Preventing Elder Spills: Down-Falls in Communication

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Description of Population of Focus

Study Population: People 65 years of age or older living in the Greater Worcester Area at risk of falls.

- People over the age of 75 had the highest prevalence of falls in 2010 according to the CDC.
- The National Council on Aging (NCOA) states 1/3 of Americans over the age of 65 will fall each year, and that every 29 minutes an elder dies as a result from a fall.
- According to the World Health Organization falls are the second leading cause of accidental deaths worldwide resulting in approximately 424,000 deaths.

Service Project

New England Dream Center:

- Provided free-of-charge fall assessments using both the Timed Up and Go (TUG) Test and a Functional Reach Test
- Counseled at risk patients about home risks through a home survey
- Wrote personalized recommendations for patients regarding medication-related and environmental risks
- Engaged the seniors in an invented educational game, “Fall Prevention Bingo”
- Gave prizes that enhance the safety of their homes: night lights and traction socks

3rd Annual Senior Health and Safety Fair:

- Performed 30-Second Chair Stand Test, challenging seniors to stand and sit as many times as possible in the given 30 seconds
- Explained test results and discussed patient’s previous falls and or worries regarding falls
- Referred “at risk” patients for home assessments to be performed by the Fallon Health Group

Centro Las Americanas:

- Provided free-of-charge fall assessments using both the Timed Up and Go (TUG) Test and a Functional Reach Test for 30 Hispanic elders
- Distributed pharmacy outreach flyers, falls prevention guides, and Worcester Senior Center informational pamphlets
- Gave participants traction socks

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At Risk Individual

People

- Elder Services of Worcester Area (ESWA)
- Community-based Care Transitions Program (CCTP)
- St. Paul’s Elder Outreach Program
- Protective Services
- Medicare & MassHealth

Services

- Home
- Nursing Home, Long term care facility
- Assisted Living
- Rehabilitation facility
- Hospital
- Adult Day Care: Worcester DREAM Center

Environment

- Personal (home monitoring devices, meals on wheels)
- Community (Fire, Police, & EMS, Religion & Cultural Associations, Worcester Housing)

Recent Trends in Medications

- Polypharmacy: Alcohol Consumption
- Benzodiazepines, Antidepressants, Hypoglycemic agents

References


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