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Reducing the incidence, impact and severity of falls and fall-related injuries among older adults in south east Ontario

NEWS

In a collaborative effort to reduce the incidence, impact and severity of falls and fall-related injuries in south east Ontario, the Regional Integrated Fall Prevention Steering Committee and the South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) are pleased to launch a fall prevention and management strategy report.

The report identifies five core pillars to help achieve that goal, which include: public awareness and education; provider skill development and education; service navigation and system integration; assessment and management; and engagement and advocacy.

The South East LHIN region is projected to have the oldest population among LHINs across the province for the foreseeable future. To that end, fall prevention has become a top priority for the regional committee, which is comprised of community, primary care, public health, hospital and long-term care stakeholders.

The report also identifies metrics to track the success of the strategy, which are in accordance with provincial [Integrated Fall Prevention Framework](#) recommendations. Key outcome measures will monitor the number of fall-related inpatient care admissions, Emergency Department (ED) visits, and repeat ED visits for falls in a 12-month period.

With November dedicated as Fall Prevention Month, there is no better time to help spread awareness and promote education in an attempt to reduce the number of falls among older adults.

A newly launched fall prevention website, in collaboration with the CCAC, provides easier access to information and resources in the south east, with a focus on how to reduce risk factors that contribute to falls. The website can be found at www.fallprevention.southeasthealthline.ca.

To read the full *Regional Integrated Fall Prevention Steering Committee* report visit www.southeastlhin.on.ca/GoalsandAchievements/Achievements/ExerciseFallsPrevention.aspx

The significant impact falls have on seniors, their families and the health care system is substantial and we all have to role to play in reducing one of the leading causes of preventable injury in Ontario.

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QUOTES

“The impact of falls on older adults and their quality of life can be quite severe. Reducing the number of falls, as well as the severity of falls and fall-related injuries for older adults, has become a top priority in our region. Bringing awareness and highlighting valuable education resources during Falls Prevention Month is a great way to help patients, caregivers, providers and stakeholders better understand the importance of falls prevention.”

-Paul Huras, CEO, South East LHIN

“Fifty per cent of all falls causing hospitalization happen at home. The good news is that many falls are preventable and this strategy will help prevent and reduce the impact of falls and fall-related injuries among older adults.”

-Jacqueline Redmond, CEO, South East Community Care Access Centre

“KFL&A Public Health is excited to work with our region’s fall prevention stakeholders during November’s Falls Prevention Awareness month, to raise awareness that falls are predictable and preventable. Falls are the leading cause of preventable injury in older adults in the south east and the South East Regional Integrated Fall Prevention and Management Strategy provides direction for fall prevention stakeholders that will meet the needs of older adults and reduce the incidence, severity and impact of falls in our communities.”

-Daphne Mayer, Manager, Substance Misuse and Injury Prevention, KFL&A Public Health

QUICK FACTS

- 20 to 30 per cent of seniors experience one or more falls each year.¹
- It is estimated that one in three persons over the age of 65 is likely to fall at least once each year.²
- Falls are one of the leading causes of preventable injury amongst older adults and often lead to avoidable emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and admissions to long-term care homes. Moreover, falls are responsible for over 95 per cent of all hip fractures in Ontario.³
- As of fiscal year 2015/16, the South East LHIN ranks second-highest of the 14 LHIN regions in the rate of falls-related Emergency Department (ED) visits for patients 65 years and older. One in five fall-related ED visits are repeated within a 12-month period. Additionally, the South East LHIN sees comparable rates to the province in the 65 years and older population for fall-related hospitalizations.⁴

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¹ Seniors' Falls in Canada: Second Report (PDF document - 2.1 MB - 52 pages)

² South East Local Health Integration Network, Knowledge Management Unit. (March 2016). South East LHIN Integrated Health Service Plan 2016-2019 Regional Capacity Analysis and Projections. Retrieved August 2016 from <http://www.southeastlhin.on.ca/-/media/sites/se/UploadedFiles/IHSP/IHSP4%202016-2019/ReCAP%202016%20-%202019.pdf>

³ Public Health Agency of Canada. (2014). Seniors' Falls in Canada. (Ottawa, ON: Public Health Agency of Canada).

⁴ Canadian Institute for Health Information's (CIHI) National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (NACRS) and Discharge Abstract Database (DAD), obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's IntelliHEALTH system