



Preventing Falls is a Team Activity – Staff Education Session in a Rehabilitation Hospital

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Aim/Background

Falls awareness education for staff by the Multidisciplinary Falls Committee in a Rehabilitation Hospital. Falls resulting in injury such as hip fracture are a source of morbidity and mortality in older adults resulting in lengthy hospital inpatient stay with potential health complications and hospital acquired deconditioning (Azowi et al. 2022). The Multidisciplinary Falls Committee developed a falls awareness education session to increase staff awareness of:

- Multifactorial risks in falls
- Falls prevention strategies
- Teamwork to identify and reduce risk factors.



Stakeholders

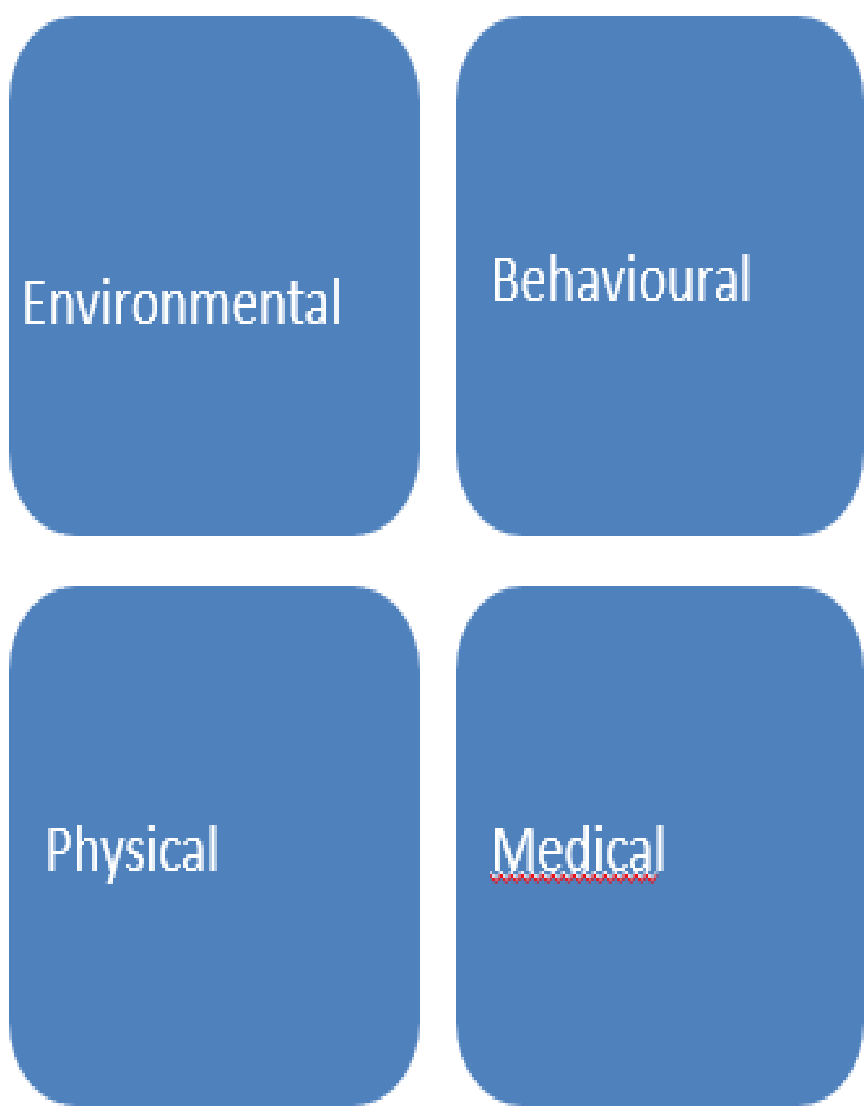
Improving patient safety is the driver for all quality improvement initiatives in Clontarf Hospital. Patient and family engagement is a key part of policy and practice development.

The Falls Committee is a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) delivering falls awareness education to all healthcare staff: Nurses, Physios, OT, Medical Staff, Porters, Healthcare Assistant Staff, Medical Social Workers, Speech & Language Therapists, Dietitians, students, new staff.



Risk Factors

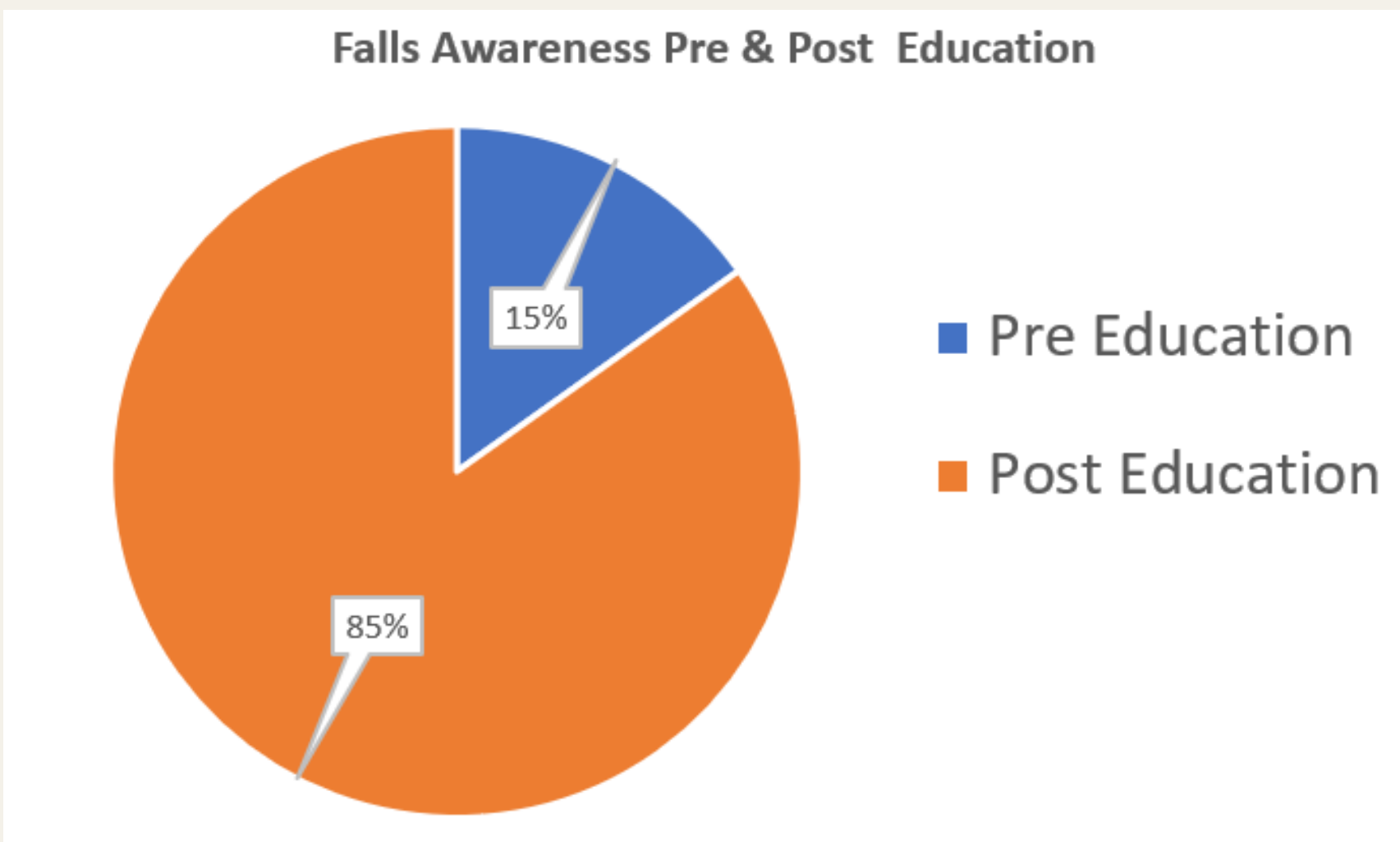
- Multi-factorial
- Individual
- Frailty



Tools/Methods

- **A PDSA Cycle** was employed to **plan, develop, study, and action** the falls education session.
- **Education (1 hour session held on a monthly basis) includes:**
 - Local and national falls statistics
 - Multifactorial falls risk factors
 - Frailty
 - Importance of mobilisation in reducing falls
 - Case Study Discussion
 - The impact of falls on older adults and quality of life
 - Falls prevention strategies
 - The importance of teamwork in preventing falls
- **A pre & post education evaluation scale** was used to gauge staff knowledge of falls.
- **Qualitative data** was collected to gain additional feedback.

Results



Post education evaluation is positive with 85% of staff reporting increased awareness of:

- Multifactorial risks
- Falls prevention strategies
- Teamwork to identify and reduce risk factors.

42% of staff have received falls awareness training to date.

Qualitative data is positive:

“Very helpful & effective for practical implications”
“Better understanding of the environmental risk factors”
“Case study discussion is very good”
“Learnt more about the multifactorial nature of falls”
“Useful information for ward work”
“Very helpful session. Interesting to learn about frailty and falls ”
“Really enjoyed this class. Very interesting”
“Very informative session for Healthcare Assistant Staff in helping to prevent falls”
“Very important to know how increasing mobilisation opportunities for patients can help reduce falls by increasing strength and balance”

Benefits / Key Learning / Next steps

Mandatory Falls Awareness Education for Staff:

Having received positive evaluation from the education session for staff, the Management Team in the hospital have agreed to make this training mandatory for all healthcare staff.

All healthcare staff will attend falls awareness education 2 yearly.

Increased falls awareness amongst staff can help improve patient safety (Voluntary Healthcare Agencies Risk Management Forum, 2024).

Key Learning for staff:

- **Multifactorial falls risks** and prevention strategies.
- **The significance of frailty** on falls and the impact of falls on the quality of life for older adults.
- **The importance of teamwork** in highlighting risk factors and implementing risk reduction strategies and interventions have been key learning points.

Next Steps:

- Ensure all new staff receive falls awareness training.
- Include staff such as Catering, Housekeeping, Pharmacy, Management.
- Update education in keeping with new evidence.

Conclusion

Falls awareness education for staff in a Rehabilitation Hospital has been successful in raising awareness of the multifactorial nature of falls and highlighting the importance of teamwork in prevention of falls for our patients.

It's over to you...



References

- Azowi L.A et al, Irish Medical Journal (2022)
- NOCA Irish Hip Fracture Database (2022)
- Voluntary Healthcare Agencies Risk Management Forum ‘Guidelines for Prevention & Management of Falls & Harmful Falls including Bone Health’ (2024)