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Elderly Falls



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Theory

Closing the Gap: A Research Agenda to Accelerate the Adoption and Effective Use of Proven Older Adult Fall Prevention Strategies

Rita K. Noonan . David A. Sleet, Judy A. Stevens

Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Abstract

Introduction

To make an impact on the public's health, evidence-based interventions must be disseminated broadly, supported by training and technical assistance, adopted widely, and implemented as designed. Many effective older adult fall prevention interventions have been identified, but too few have gained wide community acceptance and little is known about the best ways to encourage their broader use. Therefore, as in many other fields, fall prevention suffers from a wide gap between scientific discoveries and their everyday use.

Method

This article articulates the key activities embedded in Step 4 of the public health model—specifically translation and dissemination to ensure widespread adoption and use—in order to illuminate critical research needs in older adult fall prevention.

Conclusions

These needs, if addressed, will help close the gap between research and practice.

Keywords

fall prevention; dissemination; adoption; implementation; capacity building

Figures and tables from this article:



problem using surveillance to determine the incidence of falls, describes the demographic characteristics of the persons involved, identifies temporal and geographic characteristics of fall events, and estimates the severity and cost of fall injuries. This step includes monitoring and tracking trends and disseminating data to decision makers. Step 2. Identify Risk and Protective Factors. The second step considers why falls occur. It involves conducting research to determine the causes and correlates of falls, the factors that increase or decrease fall risk, and those risk factors that may be modifiable through interventions. Step 3. Develop, Implement and Evaluate Interventions. The third step uses the information obtained in Steps 1 and 2 to develop fall interventions. These are tested using randomized controlled trials and experimental and control group designs, to determine efficacy and effectiveness. Step 4. Translate and Disseminate to Ensure Widespread Adoption and Use. The fourth step involves translating evidence-based fall interventions into community-

based programs and disseminating these programs to ensure broad adoption and implementation. Research at this step includes studies that focus on methods, structures and processes to encourage communities and policymakers to adopt evidence-based programs; on policies and laws that reduce falls; and factors that increase organizational and community capacity for tailoring, implementing, and sustaining interventions.* Figure adapted from Mercy et al. (1993). Public health policy for preventing violence. Health Affairs, 12, 7 – 29.

Figure options



The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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Corresponding author at: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 4770 Buford Highway NE, Mailstop F-62, Atlanta, GA. 30341. Tel.: + 1 770 488 1532; fax: + 1 770 488 1317. Published by Elsevier Ltd.

Rita K. Noonan, PhD, The Associate Director for Program Development and Integration" in CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. In addition to receiving both a MacArthur Award and a Fulbright Fellowship, she has published across a range of topics, including the global debt crisis, women's movements, dating and sexual violence, older adult falls, and translational research.

David A. Sleet, PhD, is the Associate Director of Science in CDC's Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention. He recently won a lifetime achievement award from the Injury Section of the American Public Health Association. As a behavioral scientist, David specializes in variety of injury prevention research areas, including motor vehicle safety, global road safety, child injury, and older adult falls.

Judy A. Stevens, PhD, is an international expert on the epidemiology of elderly falls. She co-authored CDC's Compendium of "Effective Interventions from Around the World," as well as dozens of scholarly articles on older adult fall risk factors and prevention methods.