

Massachusetts Falls Prevention Coalition



Our Mission: To promote healthy lifestyles, behaviors and strategies to prevent falls and fall-related injuries and maintain independence and autonomy; to reduce the incidence and severity of falls and fall related injuries across the lifespan in Massachusetts; and to promote collaboration, communication and training so that information and best practices can be shared across settings for individuals transitioning from one setting to another.

What We Do: We connect individuals and organizations working on falls prevention across all sectors (hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home care agencies, clinics, communities, state government, universities and others). We work with health care professionals, government officials and consumers to develop and implement evidence-based programs to prevent falls in Massachusetts.

Founding Partners: Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH); Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation; Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts (HCAM). Members include vision professionals, physicians, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, hospitals, nursing homes, home health and community agencies, health plans, advocates, consumers, and others.

Our Accomplishments:

- Roughly 1,650 registrants total have attended our First and Second Annual Statewide Falls Prevention Symposiums, both held at the DCU Center in Worcester.
- The MDPH report "Unintentional Fall-Related Injuries among Massachusetts Older Adults" presented to the Massachusetts Public Health Council. The coalition was charged with developing a strategic plan to prevent falls in Massachusetts.
- Patients First** initiative: hospitals voluntarily post information about patient falls on a public website. Hospital falls prevention programs have been compiled, synthesized and shared widely throughout Massachusetts.
- A long term care falls screening tool, assessment tool, and intervention guide were developed and are being implemented. Staff and Coalition partners distribute and wear falls awareness badges that carry basic fall prevention messages.
- MassHealth includes falls prevention program guidelines for the new Pay for Performance program for LTC facilities rolled out in the spring of 2009.

- Healthcare facilities now report falls to MDPH as a “serious reportable event” to track and guide improvements.
- A MDPH social marketing campaign, **Keys to Independence**, distributed over 8,000 print materials; conducted 11 focus groups with seniors across the state; and promotes the MDPH **1-800-227-SAFE** falls prevention information line.
- MDPH, Elder Affairs and Blue Cross/Blue Shield support 160 **Keep Moving** walking programs.
- Match-Up Interfaith Volunteers’ **Walking Buddies** program in Boston and Brookline matches seniors with walking buddies to promote physical activity.
- Prevention specialists at the VNA & Hospice of Cooley Dickinson conduct **Strength in Numbers**, a falls prevention program that includes: a fall risk assessment, strengthening exercises; balance activities; a home safety assessment; strategies for medication management; and vision assessment.
- HCAM hosted a successful falls symposium in April, 2009, and compiled and surveyed evidence-based home health falls prevention programs across MA.
- Over 600 older adults have participated in **A Matter of Balance** training sessions sponsored by HCAM and ABCD of Boston.

How to Contact Us: Call 617-558-0202 ext. 239 or

Email: aweintraub@maseniorcare.org

Department of Public Health Falls Prevention Information and Referral Line:

1-800-227-7233

For information about falls prevention in nursing homes, hospitals or home care:

- Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation www.maseniorcarefoundation.org or abonner@maseniorcare.org
- Massachusetts Hospital Association info@mhalink.org
- Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts www.thinkhomecare.org
- Mass Home Care www.masshomecare.org or www.800ageinfo.com