Falls and falls prevention in residential care: perspectives of older people in Western Australia and Wales, UK.

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Background

• 1 in 2 older people admitted to RAC homes fall annually

• Limited evidence for which interventions are effective in prevention
  • Vit D supplementation
  • Multifactorial approach (intrinsic & extrinsic factors)

• Falls prevention interventions only effective if enacted in daily life

• Barriers & facilitators falls prevention interventions identified in hospital and community dwelling populations

• Gap in RAC population???
Study aims

• Explore resident’s levels of:
  • knowledge and awareness of falls risks
  • knowledge of falls prevention strategies
  • opportunities, motivation and confidence to engage in falls prevention strategies
  • preferences for receiving falls prevention education

in RAC homes in Australia & Wales
Participants, setting & procedure

- Residents n=70
  - 6 RAC homes in Perth, Australia
  - 6 RAC homes in Swansea, Wales

- Eligibility criteria
  - >65 yrs
  - Resident for >3/12
  - Able to give informed consent

- Cross-sectional survey
  - Conducted May 2015 (Aus) and Oct 2016 (Wales)
  - Custom designed questionnaire
Questionnaire: 21 questions

• Health behaviour change
COM-B framework e.g.
  • Why do you think older people fall over?
  • I am very keen to lower my risk of falling whilst living here by using these strategies
  • Is there anything the staff or management could do to help prevent you having falls?

Adapted from Michie, Atkins & West, 2014
Data Analysis

• Descriptive statistics
  • Mann-Whitney U test

• Deductive content analysis
  • COM-B
  • Category matrix to test theory

• Qualitative content analysis
Demographics & findings

• Mean age 85.47 yrs (SD 8.17)

• Female 71.4% (50)

• Ambulant 85.7% (60)

• 78.6% (55) used walking aid

• Fall since admission 61.4% (43)

• **No** significant differences between Australian and Welsh residents’ levels of knowledge and awareness of falls prevention, perceived opportunities, confidence and motivation to engage in falls prevention strategies
Why residents think older people fall

‘sometimes they forget, try to walk without their frame or staff move them away’

‘wearing shoes or slippers that aren’t suitable, you could trip over anything’

‘sometimes we’re not careful enough, you go to move but find your feet haven’t!’

‘they (residents) do things without help… we all think we are 21’

**Behaviour & extrinsic risk factors**

- Not paying attention
- Over estimating ability
- Not using walking aid
- Slippery floors
- Poor footwear
Barriers and facilitators to using falls prevention strategies

**Barriers**
- Staff not being available to assist
- Distractions
- Poor memory

**Facilitators**
- Staff having time to be more attentive
- Staff having more knowledge and understanding of falls prevention strategies
Preferences for falls prevention education

• Positive perspective focusing on maintaining independence, functional mobility and staying safe [n=41 (58.6%)]

• Reminders with pictorial poster for room (Aus) or brochure (Wales)
  • Both cohorts also requested small group discussions including demonstrations
Discussion / Conclusion

• Residents demonstrated similarities:
  • limited knowledge regarding etiology of falls and awareness of intrinsic falls risk factors and prevention strategies
  • dislike for engaging with promotion messages perceived as negative - threatening their identity

• Falls prevention education should be informed by residents and re-framed around:
  • what motivates residents (maintaining independence for mobility and functional activities)
  • alternative formats for delivery
DIOLCH
THANK YOU

Citation
Evaluation of older people’s knowledge, awareness, motivation and perceptions about falls and falls prevention in residential aged care homes: A tale of two cities (Submitted to Ageing & Society (under review)

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References

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