

Falls and Fractures



Health and Wellbeing Board

AGEING WELL



A fall is defined as an “unintentional/unexpected loss of balance resulting in coming to rest on the floor, the ground, or an object below knee level”.

Falls are distressing, costly, and preventable.

They often result in injury such as fracture and are a significant cause of entry to care and nursing homes. They are strongly associated with reduced levels of mobility and increased risk of death.



In 2017/18, **West Sussex had 1,192 emergency hospital admissions** for hip fractures amongst those aged 65 years or over.

Reducing hip fractures is a West Sussex Plan priority

There are "co-benefits" of preventing falls and fractures



- **A home hazard assessment** and modification, for patients admitted to hospital with a fall-related injury, reduces the rate of falls by 31% and an estimated return on investment to the health and care system of £3.33 for every £1 invested.



- The optimal intervention for those at low to moderate risk of falls is **strength and balance exercise programmes**, with evidence suggesting that these reduce the rate of falls by 29%. Estimated to be cost neutral in terms of reducing falls, there are considerable co-benefits, including reductions in cardiovascular and all-cause mortality, preventing the onset of frailty and reductions in social isolation.



- **Patients presenting with a fragility fracture should be assessed for osteoporosis** and receive effective management to improve their bone health and reduce their risk of future falls and fractures. Hospital based Fracture Liaison Services identify patients with a first fracture and reduce subsequent risk. These have been shown to reduce hip fracture rates by 2.3%.

Who is most at risk from falls and fractures?

Older people are most at risk from falls and hip fractures.



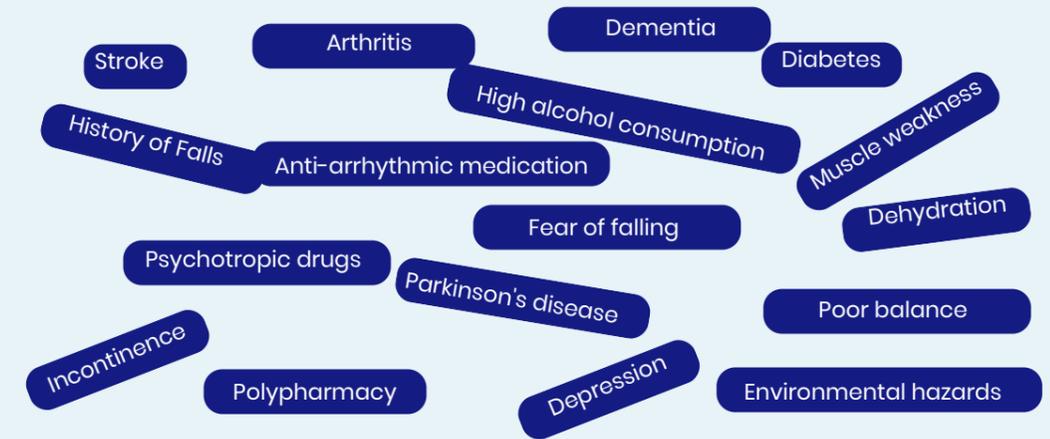
30% of people aged 65+ years fall at least once a year.



This rises to **50% for people aged 80+**.

Women are more likely to suffer a fracture than men due to the prevalence of osteoporosis.

The following factors also increase risk:



West Sussex Strategy and Plans

West Sussex Older People's Community Falls and Fracture Prevention Strategy 2017-20 outlines action in four priority areas: -

- Identification and early intervention for higher risk individuals,
- Up-stream community falls prevention interventions,
- Community awareness raising to promote self-care,
- Partnership working to reduce falls and fractures.

Lots of partners have a role to play in falls prevention, many of whom sit on **West Sussex's Falls Steering Group**. For example:-

- WSCC and District and Borough councils
- Multi-agency teams (including the Prevention and Assessment Team)
- NHS (Sussex Community NHS Trust)
- Ambulance Service
- Leisure providers
- Careline

Working together....lots of existing work in the county to build on, including

Fracture Liaison Services (FLS)

...identifies people with a first fragility fracture and then treat and monitor them to reduce the risk of a second more serious fracture. While these are mostly hospital based, **Crawley FLS** is an innovative GP-based service which offers care closer to home and frees up consultant time.

Chichester Careline

...is an independent living service that provides telehealth for falls detection and response. This includes wearable pendants and units that can be used to raise an alarm call in the event of a fall and fitting falls detection sensors in the home.

WSCC Independent Living Service

works with adults who have a physical impairment or illness, including people who have experienced falls-related injuries or who have a history of falling. Occupational therapists assess the home environment to identify hazards and barriers to independence and then provide advice and assistance around home adaptations to address these.

West Sussex Wellbeing Hubs

.. provide evidence based strength and balance exercise programmes for people who are scared of falling, feel unsteady or have a history of falls.

Prevention focused exercises for older population West Sussex County Council Public Health team funded 15 spaces on an **OTAGO Exercise Programme training course**, with graduates of the course running programmes at Wellbeing Hubs and Age UK