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Elderly Falls



Literature Review

Falls and fall prevention programmes in developing countries: Environmental scan for the adaptation of the Canadian Falls prevention curriculum for developing countries

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Abstract

Problem

Falls in older persons in developing countries are poorly understood, and falls prevention and health promotion programmes for this population are largely lacking.

Methods

A systematic review was carried out of relevant literature on falls and prevention programmes, and falls prevention education, and a scan undertaken of health promotion programmes for older persons in a representative country - South Africa.

Results

Studies on the risk and prevalence of falls are largely retrospective and hospital-based, with varied methodology, including study period, sampling method and sample size. Falls prevalence is based largely on self-reports in studies on general trauma in all age groups. Falls incidence varies from 10.1% to 54%. No reports could be traced on sustained falls prevention or health promotion programmes.

Conclusion

Scant research has been conducted and little preventive education offered on falls in older persons. Adaptation of the Canadian Falls Prevention Curriculum for developing countries will help to fill gaps in knowledge and practice.

Impact on industry

With rapid increase in the populations of older persons in developing countries, research on age related disorders such as falls is required to guide policy and management of falls.

Keywords

Falls; fall prevention; health promotion; developing countries; older persons

Figures and tables from this article:

Table 1. Studies on prevalence and/or incidence of falls in developing countries.



ADLs = Activities of daily living; IADLs = Instrumental activities of daily living; AMT = Abbreviated Mental Test.

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Table 2. Studies on trauma or death with a fall as a contributing factor in developing countries.



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Table 3. Review articles on falls in older persons in developing regions.



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Table 4. Theses and Dissertations on various topics related to falls in older persons.



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Dr. Vicky Scott, PhD, RN is the Senior Advisor on Fall and Injury Prevention for the province of BC with the BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit and Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport. Her academic appointment is with the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Medicine as Clinical Associate Professor with the School of Population and Public Health. She is Director of the Centre of Excellence on Mobility, Fall Prevention and Injury in Aging (CEMFIA) at the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility, Chair of the BC Fall and Injury Prevention Coalition, a Canadian Institutes of Health Research Knowledge Translation award recipient, and project lead for the Canadian Falls Prevention Curriculum. Her key objectives are to conduct original research at the National and Regional level, to facilitate evidence-based best practices for reducing falls and related injuries in all health care delivery settings and to assist the Ministry of Health Living and Sport in transferring knowledge from falls prevention research into policy development.

Ms Andrea Dowd, BSc obtained a diploma in outdoor recreation management in 1999, a Bachelor of Science in Human Kinetics in 2009. Her specific interest is in musculoskeletal injuries particularly prevention and rehabilitation.

Kathleen Brodrick, MSc Occupational Therapy is a private practitioner, occupational therapist specialising in gerontology. She was the founder of the non profit organisation, Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS in 2001 and is currently the financial director of the organisation.