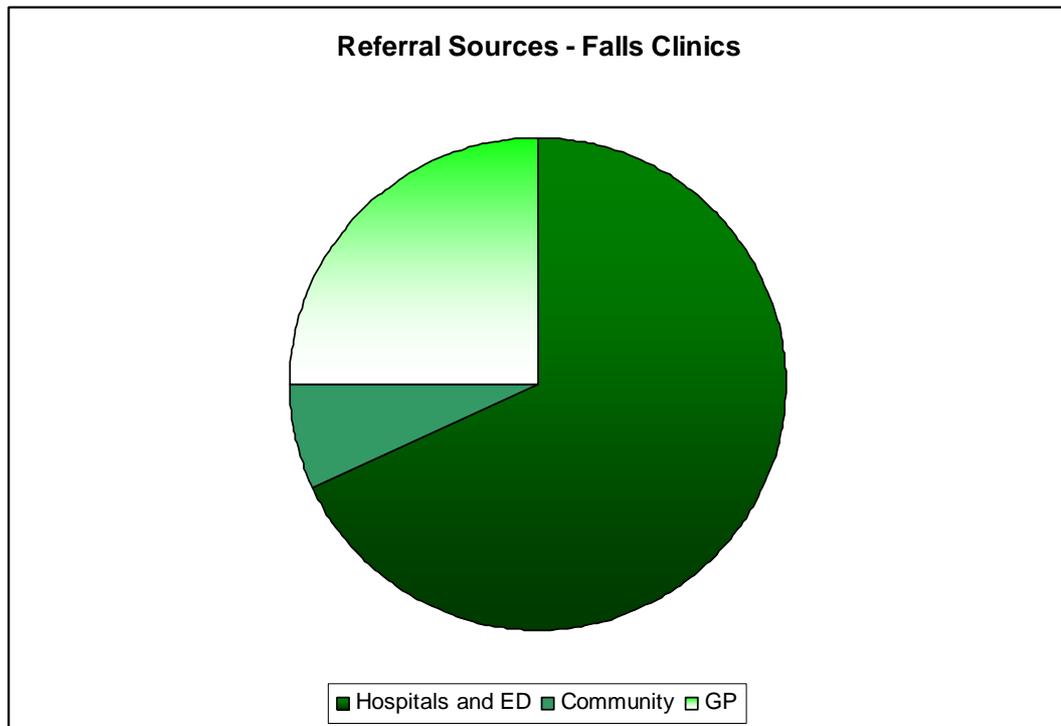
Falls assessment clinics provide multi-disciplinary assessment and management for older people with complex falls' related presentations. The Geriatrician-lead team consists of an occupational therapist, physiotherapist and nurse.

Following promising outcomes from the two clinics at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Hampstead Centre, a third clinic is planned to open in the Elizabeth GP+ Centre early 2011. The 3 Falls Clinics within the AHS Central & Northern region will be based at Woodville, Northfield and Elizabeth.



Referrals

In 2010 our referrals numbered over 340 which was a 56% increase compared to 2009. All referrals are triaged which includes contact with key agencies, the client and often family. Following triage, clients are linked into appropriate community or clinic services.



Outcomes

Service Utilisation

Data collated (6 months pre clinic and 6 months post clinic) in relation to hospital and ambulance utilisation showed:

- 56% reduction in ambulance lift only attendances
- 77% reduction in ambulance transports to ED following a fall
- 77% reduction in ED admissions
- 66% reduction in hospital admissions
- 46% reduction in hospital bed days

SAAS

As part of our strategic plan, our service aims to provide sustainable systems and procedures for the early identification of individuals at risk of falls and falls related injuries across the region

In 2008 there were approximately 2800 'lift only' attendances in the CNAHS region and 1200 in the SAHS region over a 50 week period. Across the Adelaide region, there were 1380 repeat call outs to the same address over the same period. 'Lift only' attendances refer to ambulance call outs for a fall where the individual was not transported to hospital.



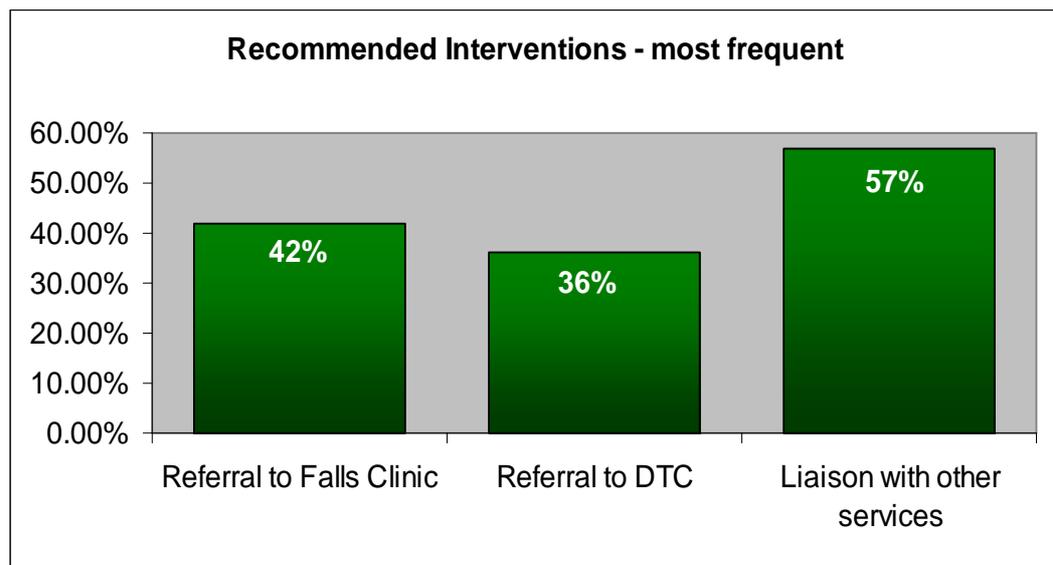
AHS (central & northern and south) provided 22 training sessions to paramedics to raise falls prevention awareness.

A simple pathway that allowed SAAS to refer non urgent response fallers to a central point for further follow up in relation to their fall has been trialled with successful results.

To date our team has received 107 referrals. The client group has an average age of 81 years. A high number of referrals (38%) are received out of working hours.

Each referral receives a screening telephone call and following this, liaison with existing services and linkage with other services as appropriate. A letter is sent to the GP outlining our recommendations.

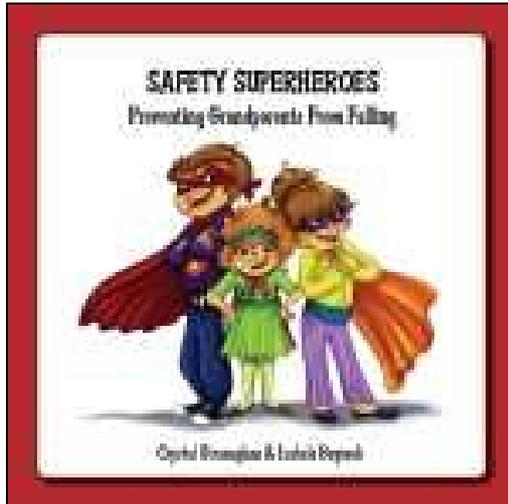
Initial outcomes are shown below.



Southern Falls Prevention Team Update

Well done to the Southern Team for their submission of "Pathways to Independence" being recognised as a finalist in SA Health Awards!

Resources



Have you ever had your children or grandchildren remind you to put your seat belt on or turn the tap off to save water? Once they get an idea in their heads they will tell you over and over and over again. That's the idea behind Safety Superheroes, the latest project from Dr. Fabio Feldman, Manager of Seniors Falls and Injury Prevention at Fraser Health Region.

Dr. Feldman developed the first ever children's book about falls prevention aimed at children and their grandparents. Using a new, intergenerational approach to falls prevention, the book focuses on the influence

that grandkids can have on their grandparents (and vice-versa) to increase awareness about fall prevention and home safety.

Through a story book approach it teaches ways to prevent seniors from falling by providing ideas on how to make their grandparents' home safer. With a fun story, lively illustrations and loads of safety tips, this book is a great resource for encouraging and teaching about intergenerational falls prevention.

For more information visit www.safetysuperheroes.com

Education Sessions 2011

Falls Community Guidelines Launch

Scheduled during February 2011 – details to be confirmed

April Falls Forum

Contact: Lisa.Elmes@health.sa.gov.au
Date: 7 April 2011
Time & Venue: TBC

Feature Service: The Independent Living Centre



Who are we?

The Independent Living Centre provides free information and advice on equipment to help individuals improve their quality of life and maintain their independence.

Staffed by health professionals (occupational therapists) Independent Living Centre services are available to all members of the public.

Services

Information and advice is provided about equipment and techniques to assist with everyday tasks, including:

- bathroom, toileting and incontinence
- clothing and dressing
- household and kitchen equipment
- building fixtures and design for access
- lifting, transferring, ramps and hoists
- seating
- mobility/walking aids
- wheelchairs, scooters ('gophers') and buggies
- vehicle modifications
- communication aids and telephone access
- computer and vocational aids
- recreation.

Equipment is displayed at the centre for the public to browse and try out. Brochures, fact sheets, books, videos and CD ROMs are also on view. A health professional is available to provide advice and assistance regarding equipment hire, loan and purchase.

For further information and see range of products available

<http://www.ilcaustralia.org/home/sa.asp>

Location and Contact details (for further information)

Address: 11 Blacks Road , Gilles Plains SA 5086

Opening hours: 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday

Phone: 1300 885 886 (SA/NT callers only) or 8266 5260

Fax: 8266 5263

Email: ilcsa@dfc.sa.gov.au

<http://www.disability.sa.gov>

For more information

Falls Prevention Team

PO Box 508

Prospect East SA 5082

Telephone: 1300 0 32557 (1300 0 FALLS)

Facsimile: 1300 467 567

gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au