

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.

I. Scenarios

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.

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 (p. 21-24). For more information on possible interventions, the Interventions section (p. 59-69) would be a good place to go next. This section has interventions recommended by VA facilities like yours. For determining how successful your program is, turn to the Measuring Success section (p. 73-81).

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 Measuring Success section (p. 73-81) for more ways to measure the success of your program. For more information on possible interventions, the Interventions section (p. 59-69) should be your next stop. You may also appreciate the Resources section (p. 85-101), Excel™ worksheets and Technology Assessment Guide. 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:

Tab – Background (p. 15-18)

This provides information on the importance of falls prevention.

2. CD-ROM/Web site:

Other — Fall Rate Calculator

Use this to show the level of falls and major injuries at your facility or within a specific target unit. This can also be used after the intervention to show that the intervention reduced the rate of falls and/or major injuries.

Falls Collaborative Documents

These can be used to show that certain interventions have been successful in other facilities

B. Staff Nurses, RNs, LPNs, NAs

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:

Tab – Interventions (p. 59-69)

This section provides 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.

Tab – Resources (p. 85-101)

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.

2. *Video:*

Hip Protectors in an Inpatient Setting

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

3. *CD-ROM/Web site:*

Educational Materials – Educational Resource Guide

Provides a list of educational materials and resources for patients and staff. Contact information on how to obtain the resources is also provided.

Educational Materials – Hip Fracture Education PowerPoint

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

Educational Materials – Identifying Patients Using a Falling Star PowerPoint™

If you are implementing a falling star identification program, this PowerPoint™ presentation is a good template to use for educating staff.

Related Web sites

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

C. Doctors, Physician Assistants and Advanced Practice Nurses

Doctors, physician assistants and advanced practice nurses are often the people implementing recommendations regarding the medications and treatment of patients.

1. *Notebook:*

Tab – Interventions (p. 59-69)

Tab – Resources (p. 85-101)

2. *Flyer:*

Performing the *Timed Up & Go Test*

Explains how to perform the *Timed Up & Go Test* on outpatients and to refer patients to a physical or occupational therapist if the patient is considered high-risk.

3. *CD-ROM/Web site:*

Educational Resource Guide

Related Web sites

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. *Notebook:*

Tab – Interventions (p. 59-69)

Tab – Resources (p. 85-101)

2. *Video:*

Performing a Balance Assessment

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

3. *CD-ROM/Web site:*

Educational Materials – 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 site: www.cornellaging.org

Especially <http://www.cornellaging.org/gem>. This Web site provides information on design as well as a program that shows how patients can interact in their home using their assistive devices.

Other – Technology Assessment Guide

This guide shows the possible assistive devices that can be used to help patients be more independent.

E. Biotechnology 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:

Tab – Interventions: Equipment Safety Checklist (p. 64)

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.

2. CD-ROM/Web site:

Other – Technology Assessment Guide

F. Facility Management Staff

Facility management is in the position of maintaining the patient's environment. The following information will be useful for them.

Notebook:

Tab – Interventions: Environmental Assessments (p. 60-65)

This section can help facility management implement an assessment program to ensure that hazards are clear from hallways and patient rooms.

G. 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.