

Falls in older people

Information for the public

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About this information

NICE quality standards help to improve key areas of health or social care so that people are offered the best care available.

This information explains the care and support described in the NICE quality standard for falls in older people: assessment after a fall and preventing further falls.

Assessment after a fall and preventing further falls in older people

The quality standard for falls in older people: assessment after a fall and preventing further falls is made up of 6 statements that describe high-quality care for older people (aged 65 and older) who have had a fall. These statements set out the quality of care you should receive.

1. Older people who fall in hospital are checked for fractures and possible injury to their spine before they are moved.
2. Older people who fall in hospital and who may have a fracture or possible injury to their spine are moved in a safe manner, using suitable equipment if needed.
3. Older people who fall in hospital have a medical examination to see if they are injured, which is carried out soon after the fall.
4. Older people who are seen by a healthcare professional (such as their GP or a nurse) because of a fall have an assessment that aims to identify anything that might make them more likely to fall, and

to see whether there are things that can be done to help them avoid falling in future. This assessment will be done by a specialist healthcare professional.

5. Older people living in the community (for example, in their own home or in sheltered or supported accommodation) who have fallen more than once in the last year have the opportunity to see an expert who will help them start a programme of exercises (sometimes called 'strength and balance training') to build up their muscle strength and improve balance. These exercises will be designed specifically for them, and the expert will check how they are getting on.

6. Older people who are admitted to hospital after having a fall are visited in their home after they are discharged by a trained healthcare professional (usually an occupational therapist) who will check for anything that might put them at risk of falling again. If the healthcare professional thinks that making changes in the person's home (for example, changing the layout of furniture) or having special equipment might lower the chances of another fall, they will offer help with this.

Your care

Your health and social care team should explain any treatment, care or support you should be offered so that you can decide together what is best for you. NICE has also produced advice and quality standards on [improving the experience of care for adults using the NHS](#) which you might like to read.

We also have more information on the NICE website about [using health and social care services](#).

More information on assessment after a fall and preventing further falls in older people

The following guidance (advice) was used to develop this quality standard:

- NICE guidance on [falls](#).
- National Patient Safety Agency guidance on [essential care after an inpatient fall](#) (accredited by NICE).
- College of Occupational Therapists guidance on [occupational therapy in the prevention and management of falls in adults](#).

Sources of advice and support for older people who have had a fall, their families and carers

- Age UK, 0800 169 6565, www.ageuk.org.uk/health-wellbeing/keeping-fit/preventing-falls/
- Alzheimer's Society, 0300 222 11 22, www.alzheimers.org.uk
- National Osteoporosis Society, 0845 450 0230 or 01761 472721, www.nos.org.uk
- The Relatives & Residents Association, 020 7359 8136, www.relres.org

You can also go to [NHS Choices](#) for more information about health and social care.

NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

A number of organisations who share NICE's commitment to improving quality in this area formally support this quality standard. They may also be able to provide advice and support. For a list of these organisations see the [overview](#) for the quality standard on falls in older people: assessment after a fall and preventing further falls.

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Accreditation

