

# CNAHS Falls Prevention Newsletter

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

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## Feedback from 2009 Survey

Three surveys were conducted on our support role, education sessions and newsletters for this year. We are grateful for your feedback, which will help guide us in our endeavours towards a productive 2010 for falls prevention in CNAHS.

## On a Roll : Falls Training in Elderly



Training of the same techniques used in Martial Arts to fall correctly is being considered as useful in the prevention of hip fractures in the elderly. (Groen et al 2008).

It has been estimated that 90% of all hip fractures result from a fall. Although hip protectors have shown to decrease the impact load on the hip, the benefits of hip protectors are yet to be clearly proven. This has led to research in the possibility of teaching older persons to fall safely thus reducing the impact load on the hip.

An early study has looked at the benefits of Martial Arts (MA) training, as a component of a falls prevention program. MA falls training was introduced as part of a 5 week falls prevention programme in healthy elderly adults over the age of 60years. (Nijmegen Falls Prevention Program).

Participants were taught how to apply MA fall techniques in a forward, backward and sideways direction. Sideways falls strategies involve a combination of knee flexion, waist flexion and trunk rotation to be the most effective movements in reducing the impact.

The fall techniques focus on developing a rolling motion when falling. It was shown this action reduced hip impact forces by 12- 27% in comparison to natural fall arrest strategies such as outstretched arms.

It has been suggested that further research into this area be conducted to investigate whether a reduction in hip fracture results.

Studies with young adults demonstrated that there was a 17% reduction in hip impact forces following a 30 minute training session in falling correctly.

A study based on a model by Lo and Ashton- Miller found that even with aging muscle forces (reduction of 30 %) the MA strategy was effective in reducing forces to below the fracture thresholds.

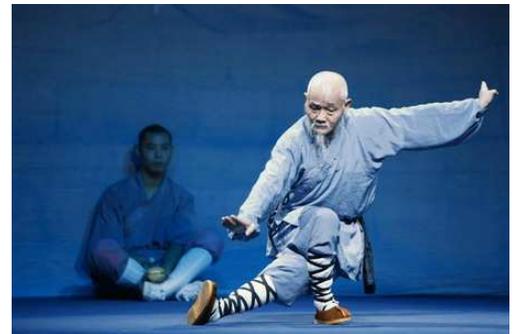
Participants were also asked to complete a Visual Analog Scale (VAS), which looks at fear of falling in daily life. There was a noted reduction in the fear of falling described by participants.

After training, 21 of the 25 participants felt confident to apply these skills in a training situation and 15 participants felt they could apply the techniques in unexpected daily falls.

MA falls training may have similar effects for hip fracture prevention as the prescription of bisphosphonates.

### References:

1. Groen BE, Weerdesteyn V, Duysens J ( 2007) Martial arts fall techniques decrease the impact forces at the hip during sideways falling. *J Biomech* 40(2): 458- 462
2. Lo J, Ashton- Miller JA ( 2008) Effect of pre-impact movement strategies on the impact forces resulting from a lateral fall. *J Biomech* 41(9): 1969-1977
3. Weerdesteyn V, Rijken H , Geurts AC et al ( 2006) A five week exercise program can reduce falls and improve obstacle avoidance in the elderly. *Gerontol* 52( 3): 131 – 141
4. Groen BE, Smulders E, deKam D, Duyens J, Weerdesteyn V ( 2010) Martial arts fall training to prevent hip fractures in the elderly. *Osteoporosis Int* 21; 215-221



## New National Falls Prevention Guidelines

After a much-anticipated wait, the new national falls prevention guidelines were released early this year. Three guidelines exist:

### Hospital settings:

[Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Hospitals 2009](#)

### Residential Aged care Setting:

[Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities 2009](#)

### Community Setting:

[Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Community Care 2009](#)

## April Falls Day 2010

April Falls Day (1 April 2010) is a national awareness opportunity for falls prevention. You and your workplace can get involved in the following ways:

### 1. Displays

We will organise resource packs (which will include some of the new state-wide fact sheets) for interested parties to set up displays at their work site. Please email Lauren ([lauren.woodford@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:lauren.woodford@health.sa.gov.au)) to receive your pack.

Last year over 30 organisations around CNAHS set up displays at their work place. Below is a selection of photos from different displays from 2009.



*Send us photos of your display to feature in our April newsletter. The best display will win a prize!*



### 2. Education Opportunities

#### Wii Week

Small practical workshops exploring programs and applications suited to balance remediation (please note that SAHS is running a theory session March 5<sup>th</sup> – this has been fully booked).

**Contact:** Marlena phone 1300 0 32557 or [marlena.esposito2@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:marlena.esposito2@health.sa.gov.au)

**Dates:** Choose your day: 20, 21, 22 and 23 April

**Time:** 1500-1630 hours

**Venue:** Falls Office, Shop 1, 221 Main North Road, Sefton Park

#### Home Safety Assessments

Feedback from CNAHS audit and current research findings

Presenters: Diana Pignata and Lauren Woodford, Occupational Therapists

**Contact:** Lauren phone 1300 0 32557 or [lauren.woodford@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:lauren.woodford@health.sa.gov.au)

**Date:** Tuesday, 04 May

**Time:** 1430-1600 hours

**Venue:** Enfield Community Health Centre, conference room

## Cataract Rebates – an update

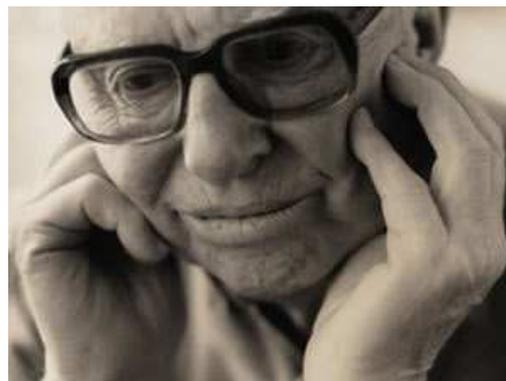
*“Expedited cataract surgery is the only evidence based vision intervention that has shown to be effective in reducing both falls and fractures in older people. Compared with expedited cataract surgery, prolonged waits on lists for cataract surgery are associated with an increased risk of falls and fractures”* (excerpt from Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Community Care 2009).

Health Minister Nicola Roxon had intended to reduce the rebate for cataract surgery from \$620 to \$370 in last year’s budget. The Coalition and independent senators voted against the legislation and a compromise was struck to increase the rebate to \$549. The revised rebate will allow ophthalmologists to continue providing services to rural communities and prevent waiting list increases in the public sector.

### References:

Foss A (2006). Falls and health status in elderly women following second eye cataract surgery: a randomised controlled trial. *Age and Ageing* 35(1):66–71.

Harwood R, Foss A, Osborn F, Gregson R, Zaman A and Masud T (2005). Falls and health status in elderly women following first eye cataract surgery: a randomised controlled trial. *British Journal of Ophthalmology* 89(1):53–59.



### Interesting Developments: Cane Fu!

The latest Cochrane review of falls prevention interventions in the community has shown that tai chi participation is an effective intervention (Gillespie et al 2009).

Tai chi was originally used for self-defence, and has evolved over the course of time into a practice for promoting health. A new martial art for the elderly is becoming popular worldwide. Cane fighting, also called "combat" cane or "cane fu," has been endorsed by at least eight martial-arts organizations. Community centres have referred to these cane classes as a gentle form of exercise. However concerns have been raised that complicated moves could make older people lose their balance. “Swinging the cane against the shins is one thing but if you actually need the cane for balance, you can’t be swinging it in the air. You’ll fall over.” Wall street Journal



### References :

1. Wall Street Journal 12/07/2008
2. Gillespie LD, Robertson MC, Gillespie WJ, Lamb SE, Gates S, Cumming RG and Roe BH. *Interventions for preventing falls in older people living in the community.* (Review) The Cochrane Library.2009

## Education Sessions 2010

### March

#### **Dementia and Delirium – Half Day Workshop**

Presenter: Associate Professor Jacqui Close

Organisers: SA Health

Contact: Lisa Michelmore phone 82266334 or  
[lisa.michelmore@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:lisa.michelmore@health.sa.gov.au)

Date: Monday, 22 March

Time: 8.30am Registration to 12.30pm

Venue: Adelaide Pavilion, Veale Gardens, Cnr South Tce and Peacock Rd

### April Falls Month

#### **Wii Week: Small interactive workshops exploring programs and applications suited to balance remediation**

Contact: Gill Bartley phone 1300 0 32557 or [gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au)

Organisers: CNAHS

Dates: 20, 21, 22 and 23 April

Time: 1500-1630 hours

Venue: Falls Office, Shop 1, 221 Main North Road, Sefton Park

### May

#### **Home Safety Assessments – feedback from CNAHS audit and current research findings**

Presenters: Diana Pignata and Lauren Woodford, Occupational Therapists

Organisers: CNAHS

Contact: Gill Bartley phone 1300 0 32557 or [gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au)

Date: Tuesday, 04 May

Time: 1430-1600 hours

Venue: Enfield Community Health Centre, conference room

#### **Fit and Fall Free: Exercise Prescription and Falls Prevention for Older People. One day course.**

Presenters: Dr Daina Sturnieks and Dr Anne Tiedemann

Organisers: SA Health

Contact: Lisa Michelmore phone 82266334 or  
[lisa.michelmore@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:lisa.michelmore@health.sa.gov.au)

Date: Saturday, 08 May

Time: TBC

Venue: CPAA, Hampstead Centre, Northfield

### June

#### **Engaging Older People through Self Efficacy: The Stepping on Program**

Presenter: Associate Professor Lindy Clemesen

Organisers: SA Health

Contact: Lisa Michelmore phone 82266334 or  
[lisa.michelmore@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:lisa.michelmore@health.sa.gov.au)

Date: TBC

Time: TBC

Venue: TBC

### October

#### **Tai Chi for Arthritis Part 1**

Presenter: Rosemary Palmer

Organisers: Arthritis SA

Contact: Carol Spargo phone 8423 0912 or  
[c.spargo@arthritissa.org.au](mailto:c.spargo@arthritissa.org.au)

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> October

Time: 9-4.30 both days

Venue: Arthritis SA, 118 Richmond Road, Marleston

## November

### 4<sup>th</sup> Australian & New Zealand Falls Prevention Society Conference

Mark this exciting conference to be held in Dunedin, New Zealand

21 - 23 November 2010 in your diary now!

Further details are available at: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/fallsconference>

## Feature Organisation



### Telecross

The Australian Red Cross Telecross service is a daily reassurance phone call, which gives peace of mind to clients, carers and families. It runs seven days a week, every day of the year.

#### How does Telecross Work?

Australian Red Cross Telecross volunteers make daily phone calls from locations within local communities checking on people's well-being and offering reassurance and friendship. If a person does not answer their Telecross call, an emergency procedure is activated to ensure that a personal visit is made to check on their well-being.

#### Who can use the Telecross service?

The Telecross service is for people who live alone, are carers, have a disability, are housebound, frail, aged, socially isolated, or recovering from an illness or accident. Sometimes people use the Telecross service on a temporary basis, when family or carers go away for a few weeks or if they have just returned home after a hospital stay.

#### Is there any cost for the Telecross service?

There is a contribution for Telecross of \$40.00 per year. However this fee is not compulsory to receive the service and registration will be determined on an individual basis.

#### Registration with Telecross:

Registrations can be made over the phone by anyone: a carer, social worker, doctor, family member or friend. Once a person is registered for the service, they can begin Telecross the following day.

#### Client Comments

*'Telecross is invaluable. To hear a friendly voice early every day really brightens my life - makes me feel secure. The best thing I've ever done was join Telecross.'*

*'The service has proven its worth on more than one occasion. Once Mum had fallen and broken her ankle and another time had fallen and was disorientated. Thanks for being there.'*

For further information call the Client Services Team  
on 08 8100 4697 or for country callers please phone  
1800 246 850 (free call).

Reference: [http://www.redcross.org.au/sa/services\\_telecross.htm](http://www.redcross.org.au/sa/services_telecross.htm)



### For more information

Falls Prevention Team  
PO Box 508  
Prospect East SA 5082  
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Facsimile: 1300 467 567

6 [gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:gillian.bartley@health.sa.gov.au)



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of South Australia

SA Health