

Fall Risk Management Evidence-Based Best Practice

Falls can cause people to restrict their activities, lead to depression, helplessness, social isolation, loss of confidence in independent mobility, injuries and even death. Most falls occur as a result of multiple intrinsic and extrinsic factors. A successful fall risk management program requires organizational commitment and an interdisciplinary team approach to prevent and minimize falls.

Assessment:

Fall risk assessments are completed within 24-hours of admission, with changes of condition, and quarterly

Documentation includes:

- Gait and balance
- Evaluation of lower extremity strength
- Review of medication regimen - including poly-pharmacy, specific medication classes that could increase fall risk, and recent medication changes
- Orthostatic blood pressure measurements – documenting the actual values
- Environmental issues
- Underlying conditions – such as previous falls and chronic medical conditions

After a fall occurs, a post-fall investigation is initiated within 24 hours

Documentation includes:

- Re-evaluation of gait and balance
- Re-evaluation of lower extremity strength
- Medication regimen and changes review
- Orthostatic blood pressure measurements – documenting the actual values
- Intrinsic and extrinsic risk factors that may have contributed to the fall

Care Plan:

A current care plan for fall risk management and injury prevention includes:

- Measurable goals for fall risk management and injury prevention
- Planned interventions that address the individualized intrinsic and extrinsic fall risk factors identified during the fall risk assessment
- Interventions reviewed and updated based on the findings of the reassessments and/or post-fall investigations including:
 - Individualized interventions which are re-evaluated and updated to prevent or minimize the risk of falls
 - Individualized interventions based on causal factors and/or identified risk factors
 - Dates of falls and causal factors (if a fall occurred) o Dates of falls and causal factors identified
- Interdisciplinary team (IDT) involvement in identifying individualized interventions to prevent falls

Outcomes:

- Individualized interventions identified in the care plan are implemented
- Effectiveness of the individualized interventions is monitored and evaluated