

New Hampshire Leadership

Making a Difference to Prevent Falls



Did you Know... every year in the United States, more than 1/4 of adults age 65+ have a fall, with approximately 1/5 of fallers sustaining a serious injury such as broken bones or head injury? Fall death rates have increased 30% from 2007 to 2016. If rates continue to rise we can anticipate 7 fall deaths every hour by 2030. Falls are serious and costly.

New Hampshire Falls Facts

- Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury deaths among people 65-85+ with **210** deaths. (WISQARS¹)
- There were **12,045** older adults treated for fall related injuries in emergency departments and hospitals (WISQARS²)
- Total approximate cost for NH older adult hospitalizations (inpatient and emergency departments) was **\$416.5** million (WISQARS³)
- Combined cost related to older adult injury deaths (ages 65+) in New Hampshire total **\$33,576,000**, including the cost of work lost (WISQARS³)
- For those hospitalized for falls, approximately **68%** of the falls occurred in or near the home and **18.6%** at a residential institution
- Approximately **33% of hospitalizations** for falls were due to **fracture** and **15%** was due to **traumatic brain injury** (WISQARS⁴ and NHUHDDS⁵)

Fall Deaths are Only the Tip of the Iceberg

- Annual number of deaths from falls: **210** (WISQARS¹)
- Annual number of hospital admissions due to falls: **2,220** (WISQARS⁵)
- Annual number of emergency department visits due to falls: **9,825** (WISQARS⁵)

As the population ages, the impact and cost of fall-related deaths and injuries will increase dramatically unless funding is increased to address the issue.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING

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Sources:

CDC's WISQARS™ website (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System), 2015:

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/nonfatal.html>

³ <https://wisqars.cdc.gov:8443/costT/>

New Hampshire Health Wisdom website- Connecting NH to Health Data, 2015:

⁴ <https://wisdom.dhhs.nh.gov/wisdom/InjuryPreventionHospitalDischargeData>

⁵ New Hampshire Uniform Hospital Discharge Data Sets (NHUHDDS) 2015

New Hampshire Responds

Falling is NOT an inevitable result of aging. Through evidence-based interventions, practical lifestyle adjustments, and capacity-building to address falls prevention through community partnerships, we can substantially reduce the number of falls. New Hampshire is taking action to prevent falls through the following initiatives:

- Integrating falls screening in community health centers, community based organizations and primary care practices using the STEADI toolkit.
- Sponsor annual conferences on the latest fall research and practice
- Promoting two evidence based falls prevention programming, Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance and A Matter of Balance. Currently the Task Force is collaborating with the Foundation for Healthy Communities and the Dartmouth Centers for Health and Aging ACL grants in these efforts.
- Continued development of a website with falls risk reduction information for older adults, caregivers and professionals. This website now includes an interactive map to locate evidence based programs around the state and the STEADI self-screen. Go to www.NHFallsTaskForce.org
- Working to create a falls prevention network hub to coordinate referrals from healthcare providers, community screens and older adults into evidence based falls programs. Referral emails: falls.prevention@hitchcock.org

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