



# Fall Prevention Program



## **Definition of Fall**

A fall is defined as ...to drop or descend under the force of gravity, as to a lower place through loss or lack of support.

## **Overview of the Falls Prevention Program**

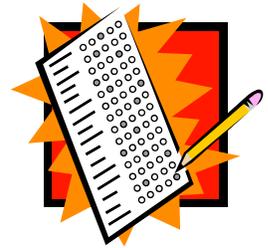
Falls are not just about getting older. A fall can cause minor or serious injuries. Even without an injury a fall can cause a loss of confidence, increased fear, decreased activity level, which may then lead to a decline in health and possibly future falls. Most falls are predictable and preventable. There can be many factors that contribute to a fall, becoming aware of these factors can foster a culture of safety within the agency and reduce the number of falls to our participants.

## **GOAL of VCBIS's Fall Prevention Program**

- 1- To educate VCBIS participants and staff of the health risks associated with falls and provide some prevention strategies to reduce the risk of a fall.
- 2- To reduce the number of fall related incidents at VCBIS
- 3- To create a culture of safety within VCBIS.

## **Assessment**

VCBIS's will use the Risk of Falls Assessment Questionnaire (Appendix A) And/or the Morse Fall Risk Assessment (Appendix 2)



To assess a participants risk of falling a questionnaire will be completed that outlines some potential factors that contribute to most falls. This questionnaire will be completed when individuals start receiving services from VCBIS and yearly thereafter at the time of the Individual Support Plan. The assessment will be repeated if there is a change in the participant's medical or physical condition.

This assessment will identify those individuals that are at a higher risk of experiencing a fall. Individuals that are rated high for risk of falls will have an Individual Fall Prevention Plan completed and added to their ISP.

When individuals experience a fall and do not have a Fall Prevention Plan, they will be asked to complete the Falls Assessment Questionnaire again to see if their status has changed.

## **Education**

Fall prevention will be addressed during staff orientation and annually thereafter. Participants and families/significant others (if applicable) will be educated by their Counsellors regarding the health risks associated with falls and strategies to reduce the risk of a fall.

To further help in bringing awareness to Fall Prevention we will post signs at all sites outlining potential risks and how to reduce the risk of falls.

The participants will receive some household tips through pamphlets or participant handbook to make their homes safer in order to reduce the risk of a fall.

## **Evaluation of VCBIS's Fall Prevention Program**

Prior to the implementation of this strategy we will have a baseline of the total number of falls for participants at VCBIS in one year. We will compare the number of falls each year to this baseline number in hopes that the number will decrease with the implementation of this new strategy.

## **Participant Fall Prevention Plan**

The four key areas that will be looked at in each Falls Prevention Plan will be

### **1- Regular Exercise**

A Physiotherapist and/or Occupational Therapist will be called to complete an assessment and implement an exercise program for the participant that will focus on strength improvement as well as balance and coordination exercises. Staff will encourage the participant to complete these exercises as often as possible.

### **2- Medication review**

The participant and the Counsellor will review with the family physician the participant's current medications and the possible side-effects such as dizziness or light headedness that may lead to a fall.

### **3-Vision**

Visual acuity decreases with age. Therefore, periodic eye exams or checkups are recommended. Be aware that either old prescriptions or new prescriptions can alter the visual field and cause falls. Also participants should be reminded to clean their glasses daily or have staff clean them daily.

### **4 -Household safety review**

Each residential site will have a checklist of safety items that the staff will review on a daily basis to ensure that the environment is obstacle free.

In Community Outreach Support Services the Counsellors will bring in information and assist the participant and family to make the environment as safe as possible. The Counsellors will review the Tips to help avoid a Fall (this can be located in the Participant Handbook).

The following items should be reviewed

- Check the stairs for any broken or worn steps and make sure there is nothing left sitting on the stairs.
- Check railings for broken or missing railings
- Make sure lighting is good – no burnt out lights in areas where someone could fall
- Make sure nightlights are located in areas for participants to see if they get out of bed at night
- If throw rugs are needed they must be fastened with double-stick tape
- Make sure that nothing has spilled onto the floor. If a spill occurs it must be mopped up immediately.
- Make sure all sturdy poles are secured and in good working condition.
- Make sure that the floor is clear of clutter that someone could trip over such as cords or shoes etc.

Residential Participants will be assessed by an OT for getting into and out of the shower/tub and also will have a transfer protocol if assistance is needed in any transfers.

## VCBIS's Risk of Falls Assessment Questionnaire

**Name of Participant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Assessment Implemented:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Question</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Do you take more than 4 medications daily?		
Have you fallen in the past 6 months?		
Do you have trouble with your balance?		
Are you over 55 years of age?		
Do you have vision problems?		
Do you have any trouble when you walk?		
Do you have high or low blood pressure?		
Seizure disorder?		
Do you need assistance transferring?		
Do you experience dizziness or vertigo?		
Do you use assistive devices?		
Do you have difficulty using stairs?		
 If yes, are there stairs where you live?		

**Total Number of Yes Answers:** \_\_\_\_\_

If you have answered yes to 3-5 of these questions then you are at a higher risk for a fall and may need a Fall Prevention Plan. If you answered yes to more than 5 of these questions your risk is significant and you will require a Fall Prevention Plan.

## Appendix B

### Morse Fall Risk Assessment

Participants Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Risk Factor	Scale	Points	Patient's Score
<b>History of Falls</b>	Yes	25	
	No	0	
<b>Secondary Diagnosis</b> (Two or more medical Diagnoses)	Yes	15	
	No	0	
<b>Ambulatory Aid</b>	Furniture	30	
	Crutches/Walker/Cane	15	
	None/Bedrest/Wheelchair/Nurse	0	
<b>IV/Saline Lock</b>	Yes	20	
	No	0	
<b>Gait/Transferring</b>	Impaired	20	
	Weak	10	
	Normal/Bed Rest/ Immobile	0	
<b>Mental Status</b>	Forgets limitations	15	
	Oriented to own ability	0	

**Total Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**High Risk** = 45 and higher

**Moderate Risk** = 25-44

**Low Risk** = 0-24

(From Morse, J. M. (1997). Preventing Patient Falls. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

# TIPS THAT WILL HELP YOU TO AVOID A FALL!!

**AVOID FLOPPY SLIPPERS OR LONG BATHROBES**

**PUT COMMONLY USED ITEMS IN AREAS THAT ARE EASY TO REACH**

**WHEN PICKING SOMETHING OFF THE FLOOR PUSH IT CLOSER TO SOMETHING YOU CAN HOLD ONTO**

**AVOID LOW FURNITURE THAT IS HARD TO GET UP FROM**

**IF YOU FEEL UNSTEADY WHEN YOU WALK YOU MAY NEED A CANE OR WALKER**

**THROW AWAY THROW RUGS**

**STAIRS NEED HAND RAILS**

**KEEP CLUTTER OFF THE WALKING PATHS OF THE HOUSE AND OFF THE STAIRS**

**PUT BRIGHT TAPE STRIPS AT THE EDGE OF EACH STEP**

**PUT LIGHTS IN HALLWAYS**

**ADD NIGHTLIGHTS IN HALLWAYS OR IN THE BATHROOM**

**ADD GRAB BARS IN THE BATHROOM ( BY THE TOILET AND INSIDE THE SHOWER)**

**CLEAN UP SPILLS IMMEDIATELY**

**PUT IN A NON-SLIP MAT IN THE BATHTUB**

**SLOW DOWN**