

Title: Implementing and Disseminating a Falls Prevention Program in At-Risk Older Adults Living in a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community-Supportive Services Program

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Abstract

The overarching goal of this study is to test the impact of the implementation and dissemination of a falls prevention program in at-risk older adults living in a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community-Supportive Services Program (NORC-SSP). The literature cites that the most effective interventions, in targeting persons at risk to fall, include both a multifactorial fall risk assessment and management program conducted by a team of health professionals.ⁱ⁻ⁱⁱ After NORC-SSP staff conducted a risk assessment utilizing a modified version of the Hartford Fall Risk Assessment tool,ⁱⁱⁱ a multifactorial intervention was implemented, utilizing a single group pre-post design. The process included communication of those risk scores to the residents' physicians, along with recommendations for follow-up interventions. NORC-SSP staff then facilitated the process by which those interventions could be accomplished. Post-intervention assessments showed a significant decrease in the mean composite fall risk score for residents (N=93) from 32.9 to 23.9, Wilcoxon signed rank, $p \leq 0.001$. It was our belief that the communication of those assessment results to the primary physician, and follow-up intervention by a health professional well known to the older adult, would decrease risk factors to fall. Future research initiatives should focus on evaluating the NORC-SSP setting as a dissemination vehicle for best practice chronic disease management.

ⁱ Chang JT, Morton SC, Rubenstein LZ, et al. Interventions for the prevention of falls in older adults: systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised clinical trials. *BMJ* 2004; 328(7441): 680-687.

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ⁱⁱⁱ Farmer BC. The Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing, Division of Nursing, New York University 2000. Available at: <http://www.hartfordign.org>. Cited March 15, 2009.