

Falls

**The huge cost to the individual,
nursing homes, their carers,
NHS and social care**

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Save Tomorrow



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Today 1,000 residents will fall in a care home

It is reported that people living in institutional settings are at greater risk of falling. ⁽²⁾

One study found 80% of people who had a call alarm did not use it, including people who lived in residential care. ⁽³⁾

Your procedure when a resident falls is critical both to them and to you and to how you are meeting your fundamental standards of practice.

The Care Quality Commission has 13 fundamental standards⁽⁴⁾ that should be up held as the principals of good practice; these standards are no more relevant than when a resident has fallen. Included in these standards are,

- **Person centred**

You must have care or treatment that is tailored to you and meets your needs and preferences.

- **Dignity and respect**

You must be treated with dignity and respect at all times while you're receiving care and treatment.

- **Safety**

You must not be given unsafe care or treatment or be put at risk of harm that could be avoided.

- **Premises and equipment**

The place where you receive care and treatment and the equipment used in it must be clean, suitable and looked after properly.

- **Fit and proper staff**

Their staff must be given the support, training and supervision they need to help them do their job.

Falls are the most common cause of death in the over 65s



Care homes that have **appropriately trained staff** in people handling and equipment use can provide a dignified service whilst safe guarding the health of residents and staff.

Falls impact our physical, psychological and cognitive well-being. They also have huge financial costs

Personal cost

Even minor falls can be debilitating leading to loss of confidence and independence. ^(1&5)

Even when there has been no physical injury, depression, fear of falling and other psychological problems can arise, this is known as 'post fall syndrome'. ⁽²⁾

Falls are associated with the following psychological issues, loss of mobility which then leads to social isolation and depression, increased dependency and disability, hypothermia, pressure related injury, infection ⁽⁶⁾

Consequences of fall include 'Distress, pain, loss of confidence and loss of independence' and these consequences not only affect the person but also affect the family and carers. ⁽⁷⁾

Financial costs

One study found that people over the age of 90 living in residential/nursing care always needed help to get up off the floor, ⁽⁵⁾ this has a significant impact on carer time and any intervention that can reduce the time to assist someone off the floor is worth investing in. There are 4 million bed stays a year due to falls and associated fractures. ⁽⁶⁾

Cost of hospital stay is approximately £303 per day. ⁽⁸⁾

In 2012/2013 2,211,228 admissions involved people over 60 at cost of £3.4 billion. ⁽⁸⁾

2003 research indicated unintentional falls cost £981 million; 59% of the cost to the NHS the rest was social services for long term care. ⁽⁹⁾

The response to a fall should allow for a assessment of the residents condition, if no significant injury has been sustained they should be assisted into a suitable chair or bed using the most appropriate equipment and monitored regularly.

Lying for long periods risks hypothermia and pressure sores ⁽¹⁰⁾ so the sooner we can get a resident up the better for them and the long term care input for the home.

In a time where there are competing demands for health and social care budgets, how do we achieve better health and well-being outcomes for people who fall in a home?

**...however falls happen
it is how we react to them
that is the key**



So what can your Nursing Home do?

- **Create a falls procedure**, that provides for a person centred approach and treats the resident with dignity.
- **Have a check list** to make sure the resident is not in need of emergency help.
- **Have equipment** in place that allows for a resident to be lifted safely, such as the Camel and Elk.
- **Have a staff group** that are trained in the use of the equipment and have the confidence to move and handle their residents.

This could save the ambulance service **£50 million of unnecessary costs to the ambulance service each and every year.**

Maintain your resident's dignity and well-being,⁽¹¹⁾ whilst going over and beyond the CQC fundamental standards of care



Sources

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