Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015

Take a Stand to Prevent Falls

A Compendium of State and National Activities

Falls Free®
National Council on Aging

ncoa
National Council on Aging
Acknowledgement

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) gratefully acknowledges our federal and national partners and the State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup members for participating in Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) and contributing to this report. Beyond FPAD, we appreciate their year-round efforts to prevent falls and fall-related injuries among older adults.

We would also like to express our gratitude to GSK for supporting the publication of this report.
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Executive Summary

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older Americans. Falls threaten older adults’ safety and independence and generate enormous economic and personal costs. Many falls can be prevented through education about fall risk factors, practical lifestyle adjustments, evidence-based falls prevention programs, and clinical-community partnerships.

Since 2008, the National Council on Aging’s (NCOA) Falls Free® Initiative has led the annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) to raise awareness about the impact of falls among older adults, educate about fall prevention strategies, and advocate for the expansion of evidence-based fall prevention programs. Through FPAD efforts, the NCOA Falls Free® Initiative and partners reach professionals, policymakers, older adults, and caregivers to collaboratively reduce and prevent the number of falls among older adults.

The 8th annual FPAD on September 23, 2015 was the most successful FPAD campaign yet, with increased participation from national organizations, federal agencies, coalitions, and state and local partners. NCOA’s FPAD 2015 national awareness and education media efforts reached an estimated 97 million individuals. At the state and community level, the Falls Free® Initiative State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup members reached nearly 2 million individuals through education, awareness, and advocacy efforts, as well as fall prevention programs and fall-risk screenings.

The NCOA Falls Free® Initiative looks forward to maximizing its impact for FPAD 2016 on September 22.
Facts about Falls

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- One-third of Americans aged 65+ falls each year.

- Every 13 seconds, an older adult is treated in the emergency room for a fall; every 20 minutes, an older adult dies from a fall.

- Falls are the leading cause of fatal injury and the most common cause of nonfatal trauma-related hospital admissions among older adults.

- Falls result in more than 2.5 million injuries treated in emergency departments annually, including over 734,000 hospitalizations and more than 25,500 deaths.

- Adjusted for inflation, the direct medical costs for fall injuries are $34 billion annually.

- The financial toll for older adult falls is expected to increase as the population ages and may reach $67.7 billion by 2020.

Falls, with or without injury, also carry a heavy quality of life impact. A growing number of older adults fear falling and, as a result, limit their activities and social engagements. This can result in further physical decline, depression, social isolation, and feelings of helplessness.

However, falling is not an inevitable result of aging. Through practical lifestyle adjustments, evidence-based falls prevention programs, and clinical-community partnerships, the number of falls among older adults can be substantially reduced.

The Ikier Wellness Center, Burlington, MA. Photo submitted in the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest.
NCOA’s National Falls Prevention Resource Center and Falls Free® Initiative

NCOA leads the National Falls Prevention Resource Center (NFPRC), which supports awareness and educational efforts about falls and promotes evidence-based falls prevention programs and strategies across the nation. The NFPRC serves as the national clearinghouse of tools, best practices, and other information on falls and falls prevention. The NFPRC is funded by the Administration on Aging, which is part of the Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the 2014 Prevention and Public Health Fund (Grant No. 90FC2000-01-00). NCOA also leads the Falls Free® Initiative. NCOA’s falls prevention efforts include:

- **The 2015 National Falls Prevention Action Plan**: A framework of action for implementing an effective, sustainable approach to reduce falls among older adults over the next 5–10 years. The National Falls Prevention Action Plan is a product of key recommendations and strategies collected during the Falls Prevention Summit, a White House Conference on Aging event held in April 2015.

- **A National Coalition**: Over 70 organizations charged with working toward the progress of one or more of the strategies in the National Falls Prevention Action Plan.

- **State Coalitions on Fall Prevention Workgroup**: 44 statewide coalitions with a common goal of reducing older adult falls, fall-related injuries, and deaths in their communities or states. Members are engaged in disseminating proven falls prevention programs, advocating for funding, and educating older adults about how they can reduce their risk of falling.

- **Annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day**: A national event to raise awareness about how to prevent fall-related injuries and deaths among older adults.
Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) Overview

History of FPAD

Launched in 2005, the Falls Free® Initiative was created to promote the strategies in the 2005 National Action Plan. The Falls Free® Initiative brought together national and state agencies to collaboratively address older adult falls with evidence-based solutions. In 2006, the Falls Free® Initiative accelerated with the addition of the State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup. The purpose of the State Coalition Workgroup members was to develop state or large regional coalitions through which multidisciplinary organizations could address falls, deter duplication of efforts, raise awareness, and facilitate necessary roles of resource coordination, policy development, and systems change at the state level.

In 2008, the 10 state-member Falls Free® State Coalitions on Fall Prevention Workgroup requested assistance in declaring a day of awareness. In response, the Falls Free® National Advocacy Workgroup gained bipartisan sponsorship of the first annual National Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) resolution in the U.S. Senate and has obtained bipartisan sponsorship every year since then. The number of states observing the annual FPAD grew from 4 in 2007 to 48 states and the District of Columbia in 2014.

FPAD 2015: Take a Stand to Prevent Falls

The 8th annual FPAD on September 23, 2015, was observed by 48 states and the District of Columbia. FPAD events raised awareness about the personal and financial impact of falls among older adults; provided education about how to prevent falls; screened older adults for fall risks; and advocated for the expansion of evidence-based fall prevention programs.
The 2015 theme *Take a Stand to Prevent Falls* was selected by the Falls Free® Initiative Awareness and Advocacy Committee after careful deliberation of numerous theme ideas from the field. The theme was intended to unite professionals, older adults, caregivers, and family members in raising awareness and preventing falls.

This compendium highlights FPAD 2015 activities from national, federal, state, and community initiatives. National organizations and federal partners engaged their networks in fall prevention efforts and shared NCOA’s FPAD resources and events. NCOA’s FPAD 2015 national media efforts reached an estimated 97 million individuals through NCOA fall prevention webpages, a digital news release, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.
State and community initiatives were assessed through NCOA’s annual online survey of the Falls Free® Initiative State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup members, which consists of 43 State Falls Prevention Coalitions, the Washington, D.C. Falls Free Coalition, and five states that are in the process of developing an official coalition. The coalitions and states that completed the survey reached nearly 2 million individuals through their FPAD 2015 efforts:

- 1.1 million older adults, family caregivers, and professionals were reached through fall prevention awareness and education campaigns,
- 700,000 people, including policymakers, were reached through advocacy efforts,
- 60,000 individuals participated in evidence-based fall prevention programs, and
- 22,000 people were screened for fall risk factors.

The fall prevention coalition and state narratives that follow paint a portrait of the breadth and dedication of those at the state and community levels who do so much; the individual state narratives are rich with many more creative ideas, initiatives, partnerships, and activities.

We hope you join the Falls Free® Initiative and our partners in promoting Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2016 on September 22nd, the first official day of fall.

Joyce Raye Patterson Senior Center, St. Joseph, MO. Photo submitted in the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest.
Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) 2015: Events and Activities

National FPAD Activities

National Resolution

U.S. Senate Resolution 264, passed by the 114th Congress (2015-2016), designated September 23, 2015 as National Falls Prevention Awareness Day. The resolution recognized that there are cost-effective falls prevention programs and policies; commended the Falls Free® Coalition and others for their efforts to increase awareness of falls prevention; and urged the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Administration for Community Living, and others to continue developing, evaluating, and promoting interventions and programs to prevent falls. The Resolution was sponsored by Senator Collins [R-ME] and co-sponsored by Sen. McCaskill [D-MO].

U.S. Senate Resolution 264 served to bring greater attention to the issue across the Senate and provided draft language for state and local FPAD proclamations. Twenty-eight states obtained Governors’ Proclamations recognizing FPAD 2015.

National and Federal Partners

Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services

The U.S. Administration for Community Living promoted FPAD through announcements on the White House Conference on Aging and the Healthy Aging Summit webpage.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The CDC’s STEADI (Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries) fall prevention tools and educational materials were used nationwide to conduct fall risk assessments and referrals to fall prevention programs and services. CDC’s STEADI initiative provided professionals with educational materials to share with older adults, such as the Check for Safety: A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults, and the What YOU Can Do to Prevent Falls brochure.
The CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control announced FPAD 2015 in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. The report offered the public health community fall prevention recommendations and resources. CDC staff members also participated as panelists in NCOA’s annual FPAD webinar.

**National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services**

The National Institute on Aging’s Go4Life® campaign, a national exercise and physical activity campaign for people 50 years and older, cross-promoted FPAD with Go4Life® Month in September. The director of the Go4Life® Campaign also participated as a panelist in NCOA’s annual FPAD webinar.

**American Chiropractic Association**

The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) participated in FPAD on September 23, 2015 by sharing falls prevention tips and healthy aging information with the public through its social media channels and website. They also encouraged members to share patient fact sheets, social media graphics, prewritten social media posts, and blog entries on falls prevention awareness developed by ACA. In addition, ACA urged members to give a presentation on falls prevention at a local senior center or senior living facility in their communities and provided resources and tips on how to reach out to local organizations.

Left: Derek Barton, DC, a chiropractic neurologist at Plasticity Brain Centers in Orlando, FL, conducts a balance test of a patient on a perturbed surface using a computerized force plate called computerized dynamic posturography.

Right: Francine Tougas, DC, of Milton Chiropractic Center in Milton, VT, works with a patient on side bends to increase flexibility, balance and stance.
The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

AOTA is a long standing Falls Free Initiative® partner, and actively promotes fall prevention among members and their clients. In 2015, AOTA partnered with NCOA to host a FPAD Twitter Chat (#FPAD15chat) on September 23rd. The chat reached over 300,000 Twitter accounts.

AOTA promoted FPAD 2015 in online communications and on their fall prevention website for occupational therapists. From September to October 2015 AOTA’s falls prevention website received over 36,000 page views. AOTA also developed an interdisciplinary fall prevention toolkit for professionals and advocates to educate older adults about fall risks, strategies to reduce falls, and the benefits of evidence-based fall prevention programs. The toolkit includes a PowerPoint document with sample narration notes, a brief presentation guide, and a list of resources and references.

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

APTA is a long standing Falls Free Initiative® partner in the effort to prevent falls and promote awareness and assessment skills among APTA members. APTA emailed FPAD resources to all of their members. The APTA monthly student newsletter, the Professional Pulse, also encouraged student members to participate in FPAD 2015:

September 23 is Falls Prevention Awareness Day, put on by the National Council on Aging’s Falls Free Initiative. As a member of the initiative, APTA encourages members to participate in activities that raise awareness of falls to help prevent them. APTA also provides education and resources year-round, such as exercise prescriptions for balance improvement and falls prevention, information on how to develop consumer events on balance, falls, and exercise, and information on evidence-based falls programs. Members also can access an APTA pocket guide on falls risk reduction and a clinical summary on falls available through PTNow.

The Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy Balance and Falls Special Interest Group, a component of APTA, held events in nine states: Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Washington. Nearly 40 events were staffed with 64 providers offering risk assessments and education on preventing falls to over 500 older adults. Events included fall risk assessments, dissemination
Highlights from a few of the events are listed below.

- **Iowa**: The St. Ambrose University Physical Therapy Department, the Center for Activite Seniors Inc. and Milestones Area Agency on Aging in Davenport, Iowa held an event to increase public awareness about how to prevent falls among older adults and to provide fall risk assessments. Adults at risk for falls were referred to community services and the results were shared with their physicians.

- **Vermont**: In the Vermont APTA chapter’s fourth annual statewide effort to prevent falls, the chapter collectively held 23 fall prevention events and provided over 250 fall risk assessments using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries (STEADI) toolkit.

- **Missouri**: Missouri State University physical therapy students and faculty, Ozarks Technical Community College physical therapy students and faculty, local physical therapists, and the southwest district of the Missouri Physical Therapy Association co-sponsored two FPAD events. Older adult participants were screened for fall risks and provided recommendations for interventions, if needed. Participants were also provided with documentation of their test results to share with their physicians and family. As an incentive for participation, older adults spun a prize wheel with prizes donated from local businesses.

**GSK**

GSK generously supported the development and dissemination of several FPAD 2015 products and activities. Through GSK sponsorship, NCOA created a 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall 90-second video to educate older adults. The video is available in English and Spanish.

GSK also sponsored the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest and Video Contest. The contests captured positive images of older adults engaged in fall prevention activities. Winning contest entries were used in national media and fall prevention materials.

Funding from GSK supported the development of an infographic about the value of evidence-based falls prevention programs, Falls Prevention Programs: Saving Lives, Saving Money. The infographic depicts the impact of falls among older adults, health care costs associated with falls, and the return on investment related to evidence-based falls.
prevention programs. During FPAD 2015, professionals shared the infographic to educate policy makers, health plans, clinicians, and community organizations about the benefits of evidence-based falls prevention programs.

**Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute**

The Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute promoted FPAD 2015, NCOA fall prevention resources, and a free, online falls prevention curriculum for home care workers that was jointly developed by the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute and NCOA.

**Media Outreach**

NCOA’s FPAD 2015 national media efforts reached an estimated 97 million individuals through NCOA fall prevention webpages, a digital news release, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

**National FPAD Webpage**

In preparation for FPAD 2015, NCOA updated the Falls Prevention Awareness Day webpage with new tools, resources, and initiatives to help individuals plan and promote a successful FPAD campaign. New resources included an updated media toolkit, an educational video for older adults and caregivers, and an infographic depicting the value of fall prevention efforts and evidence-based programs. The webpage also featured resource examples from NCOA partners and State Falls Prevention Coalitions.

NCOA’s annual FPAD webinar was promoted by state and local fall prevention coalitions and many national partners. Nearly 800 individuals joined the webinar in August 2015 to learn about ideas, tools, and new resources to maximize their impact on FPAD and beyond.

**Twitter**

The American Occupational Therapy Association hosted a FPAD Twitter chat (#FPAD15chat) on September 23, 2015. The Twitter chat prompted an international conversation about tips to prevent falls and the fear of falling, home modifications, medication management techniques, and more. Over 1,000 #FPAD15chat tweets reached an estimated 300,000 Twitter accounts.
Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015—A Compendium of State and National Activities

Falls prevention awareness through Twitter extended beyond the Twitter chat on September 23rd. National partners, State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup members, and advocates around the country tweeted #FPAD15 from July to October 2015 to share fall facts, fall prevention tips and resources, photos of fall prevention events, and more. Approximately 1,500 #FPAD15 tweets reached almost 2 million Twitter accounts.

Digital News Release
With support from GSK, NCOA developed a digital (online) FPAD news release. The digital news release served as a central point for partners and media outlets to directly download a variety of FPAD outreach materials, such as the 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall video, falls prevention infographics, and audio/video clips for TV press. The news release generated nearly 200 news stories about FPAD and reached an estimated 95 million people.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015: National Social Media Efforts
Led by the National Council on Aging Falls Free® Initiative
Total Reach: 97+ Million People

- 88,000 page views on NCOA’s fall prevention webpages
- 64,000 people reached through NCOA Facebook posts
- 200 news stories reached an estimated 95+ million people
- NCOA’s 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall video was viewed 28,000 times
- 2.1 million people reached through FPAD 2015 tweets
Falls Prevention Coalition and State FPAD Activities

Overview

The following results are based on responses to NCOA’s annual online survey of the Falls Free® Initiative State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup and are used to estimate the impact and reach of state FPAD efforts. A total of 43 coalitions or other state fall prevention leads completed the survey. Survey respondents consisted of 37 State Falls Prevention Coalitions, the Washington, D.C. Falls Free Coalition, and five states that are in the process of developing an official coalition. The survey was emailed to the leader(s) of each coalition and the designated contact for states whose coalitions are under development. Coalition leaders and state contacts were asked to collect FPAD activity information from their statewide partners and designate one person to complete the survey. Survey responses were collected from October 2015 to February 2016.

Across the coalitions and states that completed the survey, nearly 2 million individuals were reached through FPAD 2015 activities and events. Survey respondents reported the estimated number of people reached across four specific areas:

- Awareness and education
- Fall prevention evidence-based programs
- Advocacy
- Fall-risk screenings

Some states noted a lack of capacity to collect member and partner data regarding the number of consumers, providers and elected officials reached. Therefore, the available data reported here are only a proxy for the overall progress and impact of the FPAD 2015.

One-third (33%) of states observed falls prevention awareness for the entire month of September, while 35% reported activities extending for a week. Twelve percent (12%) observed one day of activity focused on September 23rd. Hawaii began its observance in July in conjunction with other observations, extending awareness activities through September.
Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015:
Falls Prevention Coalition and State Outreach
Total Reach: 2 Million Older Adults, Caregivers, and Professionals

- Coalition/State Participation
  42 states and Washington, D.C. participated

- Awareness & Education
  100% conducted educational activities to raise awareness about falls prevention

- Student Involvement
  72% engaged students in FPAD activities

- Fall Risk Assessments
  81% conducted fall risk assessments

- Governor’s Proclamations for FPAD
  76% obtained a state proclamation/declaration for FPAD

- Advocacy
  694,000 people were reached through advocacy efforts
Awareness & Education

One hundred percent (100%) of reporting states organized awareness and education activities as part of FPAD 2015. Table 1, below, highlights states’ key activities.

Table 1: Awareness and Education Activities Conducted by Coalitions and States (n=43)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distributed falls prevention information</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provided falls prevention presentations/lectures/webinars</td>
<td>91%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrote and distributed a press release</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participated in a health fair</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conducted falls risk screening event(s)</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public awareness/education using traditional media, e.g., newspaper article, radio, television</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public awareness/education using social media, e.g., Facebook, Twitter</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other, e.g., flash mob, scavenger hunt, or theatre skit</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Held a press conference</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Some of the creative awareness and education activities reported included:

- A Massachusetts nursing and rehabilitation facility held an educational falls prevention staff scavenger hunt; a skilled nursing facility held a resident falls prevention poster contest.
- Oregon hosted a Tai Chi flash mob.
- North Carolina hosted a fall prevention bingo night.
- New Hampshire created a fall prevention public service announcement with Tomie dePaola, a famous author and illustrator.
- Hawaii recruited 51 pharmacies on four islands to conduct medication reviews and balance tests. They also engaged the Hawaii County Fire Department and retired electrical workers to install smoke detectors and grab bars in the homes of older adults.
• During the week of FPAD, the University of Illinois, Chicago, Department of Occupational Therapy engaged occupational therapy students in fall prevention education efforts to provide entry-level students with fall prevention expertise related to clinical work and program development. Students also provided community-based older adults with information about the role of occupational therapy in fall prevention.

• The STEADY U Ohio initiative asked community organizations and individuals around the state to engage in a statewide campaign to take “10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls” throughout September. Communities responded, with 57 different organizations sponsoring 57 community events.

• The Florida Department of Health in collaboration with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Injury Prevention Council released three educational fall prevention YouTube videos for adults and caregivers, community members, and healthcare providers. They also created a fall prevention community event implementation toolkit.

• In Georgia, the Cobb County library system hosted an education/outreach day and included falls prevention messaging in other library programming.

Nearly half (49%) of states reported combining falls prevention with other observations to expand reach and find new partners. National observances included International Council on Active Aging’s Active Aging Week, National Senior Center Month, Go4Life Month, and the 50th Anniversary of the Older Americans Act.

Many states leveraged local ongoing events, programs and observances, such as Medicare enrollment, Title III-D programs, physical activity and cardiovascular health programs, osteoporosis prevention activities, diabetes prevention and control, and community festivals. Listed below is a select list of awareness activities observed in conjunction with FPAD:

• New Mexico participated in Senior Day at the New Mexico State Fair.

• Arizona partnered with the Fire & Medical Department Health Fair and Banner Health System Event.

• Kentucky combined fall prevention education with osteoporosis awareness and prevention activities.
• **Massachusetts** and Oregon observed National Senior Center Month.
• **Pennsylvania** combined fall prevention education with immunization awareness.
• **Wisconsin** observed the 50th Anniversary of the Older Americans Act.

**Engagement of Professional Students**

The practice of engaging students in fall prevention activities offers both in-kind support and exciting opportunities for students to learn more about fall prevention among older adults. Thirty-one coalitions and states engaged students in 2015 FPAD activities. Students from a variety of disciplines assisted with fall risk assessments, led fall prevention programs, classes, or exercises, and/or provided educational presentations. Table 2, below, shows the breadth of student disciplines engaged in FPAD 2015 activities.

**Table 2: Student Disciplines Engaged in Coalition and State FPAD Activities (n=31)**

<table>
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<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Physical therapy</td>
<td>58%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational therapy</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other, e.g., social work, optometry, gerontology, kinesiology</td>
<td>36%</td>
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**Evidence-Based Programs**

Eighty-four percent (84%) of reporting coalitions and states promoted or kicked-off an evidence-based program or fall prevention workshop as part of their FPAD 2015 efforts. Evidence-based programs have been proven to help older adults reduce their risk of falling. The majority of states promoted *A Matter of Balance* and *Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance*, while others promoted CDC’s *Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries (STEADI)* Initiative, *Stepping On*, and the *Otago Exercise Program*. 
Fall Risk Screenings

Research has identified several factors that place older adults at risk for falls. The most effective fall prevention efforts screen and assess for these risk factors and educate older adults about what may put them at risk for falling. Eighty-one percent (81%) of reporting coalitions and states assessed older adults for fall risk factors as part of their 2015 FPAD activities. The majority of states conducted balance assessments (89%), medication screenings (71%), blood pressure checks and/or orthostatic blood pressure checks (69%), and/or multifactorial screens (66%). Additional screens included vision, hearing, home safety, bone density, glucose, fracture risk, cognition, and nutrition. Table 4, on the next page, highlights the most common fall risk screenings conducted by coalitions and states.
Table 4: Fall Risk Screenings Conducted by Coalitions and States (n=35)

<table>
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<th>Screening Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Balance screening</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication reviews and/or screening</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood pressure and/or orthostatic blood pressure checks</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifactorial screening (multiple risk factors screened)</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home safety checks</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEADI screening or assessment (CDC’s Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries Toolkit)</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision screening</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, e.g., bone density, blood sugar, nutrition</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing screening</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advocacy and Public Education

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of respondents reported advocacy and public education initiatives as part of their 2015 FPAD activities. Three-quarters (76%) of states obtained a Governor’s Proclamation for FPAD 2015. Table 5, below, provides additional details about states’ advocacy and public education initiatives.

Table 5: Advocacy or Public Education Activity Conducted by Coalitions and States (n=37)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governor’s proclamation for FPAD</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local proclamation(s) for FPAD</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, e.g., wrote letters to elected officials</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with elected officials</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducted evidence-based falls prevention demonstration or educational session for elected officials</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some of the creative advocacy and public education activities reported included:

- **Iowa** hosted the largest Tai Chi class in the state at the state capitol and multiple other sites—249 people participated in the event.

- The **Massachusetts (MA)** coalition held an event at the State House with an agenda that included public remarks from key state legislators from the MA House and Senate, as well as the Commissioner of the MA Department of Public Health, the Secretary of the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs, a Matter of Balance leader, and others.

- **New Hampshire** invited legislators to view a screening of *The Falling Monologues*, a series of stories reflecting the thoughts and lessons learned by older adults after they have fallen.

- **New York State** announced FPAD plans and distributed a flyer with FPAD schedule of events at a county-wide annual public hearing/aging network meeting. Public officials, aging network professionals, health care agencies and numerous older adults attended.

- **Pennsylvania** Department of Aging and Department of Health held a “Falls Prevention and Immunization Awareness Event,” at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building. The Department of Aging legislative office emailed an invitation to all of the Representatives and Senators to attend the awareness event.

- **Virginia’s** groundbreaking event for the Pulaski Adult Day Service and Fall Prevention Center was attended by local officials, including the mayor, a state delegate, and members of the town council and County Board of Supervisors.

**Partnership Building**

Partners are an essential component of coalitions’ and states’ FPAD initiatives and outreach. Partnerships also contribute to the sustainability of fall prevention initiatives beyond FPAD. Nearly all states and coalitions reported creative partner activities. Table 6, below, features the most common FPAD partnerships.
Table 6: Falls Prevention Awareness Day Coalition and State Partnerships (n=42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior centers</td>
<td>(88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Agencies on Aging</td>
<td>(83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and/or city health departments</td>
<td>(81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>(67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior housing, e.g., retirement communities, assisted living facilities</td>
<td>(64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities and/or colleges</td>
<td>(60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma centers</td>
<td>(43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacies</td>
<td>(43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency medical services and/or fire departments</td>
<td>(36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, e.g., hospice organizations, public libraries</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

States and coalitions developed partnerships with the following organizations:

- **Alaska** developed a partnership with the Medicare Quality Assurance office.
- **Arizona** partnered with the North Valley Coalition on Aging to expand its reach.
- **Delaware** partnered with the state trauma system.
- **Massachusetts** reached out to a number of new partners including a dual eligible health plan provider, long-term care providers, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, the State Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund initiative, emergency medical services, outpatient rehabilitation practices, YMCAs, public libraries, and farmers’ markets.
- **Missouri** partnered with a funeral home company and hospice organizations to reach a large number of older adults.
- **Montana** expanded their reach to at-risk older adults by partnering with Native American Tribal councils.
- **New York** partnered with a number of new organizations including individual health care providers, the Road Runners, a Home Care Agency, a Transitional Care Unit, an Orthotist, the Vision Zero Program, Accessible Living Center; Podiatry, the Fire Department of New York, Bone Builders Classes, YMCA; Lifeline and Life Alert, an adult daycare agency; nutrition services, and Nurses Improving Care for Health System Elders.
- **Ohio** partnered with Prevent Blindness Ohio and included vision screening in their fall risk assessments.
What Did We Learn?

To assist in planning for 2016, NCOA asked coalitions and states to identify key successes related to the 8th National FPAD.

Successes

The coalitions’ and states’ fall prevention events, activities, partnerships, and initiatives contributed to the grand success of FPAD 2015. Several of these successes are highlighted below:

- **Arizona** provided a demonstration on what to do if a fall occurs; the demonstration was well-received by older adults.
- **Colorado** identified new partners who serve new audiences of older adults to help increase awareness of falls prevention and to promote effective programs.
- **Connecticut** was pleased with the Governor’s FPAD declaration and press release that highlighted the importance of fall prevention, which prompted a request for an interview from Connecticut’s WDRC radio station.
- **District of Columbia** physical therapy/occupational therapy assessments educated and empowered older adults to know their risk and identify activities they can do to strengthen their balance.
- **Hawaii’s** public service announcement prompted a television station to dedicate a nine minute segment on their news program to falls prevention.
- **Iowa** had excellent media coverage at the “Iowa’s Largest Tai Chi Class” held at the state capitol.
- **Kentucky’s** Fall and Osteoporosis Summit enabled networking and collaboration among a diverse group of healthcare professions.
- **Maine** reported that fall risk screenings were enhanced by including pharmacy students and their supervising professor in FPAD efforts.
- The **Massachusetts** Coalition was pleased that a new Social Media Workgroup volunteered to develop the Coalition’s first Facebook page and a new Twitter account to promote the State House event and show real-time FPAD activities.
- In **Maryland**, the Baltimore County Office of Aging’s annual 5K walk/run event attracted over 300 people and encouraged participants to stop by the falls-risk screening area.
• The Minnesota Coalition relayed the advocacy success surrounding the media coverage (several newspaper articles and a local television station) of their FPAD event.

• Montana found it was helpful to engage the Montana American Physical Therapy Association members with weekly informational emails beginning in July.

• New Hampshire developed a public service announcement with author Tomie dePaola and forged a new relationship with a possible new falls prevention spokesperson.

• New Mexico was pleased with the Coalition’s continued presence at the New Mexico State Fair Senior Day, which ensured that older adults from throughout the state received information about falls prevention.

• North Carolina reported that the “Fit After 50 Health Fair” at the YMCA showcased community-based programming and was an effective event for promoting FPAD activities.

• Ohio was pleased with the outpouring of support and participation in its “10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls” campaign.

• Oklahoma conducted two Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance instructor trainings, adding nearly 40 more class instructors to communities across the state.

• Oregon hosted a Tai Chi flash mob in downtown Portland with over 100 participants, including Native American Youth and Family Association elders, Promotores de Salud, LGBT elders from the Portland Q Center, and several Tai Chi groups. The flash mob provided a visible demonstration to the public of inclusive, vibrant, healthy aging.

• South Carolina was pleased that its statewide press release from the Trauma Association of South Carolina included a quote from Congressman James R. Clyburn.

• South Dakota found that over half their fall-risk assessment participants had significant impairments and were at high-risk for a fall. With the participants’ permission, they were able to notify their doctors and get them the assistance they needed.

• Tennessee reported two exciting funding successes: 1) The Chattanooga County Coalition partnership development led to a Community Foundation Grant of $15,000 to fund Matter of Balance instructor trainings; 2) The Knox County Coalition recruited 25 local partners and recruited six “gold sponsors” and six “silver sponsors” to raise $2,900 to support and sustain fall prevention activities.
• **Utah** was pleased with media attention and enhanced community awareness emanating from the coalition-sponsored senior walk at a local park.

• **Vermont** was pleased with its Stay Steady Vermont initiative which involved 43 clinicians, 23 events and 272 screenings throughout the state. Each event was a collaboration of a minimum of three separate partners.

• **Virginia** noted that the Tai Chi for Arthritis demonstration at the 3rd Annual Fall Prevention Conference raised awareness and resulted in scheduling further training for certified instructors in the area.

• **Washington** was pleased to attend the Annual Senior Citizens Foundation Conference where over 350 advocates from across the state came together to address aging. This is the second year that the Department of Health has had the opportunity to present on fall prevention and healthy aging.

• **Wyoming** was pleased to obtain a Governor’s FPAD Proclamation and have a major media outlet run the story.
Looking Toward 2016 and Beyond

Opportunities
Coalitions and states that responded to the 2015 FPAD survey identified key challenges associated with statewide and local observances. The most notable challenge was a need to begin the FPAD planning process earlier in the year to build and strengthen partnerships, engage media outlets, plan and promote events, and coordinate with legislators. Many coalitions and states would also like to improve their data collection process to track FPAD events across the state, report back to partners, follow-up with FPAD participants, and assess areas for improvement. The list below highlights additional opportunities for improvement and expansion that coalitions and states would like to address in 2016:

- Expand partnerships
- Enhance marketing materials and promotional efforts
- Expand advocacy efforts and engage legislators earlier
- Increase funding opportunities and obtain sponsorships
- Recruit additional volunteers/staff to plan and manage FPAD events
- Coordinate transportation to FPAD events

Suggested Resources
To assist in planning for FPAD 2016, NCOA asked coalition and state survey respondents to suggest resources that could enhance FPAD initiatives. A summary of their suggestions is presented below:

- An expanded national media campaign for FPAD
- A national online, interactive map to locate evidence-based falls prevention programs
- Vision screening tools and resources
- Brochure on the importance of proper footwear
- Fall prevention educational materials in accessible format, specifically in large print, audio, and/or Braille
- Fall prevention posters that can be printed in any size
- Home safety fall prevention toolkit
- Video on how to safely get up from a fall
- Sample ad for television channels
Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2016

In 2016, the 9th annual National Falls Prevention Awareness Day will be observed on September 22. NCOA’s Falls Free® Initiative will engage all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and collaborate with more of our national and federal partners. Contact your State Fall Prevention Coalition lead to learn how you can get involved in FPAD and coalitions’ year-round fall prevention efforts. If you are interested in becoming a national partner, or if your State Fall Prevention Coalition is currently inactive, write to NCOA at fallsfree@ncoa.org.

Beyond the annual FPAD, NCOA’s National Falls Prevention Resource Center will continue to work with national and federal partners and Falls Free® Initiative members to implement strategies and action steps of the 2015 National Falls Prevention Action Plan to affect sustained initiatives that reduce falls and injuries among older adults.

NCOA and the Falls Free® Initiative are looking forward to a successful FPAD 2016 and year-round efforts to reduce the number of falls and fall-related injuries among older adults.
Fall Prevention Coalition and State Activities

Listed below are many highlights of FPAD 2015 activities reported by coalitions and states. These highlights showcase the dedication of those at the state and community levels to raise awareness, educate about fall prevention strategies, and refer older adults to evidence-based programs that reduce falls and fall-related injuries among older adults.
Alabama

A number of organizations in Alabama promoted awareness through Facebook and other social media venues. Notably, the Central Alabama Aging Consortium posted on Facebook; the Alabama State University Occupational Therapy Program posted on Pinterest; and Brightstar Care Home Health Agency promoted awareness through a blog.
Alaska

The Alaska Senior Falls Coalition reported a week long observance that included fall prevention presentations and lectures, including many that were delivered in senior centers. The Coalition members also distributed falls prevention information through newspaper articles, radio, TV, PSAs and social media. Key partners for Fall Prevention Awareness Day included senior centers and the Medicare Quality Assurance Office. Members reported that educational presentations were successful in engaging new partners in the effort to reduce falls across Alaska.

The Alaska coalition engaged the King Career Center that catered the falls prevention event and engaged students. Engaging professional students offered opportunities for them to learn more about older adults and evidence-based strategies for preventing falls among family, friends and community members.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Alaska.

Injuries are preventable!

Key advocacy strategies included conducting evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations or educational sessions for elected officials and professionals.
Arizona

The Arizona Falls Prevention Coalition reported an official one week observance September 21–25, 2015; in addition, several coalition members hosted activities throughout the month of September. Efforts were supported by Governor Ducey’s Proclamation.

Coalition members participated in a number of events that included writing and distributing a press release; providing falls prevention presentations and lectures; and distributing fall prevention information to promote public awareness using traditional media and social media.

The City of Phoenix senior center members and staff were encouraged to wear orange to signify safety on National Falls Prevention Awareness day. Over 300 senior members wore orange. The staff at various partnering organizations wore orange t-shirts with their logos, e.g., at Sun Health the back of their T-shirt read: “Stand Up to Falling Down.” Senior centers partners also engaged speakers and posted signs in their 15 centers in the City of Phoenix. Other presentations and events were held throughout the state, including the North Valley Coalition on Aging.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), State/city health departments, EMS and/or fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, pharmacies, senior housing, and universities/colleges. The North Valley Coalition on Aging activities were also jointly observed with the Mesa Fire & Medical Department Health Fair and Banner Health System Event.

Coalition members conducted multiple falls risk screening event(s) including hearing screening, medication reviews/screening, STEADI screening or assessment, multifactorial screening (in which multiple risk factors were screened), and Tai Chi and leg strength exercise demonstrations. Demonstrations included what to do if a fall occurs—whether an older adult can safely get up or not—raised awareness to the participants on actions they can take if, despite all precautions, a fall does occur. Members promoted A Matter of Balance workshops.

Members distributed CDC fall prevention materials in support of their effort, creating a booklet that included the STEADI assessments, including the “Check Your Risk for Falling,” and a referral page to record their results, which gave participants an understanding of their static balance difficulties, lower body weakness, and gait or mobility problems. A registered nurse reviewed their results and wrote in recommendations that they could share with their healthcare provider. The participants learned that falling is an issue to discuss with family and providers. This education was intended to empower older adults need to ask questions when seeing their physician, pharmacist, or other health care provider.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Arizona.
California

Stop Falls California reported a week-long observance to recognize this critical issue. Since SCR 77 was passed in 2008, declaring the first week of fall each year as Fall Prevention Awareness Week, annual local and regional efforts across California are conducted.

In support of the 2015 observance, the 16 local coalitions wrote and distributed press releases, provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information and participated in health fairs to expand outreach. Two coalitions worked together on a social media campaign, posting videos as part of the “Sit to Stand Challenge” for fall prevention week.

Stop Falls California Network members and partners also conducted falls risk screening events that included balance screening, blood pressure checks, medication reviews/screening, vision screening, and multifactorial screening using the STEADI toolkit.

The most important outcome reported was the creation of a new geo-directory that identifies locations of evidence-based programs and other fall prevention resources on the new StopFallsCalifornia.org website to be launched May 2016.

Submitted by: Gretchen Swanson, DPT MPH, Fall Prevention Program Advisor
Heart of Ida, Long Beach, CA
gretchen.swanson3@gmail.com

Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services, Walnut Creek, CA. First place winner of the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest.

Partners in Care Foundation, San Fernando, CA. Honorable Mention winner of the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest.
Colorado Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition reported a one week observance, with two community health fairs scheduled during that time. A variety of events were conducted, such as walking and biking on a trail, Tai Chi in the Park, community forums, and a meeting with one set of county commissioners. In support, members wrote and distributed a press release, provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, and distributed falls prevention information using traditional media and social media. Members also met with elected officials to promote awareness.

Two health fairs were leveraged to reach new audiences. Members conducted falls risk screening events including balance screening, blood pressure checks, and multifactorial screening using the STEADI Toolkit. Colorado engaged pharmacy students in providing educational workshops on the potential effect of medications on the risk for falls.

Demonstrations of Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance, Stepping On, Matter of Balance, Tai Chi for Arthritis, and N’Balance (a Colorado fall prevention exercise program) rounded out the offerings.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, pharmacies, senior housing, retirement communities, and assisted living facilities.

Most of the participating partners used the events to promote their existing programs and get more participants to sign up and/or to develop new partners.

Colorado reported that the key outcome of the 2015 Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities was the opportunity to connect with new clinical partners for more referrals to community-based programs, as well as sign many older adults up for evidence-based falls prevention programs. Colorado also identified new partners who are reaching older adults to help increase awareness of falls prevention and related programs.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Colorado.
Connecticut

The Coordinator of the Connecticut Office of Injury Prevention at the Department of Public Health, in collaboration with the State Department on Aging (SDA), reported promoting Falls Prevention Awareness Week across the state. These efforts were supported by Governor Dannel Malloy’s Falls Prevention Proclamation. The press release and governor’s proclamation highlighted the importance of falls prevention among older adults and lead to interest from the media in the form of requests for interviews and state data. This promotion prompted a request for an interview from Connecticut’s WDRC “The Talk of Connecticut” radio station.

Organizations across the state offered demonstrations of Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance to help promote the value and availability of this evidence-based program. At select falls prevention sites, Coalition members provided blood pressure checks, home safety checks, and medication reviews/screening.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging, state/city health departments, senior centers, and the State Department on Aging. Members distributed falls prevention information, to participants in a health fair and promoted public awareness using social media.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Connecticut.
Delaware

The Delaware Coalition for Injury Prevention takes a unique year-long approach by establishing and facilitating best practices in Fall Prevention for Delawareans across the age span. In support of the Fall Prevention Awareness observance, the Coalition coordinated a week-long observance in which members wrote and distributed a press release, provided falls prevention presentations across the state, distributed falls prevention information and promoted public awareness using traditional media. The observance was supported by Governor Jack Markell’s Falls Prevention Proclamation.

Partners included state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, the state trauma system, and Matter of Balance (MOB) trainers. Accordingly members promoted evidence-based community programs offered in Delaware: MOB, and Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance. These efforts resulted in at least one senior group requesting a falls prevention program for their organization.

The key outcome reported was the promotion and widespread awareness of MOB programs, as well as falls prevention programs offered by hospitals. Through advocacy and the Governor’s proclamation, Coalition members were also able to increase awareness of state legislators regarding the issue of falls in the older adult population.

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kboyer@christianacare.org
Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Delaware.
District of Columbia

The D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA), in conjunction with the District of Columbia Falls Free Coalition, hosted the Third Annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day observance that included falls prevention presentations, distribution of falls prevention information, and public awareness activities using traditional and social media.

Across the District of Columbia, multifactorial screening activities were offered including balance screening, strength and TUG (Timed Up and Go) testing, blood pressure checks, and medication reviews. Vision screenings were also offered in six senior wellness centers, a senior program, and three senior residential buildings. Approximately 25 to 40 older adults participated in programs at each site. Participating providers included: physical therapists, occupational therapists, optometrists, ophthalmologists, nurses, and pharmacists. The District’s effort also engaged a variety of students, including physical therapy, pharmacy, nursing, optometry, and ophthalmology.

The Falls Prevention Awareness Day participating agencies and organizations included the DCOA, Walmart, Walgreens, Howard University, George Washington University, George Washington University Hospital, Transitions Healthcare, Right at Home, So Others Might Eat, Community Preservation and Development Corporation, Capitol City Pharmacy MRC, Agewell Biometrics, Bernice Elizabeth Fonteneau, St Mary’s Court, Iona Senior Services, Hattie Holmes Senior Wellness Center, Model Cities Senior Wellness Center, Hayes Wellness Centers, Washington Senior Wellness Center, Sibley Hospital, American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Optometric Association.

The key outcome reported was having seniors become more educated about their balance and aware of tools and resources to mitigate their risk of falls. In particular, physical therapists and occupational therapists’ assessments educated and empowered seniors to understand their risk and what activities they can do to strengthen their balance. The multitude of screening activities gave the seniors a holistic picture of their health and risk of falling.

Reported by: Linda Irizarry, LGSW, CIRS-A/D Special Projects Coordinator
District of Columbia Office on Aging
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The Florida Injury Advisory Council reported a month-long Falls Prevention Awareness celebration. During this time, the Council organized or supported many different forms of awareness and education with an estimated reach of 70,000 individuals. These included the distribution of a press release, falls prevention presentations/webinars, distribution of falls prevention information, participation in health fairs, public awareness/education via traditional and social media, and falls risk screening events.

The Council partners facilitated a variety of falls advocacy activities, highlighted by Governor Rick Scott’s proclamation of September 23rd as Falls Prevention Awareness Day. This brought attention to the issue of falls among seniors and available evidence-based interventions. Several local proclamations were also published such as a similar release by the Mayor of Sunrise.

The Council chose to begin their activities by starting multiple evidence-based falls prevention workshops. New Matter of Balance, Otago Exercise Program, STEADI, and Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance workshops were all kicked off during the month of September. Fall-risk screenings were an important piece of Florida’s efforts, including balance screening, blood pressure checks, hearing screenings, home safety checks, medication reviews, STEADI screenings, vision screenings, multifactorial screenings, and blood sugar tests.

Partners included the Department of Health in collaboration with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Injury Prevention Council, Elder Options, Area Agency on Aging Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc., Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, Florida Physical Therapy Association, Brooks Rehabilitation Center, Florida Health Networks, CARES, St Johns County Council on Aging, Aging & Disability Resource Center of Broward, ElderSource Institute, Area Agency on Aging for North Florida, Alliance for Aging, Inc., Communities for A Lifetime, and Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida.

The Florida Department of Health in collaboration with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Florida Injury Prevention Council released three educational YouTube videos and a community toolkit.

The Area Agency on Aging Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc. conducted six Fall Prevention Awareness presentations that resulted in five MOB workshops requests from local agencies. West Palm Hospital allows the Healthy Living COE to offer a fall prevention presentation in conjunction with one of their orthopedic doctors. The Palm Beach Fire Rescue partnered with the Aging Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc. in a collaborative Fall Prevention Awareness Day event at a senior center.

The Florida Physical Therapy Association and Brooks Rehabilitation Center was awarded a community awareness grant from the American Physical Therapy Association for a public relations campaign to show the importance of physical therapists as members of the health care team in an emergency department for the purpose of providing a comprehensive fall risk assessment and intervention.
The Alliance for Aging, Inc., provided a Matter of Balance demonstration at their Flu and Falls Prevention Awareness Day event, in addition to providing falls prevention presentations/education to six senior housing complexes and senior centers throughout the month of September.

Area Agencies on Aging, state/city health departments, EMS/fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, pharmacies, senior housing facilities, and universities/colleges all came together to support Florida’s Falls Prevention Awareness efforts. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and nursing students, as well as volunteers and social workers were all recruited to assist with screenings and workshops.

Specifically, Elder Options partnered with Innovative Dads and Prayers By Faith Family Ministries Inc. to host an “Aging in Place” workshop that included fall prevention information and ways to make it easier for seniors to make their home work best for them. Dr. Randy Cantrell, a University of Florida/IFAS assistant professor was the speaker. The event was covered by the news media. The Area Agency on Aging Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc., partnered with two local hospitals, Palm Beach Fire Rescue, two senior centers, one Faith based organization and a senior community. CARES partnered with the Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point and the Falls Prevention Coalition of Pasco Pinellas and Pasco Aging Network. The Area Agency on Aging for North Florida partnered with the Gadsden Senior Center and Sharon Hennigan, an occupational therapist and volunteer with AARP. The Alliance for Aging, Inc. partnered with NCOA, Miami-Dade County, the Florida Department of Health, Senior Medicare Patrol, and Walgreens Pharmacy to host a Flu and Falls Prevention Awareness Day event at Naranja Neighborhood Senior Center that was attended by 100 seniors.

The most important outcomes reported were increased awareness and partnership across the state of Florida.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Florida.
Georgia

Georgia held a variety of events, kicked off by Georgia Governor Deal’s proclamation of September 23rd as Fall Prevention Awareness Day. The proclamation cited both the Georgia Falls Prevention Coalition and the Physical Therapy Association for their efforts.

Other leading efforts included the collaboration between the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Shepherd Center in hosting a Falls Prevention Awareness Day on Friday, Sept. 25 at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta. Activities included free health screenings, fall risk assessments, fall prevention demonstrations, and free lunch for those in attendance. The events were broadly advertised and open to the public at large.

Other partners such as the Cobb Public Library System of Marietta promoted awareness and offered a variety of county and local resources.

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Hawaii

The Hawaii State Fall Prevention Consortium reported a two month long observation from July 1, to August 30, 2015 in collaboration with the Annual Hawaii Fall Prevention Awareness State Campaign. In support, members wrote and distributed a press release. In concert with the press release, 51,000 bag-stuffer flyers were distributed at pharmacies (personalized with company logos). The flyer packets included educational information, an invitation for personal medications review, and balance tests at participating pharmacies.

Concurrently, Consortium members provided falls prevention presentations, distributed falls prevention information, and actively participated in several health fairs. Members also promoted public awareness activities using traditional and social media.

With generous support from key corporate sponsors (The Queen’s Medical Center, The Plaza at Moanalua, Ohana Stairlifts, and Attention Plus Care), HI was able to purchase, as well as negotiate, additional air time for their 30 second Public Service Announcement (PSA). Four television stations ran a total of 222 spots in 111 minutes of air time.

The PSA-linked stories generated buzz, causing a total of 50 minutes and 42 seconds of fall prevention campaign awareness coverage. Spots were run at demographically appropriate times targeting seniors and their adult children/caregivers. The total cost for PSA purchase was $12,800, while the per-industry estimates generated a value exceeding $88,000 of normal air purchase. The Hawaii Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) surveys conducted after the TV campaign will measure increases in awareness (data available May/July 2016).

Across the islands, members conducted falls risk screening events including balance screenings (using the STEADI 30 Second Chair Stand and Timed Up and Go Test), home safety checks, medication reviews (2015 saw 51 Pharmacies on 4 islands perform medication reviews and balance tests), STEADI assessments, and multifactorial screenings. Hawaii engaged pharmacy and nursing students to help support these falls risk screenings and educational workshops.

Home safety assessments were conducted by Hawaii County Fire Department in cooperation with retired IBEW (Electrical
Workers). Where needed, they installed smoke detectors and assisted with the installation of grab bars.

Across the state, members promoted Tai Chi for Arthritis and other available community programs. The Tai Chi workshops and the subsequent news stories about them generated great interest and inquiry. The PSA generated such interest by one station that they dedicated a complete 9 minute segment on their news program, “Living 808,” which generated a great reaction to this story.

All of the media activity, awareness programs, and evidence-based workshops led to lengthy discussions with Hawaii’s two most active partners. KHON Fox television, Kaiser Permanente, and the EMS Injury Prevention System Branch (EMSIPSB) reached agreement confirming a full 30 minute prime-time television special about falls prevention. This broadcast is due to air in late March or early April. This segment concentrates on the 4 ‘pillars’ of fall prevention: medication reviews, annual vision testing, staying active with exercise, and maintaining a safe home and environment.

Partnering agencies for all activities included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, EMS and fire departments, senior centers, trauma centers, pharmacies, universities, and senior housing.

In addition to the television special, the key outcome reported was the growth in general awareness about the issue of falls prevention and actions that can be taken to reduce falls risks.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Hawaii.
Illinois

The Illinois Fall Prevention Coalition reported a week-long falls prevention awareness observance in which members provided presentations, distributed educational materials, and participated in several health fairs.

At one health fair, in collaboration with a City of Chicago Senior Center, a practitioner-educator led participants through learning stations that addressed medication, fall risk factors, home assessment, balance screening, and orthostatic blood pressure assessment. Matter of Balance (MOB) exercise demonstrations were also provided for participants. Assorted prizes related to fall prevention/home safety were distributed.

The Community of Palos, west of Chicago, was particularly active. At the Fall Prevention Fair in the Palos community, organizers used the opportunity to describe their MOB programming, which includes a support group that meets once a month for participants who have completed the MOB program. Another coalition member provided a presentation titled “Foot Care and Foot Wear for Fall Prevention.” The presentation was conducted by a podiatrist and a certified orthotist/prosthetist. Each had a table displaying appropriate shoes and samples of orthotics and prosthetics. Additional FPAD-related activities offered in the Palos community included two fall prevention presentations to older adults in community-based settings.

FPAD efforts by the Chinese American Service League included games with prizes. Participants were asked to spot 14 home safety traps from a color picture. The organization also hosted a 30-minute session of group exercise and encouraged every participant to practice all the exercises included in the MOB program.

The Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Illinois at Chicago coordinated efforts across two professional courses to provide entry-level (MS) students with fall prevention expertise related to clinical work and program development. A subset of MS students also provided information to community-based older adults about the role of occupational therapy in fall prevention. The CDC’s Stay Independent brochure was used to support participants’ self-assessment of fall risk.
Throughout the state, members conducted falls risk screening event(s) including blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews/screening, vision screening, multifactorial screening, assistive device checks, vestibular screening, and footwear/orthotics checks. Across the activities, sponsoring organizations included: continuing care retirement communities, home health agencies, Walgreens, and universities. Partners included senior centers, hospitals, pharmacies, senior housing (e.g., retirement communities, assisted living facilities), universities, and the Illinois Physical Therapy Association.

Illinois reported two key outcomes: 1) The 2015 FPAD health fairs increased interdisciplinary representation, and 2) Involving MOB program graduates in FPAD presentations led to increased interest in the MOB program among potential program participants.

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Indiana

Indiana observed Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015 by distributing a press release. Efforts were lead by the Indiana State Department of Health. Additionally, the state’s Spring Leadership Conference focused on Falls Prevention as a topic, bringing in national speakers to present to over 800 participants.

The Hearth of Sycamore Village, Fort Wayne, IN. Photo submitted in the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest.
The Iowa Falls Prevention Coalition reported a one-day observance supported by Governor Terry Branstad’s Falls Prevention Proclamation, as well as local proclamations. Coalition members met with elected officials and conducted evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations and educational sessions.

The coalition hosted Iowa’s largest Tai Chi class at the State Capitol and multiple sites, with approximately 250 people participating. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Iowa Department on Aging (IDA) information officers, collaborated with the coalition to plan for Iowa’s largest Tai Chi class. They also helped to write and widely distribute a press release. The Governor’s proclamation was read at this event. Unfortunately, legislators were not in session so they did not participate.

Iowa’s largest Tai Chi class resulted in wide media coverage by television, radio, and newspaper. This media coverage helped to promote greater awareness about falls around the state. The Des Moines Register captured wonderful photos of the event.

Coalition members also provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, actively participated in health fairs, and promoted public awareness using traditional and social media.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day sponsors included IDA, the IDPH, Iowa Area Agencies on Aging, the YMCA of Greater Des Moines, retirement communities, and universities. Tai Chi activities increased awareness for all YMCA, staff resulting in new champions promoting fall prevention.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging, state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, pharmacies, and senior housing.

In addition to the Tai Chi event, across the state members promoted Matter of Balance, Stepping On, Tai Chi for Arthritis and offered falls risk screenings. Members also offered educational workshops and led falls prevention programs and exercises. In a variety of settings, members hosted balance screenings, blood pressure checks, hearing screening, home safety checks, medication reviews/screening, STEADI screening or assessment, and vision screening.
Throughout the activities, Coalition members engaged physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and nursing students to participate in falls risk screenings, educational workshops, falls prevention program classes and display posters on fall prevention.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls in Iowa.
Kansas

The Kansas Falls Prevention Coalition reported holding a week-long observance of Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015. The charge was led by Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and included awareness and education efforts such as distribution of a press release regarding available Stepping On workshops. These workshops were sponsored, in part, by scholarships from local partners such as hospitals, AAAs, law enforcement, pharmacies, optometrists, etc.

“At senior centers and other community-based organizations across Kansas, programs like Matter of Balance (MOB), Tai Chi and Stepping On help older adults gain strength, improve balance, and build confidence to help them live healthier lives and preserve their independence,” said Kari Bruffet, Secretary of the Department for Aging and Disability Services.

“Regardless of our age, we all need to know how to reduce the risk of falling.”

Kansas provides a variety of evidence-based programs including Stepping On, MOB, and Tai Chi. Currently more than 50 Stepping On Leader/Trainers and more than 35 Tai Chi Instructors are available.

Traditional and online media across the state promoted awareness and the value of accessible programs. The most important outcome of Falls Prevention Awareness Day efforts was that awareness of the issue of older adult falls was increased across the state.

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Kentucky

The Kentucky Safe Aging Coalition reported a one month fall prevention awareness observance supported by Governor Beshear’s proclamation. Members offered presentations and lectures, widely distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Members also conducted falls risk screening events at select sites including health fairs that included balance screening, blood pressure checks, medication reviews, and vision screening. Planners engaged occupational therapy, pharmacy, nursing, and kinesiology students to assist in falls risk screenings particularly serving health fairs and to participate in a falls prevention program class.

Members promoted the value of readily available programs including Matter of Balance, STEADI, Walk with Ease, Bingocize® and Silver Sneakers.

The Coalition actively collaborated with scheduled osteoporosis prevention activities. To reach health care professionals the Kentucky Safe Aging Coalition, Kentucky Department for Public Health, Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living, and the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center hosted the 2015 Fall Prevention and Osteoporosis Summit. During the summit, updated prevention information on osteoporosis and falls of older adults was discussed with a focus on sharing information, resources, strategies, and information on evidence-based programs. Kentucky reported The Fall Prevention and Osteoporosis Summit enabled networking among diverse group of healthcare professions.

Partners in fall prevention awareness included: Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, EMS and fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and universities.

The valued outcome reported was the development of new partnerships between state agencies, universities and other organizations to leverage limited resources as demonstrated by the professional diversity of the fall summit attendees.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls in seniors across Kentucky.
Louisiana

In Louisiana, the Elder News from the Governor’s Office on Elder Affairs highlighted the issue and available resources. Partners such as the YMCA of the Capital Area actively promoted falls prevention by asking older adults, caregivers, family members and health care professionals in Baton Rouge to raise awareness to prevent falls among older adults. The YMCA promoted available programs and online access to a risk assessment.

Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Louisiana.
Maine falls prevention partners reported a month long falls prevention awareness observation anchored by Governor Paul LePage’s Proclamation stating that September 23, 2015 be recognized as Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Across the state, the aging network provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, widely distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs to reach older adults. Public awareness throughout the month was promoted through social media activities.

Partners in observing Falls Prevention Awareness Day included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), senior centers, universities, and a mall. The partners conducted falls risk screening events at selected venues, including a mall storefront where partners hosted balance screening, blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews, and vision screening. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and pharmacy students assisted with falls risk screenings, and participated in a falls prevention program and exercise class. Some partner organizations jointly observed Falls Prevention Awareness Day in conjunction with Medicare enrollment activities.

MOB classes scheduled in the state were highlighted and a Falls Summit was hosted for health system members, which included MOB program information and referral processes.

The key outcome reported was increased awareness and access by older adults to falls prevention resources, including evidence-based programs, from trusted sources such as AAAs and universities.

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Maryland

The Maryland Fall Prevention Advisory Group reported a one week observance that was supported by Governor Larry Hogan’s Falls Prevention Proclamation, as well as several local proclamations. Coalition members met with state and local elected officials and conducted evidence-based falls prevention program demonstrations and educational sessions for those officials to promote greater awareness of the issue of falls among older Marylanders.

Coalition leaders wrote and distributed a press release and, in conjunction with partners, provided falls prevention presentations, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in a local health fair. Coalition members promoted public awareness across the state using traditional and social media.

At select sites, members conducted falls risk screening events, including balance screenings, home safety checks, medication reviews, vision screening, as well as multifactorial screenings when multiple risk factors were screened at one event. Planners engaged physical therapy, occupational therapy, and pharmacy students to assist in falls risk screenings, and participate in a falls prevention program or exercise class.

Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center promoted the importance of fall prevention in the hospital and at home. The Baltimore County Office of Aging’s Annual 5K Walk/Run Event attracted over 300 people and drew attention of most participants to the screening area.

Across the state, members promoted available programs including Matter of Balance, Stepping On, Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance, and AIM: Balance & Core Strengthening.

Partnering organizations included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and universities.

The MD Department of Mental Health and Hygiene facilitated the statewide observance. A key success was establishing new partnerships with trauma centers, as well as working with local partners.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Maryland.
Massachusetts

The Massachusetts (MA) Falls Prevention Coalition reported that the annual one day “main event” at the State House in Boston was held on September 22nd. The Coalition obtained a Senate Resolution commending the Coalition’s efforts and observance of Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Approximately 150 people attended the event (an increase from last year), which included legislators and other state officials, Coalition members, and older adults from surrounding communities. The program agenda included public remarks from key state legislators from the MA House and Senate, as well as state agency leaders such as the Commissioner of the MA Department of Public Health and the Secretary of the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Other speakers included an older adult consumer who shared stories of her personal experience as a Matter of Balance (MOB) Lay Leader Coach, grantees from the state’s Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund who are implementing falls interventions, and an educational presentation about preventing falls delivered by a Coalition member, who is a professor of pharmacy practice. A Tai Chi demonstration was also given. Rounding out the program event was the very popular raffle of falls prevention items, such as flashlights, nightlights, bath mats, bath treads, to the delight of many older adult attendees and winners.

Coalition members sponsored tables offering hand-out information and guidance on certain falls prevention topics, e.g. pharmacy students accompanied by their professor provided medication reviews. Coalition members and partnering organizations donated funds and services for this event, including food and light refreshments, coverage of the rental fee for the hall, and tote bags so that attendees could carry away printed information and free giveaways. Bus service was provided by a local Aging Service Access Point (ASAP) so that older adults in the area could attend the event. Raffle items were all donated. Special shoehorns with the FPAD theme “Take a Stand to Prevent Falls” printed on it were created and donated by a Coalition member’s spouse.

The Coalition took advantage of the talents of a new Social Media Workgroup, comprised of Coalition members, who volunteered to develop the Coalition’s first Facebook page and new Twitter account to promote the State House event and show real-time activities.

A key outcome of the Massachusetts Falls Prevention Coalitions’ efforts was the dedication and generosity of the 125+ voluntary members of the state Coalition (which in 2015 included some new members who brought fresh ideas and new energy) who helped spread the word across the state about the importance of prevention and promoted the
State House event. The feedback post-event was extremely positive and interest in joining the Coalition has increased.

In addition to the “main event,” other Coalition members and partners throughout the state held events from mid-September to the end of the month and in October. One senior center postponed their event until early November in order to have it coincide with their Silver Anniversary celebration, which offered a great teaching opportunity. A pharmacy outreach program event was sponsored by a college of pharmacy and held at a senior center in central Massachusetts. A nursing and rehabilitation facility held a staff falls prevention education scavenger hunt. A long-term care management organization held a falls prevention poster contest within their 13 skilled nursing facilities, and the winning resident not only attended the Coalition’s event but also displayed his poster there. A rehabilitation department in a hospital setting hosted a FPAD event that included a poster presentation and seminar for staff as well as patients and family members.

Across the state, members provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Members promoted public awareness using traditional and social media. They also conducted falls risk screening events that included balance screening, blood pressure checks and/or orthostatic blood pressure checks, medication reviews/screening, multifactorial screening, foot care assessment, and nutrition assessments. Members and partners also promoted the value and availability of MOB, Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance and EnhanceFitness classes.

Partners in observing Fall Prevention Awareness Day included: Area Agencies on Aging, state/city health departments/state agencies, EMS and/or fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, universities/colleges, a health plan provider, long-term care providers, assisted living facilities, the state’s Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund initiative, an out-patient PT/OT rehab practice, YMCAs, public libraries, and farmer’s markets. Community Health Workers are also important new members of the growing falls prevention community.

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Learn more about how to prevent falls among older adults in Massachusetts.
Michigan

Although the Michigan Falls Prevention Coalition is currently inactive, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services worked to promote Fall Prevention Awareness Day creatively tying it to a number of other September observances including physical activity, cardiovascular health, and diabetes prevention and control. The effort was supported by Governor Snyder’s proclamation and partners within the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and State/city health departments. The State Association for Area Agencies on Aging in Michigan and the Office of Services to the Aging co-endorsed the press release and Governor’s Proclamation to promote greater awareness.

In observance the health department wrote and distributed a press release, widely distributed falls prevention information, and promoted awareness and education activities using social media. Local radio stations like WRKR and newspapers helped to promote awareness and evidence-based interventions. The online MI Headlines posted awareness messages, and cited informative resources and programs hosted by the MI Area Agencies on Aging. Michigan residents were reminded to take action and prevent falls. Independently, Area Agencies on Aging such as the Valley Agency on Aging and the Upper Peninsula Area Agency on Aging and Upper Peninsula Commission for Area Progress promoted programs offerings such as Matter of Balance.

This year the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan noted the importance of the issue and helped to promote programs in Area Agencies on Aging and other venues. The Michigan Physical Therapy Association also participated by promoting the importance of fall prevention for clients over 65 among members around the state.

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Minnesota

Minnesota hosted several events across the state on September 23rd, as well as on other dates in September and early October. These events were supported by Governor Dayton’s Proclamation. Observances included a Fall Prevention Awareness Day event demonstrating Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance, which was attended by DHS Commissioner Lucinda Jesson, Dr. Fuzhong Li, Department of Health Commissioner Ed Ehlinger, and coalition members. Coverage of this event resulted in several newspaper articles and coverage by a local TV station.

Multiple events across the state were provided by coalition members and Area Agencies on Aging.

In support of Falls Prevention Awareness Day, the state wrote and distributed a press release. Across the state, members provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Coalition members widely promoted public awareness activities using traditional and social media.

In selected sites, members and partners conducted falls risk screening events, including balance screening, home safety checks, and STEADI screening. Planners engaged occupational therapy students to assist with assessing and recommending adaptive and assistive devices for fall prevention.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, EMS and/or fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, senior housing, (e.g., retirement communities, assisted living facilities), and universities.

Minneapolis partners offered demonstrations of Matter of Balance, Otago Exercise Program, SAIL, STEADI, Stepping On, and Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Minnesota.
Mississippi

Mississippi reported a week long observance of Falls Prevention Awareness. The highlight of these events was Harrison County Senior Resource Center’s health fair, where a falls prevention presentation was conducted and information was distributed. Matter of Balance (MOB) workshop was kicked off on this day. In addition, coalition members presented at a public hearing on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to provide increased awareness of the state’s falls prevention efforts. A number of additional partners across the state, including the National MS Society Alabama-Mississippi Chapter, Area Agencies on Aging, city/state health departments, senior centers, assisted living facilities, and retirement communities, promoted awareness and the availability of evidence-based programs. It is estimated that approximately 6,000 individuals were reached via these awareness and education efforts.

The most important outcome of Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities was that MOB materials and additional falls prevention resources were provided directly to community members and their caregivers. The open discussion and hands-on activities held during the workshops were successful in increasing awareness and empowering participants.

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Missouri

The Show Me Falls Free Missouri reported a month long observance with a number of unique collaborations across the state, reaching over 4,000 people. Examples included a falls prevention screening successfully partnered with a ‘Medicare Update’ program, as well as other senior center activities and outreach efforts targeted toward homebound seniors through meals on wheels programs. E-cards are available from the state, including a reminder card about Falls Prevention Awareness Day. A new card features the newest fall prevention issues: “Don’t Walk and Text!”

The Missouri Department of Senior Health and Services promoted activities across the aging services network and posted a list of events planned to mark Falls Prevention Awareness during September 2015.

Across the state, members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. In select sites, members conducted falls risk screening events, offering balance screening, blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews/screening, vision screening, and multifactorial screening. Planners engaged physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and nursing students in offering falls risk screenings, educational workshops, or participation in a falls prevention program. Members and partners across the state also promoted the value and availability of Matter of Balance.

In addition to partner agencies such as the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, the Missouri Physical Therapy Association, AARP, senior centers, hospitals, pharmacies, senior housing, retirement communities, and assisted living facilities, Missouri uniquely partnered with a funeral home company and several hospice organizations to reach a large number of older adults. Planners noted participating senior centers reach the most at risk elders.

The Oasis Institute, in collaboration with CLAIM (State Health Insurance Assistance Program), Missouri Baptist Medical Center, and BJC Home Care Services hosted a community wellness fair for older adults. The “Stay Grounded for Life” event included free screenings related to...
better balance and fall prevention, tips for preventing fall-related injuries, and updates on Medicare changes for 2016.

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 Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Missouri.

September 23 is Falls Prevention Awareness Day.
Montana

The Montana Falls Free reported a full month observance, collaborating with the International Council on Active Aging’s Healthy Aging month, and National Physical Therapy Month. Fall Prevention was supported by Governor Bullock. Planners wrote and distributed a press release to promote awareness; further public awareness was promoted through traditional and social media leading to a radio interview on falls prevention.

Across the state, members provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Members and partners also promoted the Otago Exercise Program, the STEADI and Stepping On.

In select sites, state members hosted screening events including: balance screening, blood pressure checks, hearing screening, medication reviews/screening, STEADI assessment, vision screening, multifactorial screening, and heel scans for bone density. Planners actively engaged physical therapy, pharmacy, nursing, social work, and gerontology minor students in performing falls risk screenings, assisting with educational workshops, and participating in a falls prevention program class or exercise class. Students also helped with the outreach and distribution of promotional flyers and offered displays at the public libraries.

Sponsors of this statewide effort reached an estimated 3,500 individuals including: Montana Department of Health and Human Services, Injury Prevention, Montana Geriatric Education center, Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities, Missoula Senior Center, Missoula Aging services, members of the MT chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association, the Missoula Coalition on Aging & Disabilities and many educational programs from the University of Montana and the Montana State University—Bozeman. The members of the American Physical Therapy Association’s Academy of Geriatric PT and their Balance & Falls special interest group were especially active.
A key outcome reported this year was the engagement of the Montana Physical Therapy Association (MAPTA). Members hosted 20 fall risk screening sites across the state, staffed and sponsored by PTs and their staff, resulting in impact that was easily 4-5 times as large as last year. An important strategy of recruitment was activating email blasts to the MAPTA listserv members every week beginning in July, which resulted in a significant increase in FPAD STEADI screenings performed across the state.

Organizations partnering in this statewide effort included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, pharmacies, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, universities, and Native American Tribal councils

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Montana.
Nebraska

Nebraska Older Adult Falls Coalition reported a month long observance in which members and partners wrote and distributed a press release, provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs.

Nebraska participates in World Tai Chi Day every year, which provides demonstrations of the forms, as well as education on health benefits and available classes. Nebraska partners with faith communities across the state for facility access, fall prevention program presentations, recruitment of community-based instructors, outreach, and referrals to Evidence-Based Falls Prevention programs. Nebraska Department of Public Health and Human Services (NDHHS) works with community partners to implement programs including STEADI, Stepping On, and Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance. Planners engaged physical therapy students in the administration of Timed Up and Go test at events.

Nebraska saw an increase in the utilization of STEADI Toolkit components during 2015. The timing of the online STEADI Phase I training release helped bring attention to falls and the state’s observance of FPAD throughout the month. Specifically, hundreds of the patient/caregiver education pamphlets from the toolkit were disseminated at fairs or included in participant training materials. A trauma partner secured a booth/table, assured professional presence, and disseminated fall prevention literature during the Nebraska State Fair. An aging partner led the expansion of the Stepping On program.

Members and partners advocated for public awareness and promoted educational activities using a variety of traditional media outlets. Partners included the Nebraska Department of Public Health and Human Services, Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and universities. Another partner, communities of faith, provided educational sessions.

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Learn more about preventing falls across Nebraska

Birksley Wellness Center Tai Chi, Fairbury, NE. Photo submitted in the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest.
Nevada participated in Falls Prevention Awareness Day via multiple partnering organizations across the state. The Nevada County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution proclaiming September 23 as “Falls Prevention Awareness Day”.

The Falls Prevention Coalition of Nevada County hosted their 8th annual free educational event at the Seventh-Day Adventist Church which included a program featuring Dr. Debbie Rose, an internationally-recognized falls prevention expert, as well as demonstrations by local experts of how to stay strong and maintain balance.

The Washoe County Senior Services hosted a Falls Prevention Awareness Day which included demonstration of exercises that increase balance and reduce falls. Experts were also available to the media and public to discuss ways seniors can reduce the risk of falling. Medication reviews were also provided. The Nevada Physical Therapy Association actively promoted Falls Prevention Awareness Day among members.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Nevada.
New Hampshire

The New Hampshire Falls Risk Reduction Task Force reported a week long observance that included Governor Maggie Hassan’s Falls Prevention Proclamation. Coalition members wrote and distributed a press release to promote awareness. A new falls awareness public service announcement (PSA) starring author and illustrator Tomie dePaola was created and disseminated throughout the week long observance and after. The PSA won second place in the NCOA Falls Prevention Awareness Day video contest.

Coalition members met with elected officials and conducted evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations/educational sessions to promote greater awareness of the issue and available evidence-based solutions. Legislators were invited to see the “Falling Monologues.” This raised awareness with one legislator on the important Health and Human Services Committee.

Members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and promoted greater public awareness and education using traditional media. The Task Force also created a lens cleaner with a fall prevention message and web site for partners to use as giveaways in their falls prevention activities with older adults.

Coalition partners included state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, and senior housing.

Partners hosted Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance training in September with Dr. Fuzhong Li. In addition, at the Concord Hospital, staff created 300 pins for health care workers; the pins had the Falls Prevention Awareness Day theme “Take a Stand to Prevent Falls” printed on them. Across the state members also promoted Matter of Balance, Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance and offered balance screenings as well as multifactorial screenings at selected sites.

The Task Force was pleased to report more events occurring across the state with stronger collaboration than ever before.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across New Hampshire.
New Jersey

The New Jersey Falls Prevention Workgroup reported a week long observance supported by Governor Christie’s Falls Prevention Proclamation, from which staff wrote and distributed a press release to promote public awareness and education.

Members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, participated in health fairs, and conducted falls risk screening events including balance screening, blood pressure checks, and medication screening.

Across the state, members promoted the value and availability of Matter of Balance classes.

New Jersey continued its unique outreach using food tray covers devoted to fall prevention with hospitals, clinics, congregate meal sites and meals on wheels activities.

Partnering organizations included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, senior centers, hospitals, senior housing, retirement communities, and assisted living facilities.

New Jersey reported that the most important outcome was increased public awareness regarding falls among older adults and how to prevent falls.

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The New Mexico Adult Falls Prevention Coalition reported a longitudinal observance taking place Aug 27, Sept 14, Sept 19, Sept 23, Oct 11, and Oct 15, 2016. Observances included collaboration with the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Library and Senior Day (Sep 14th) at the New Mexico State Fair. The Coalition’s continued presence at the New Mexico State Fair Senior Day ensured that older adults from throughout the state received information about falls prevention.

Fall Prevention Awareness Day was supported by Governor Martinez’s proclamation along with many local proclamations, and press releases. The City of Albuquerque released its first mayoral proclamation for Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Coalition members met with elected officials to promote awareness of the issue and evidence-based interventions.

In 2014 New Mexico Stat., Ch. 37, § 1, 24-1-36 (2014 HB 99) established a statewide and community-based older adult fall risk awareness and prevention program which serves as the focus of observance. Members and partners promoted public awareness and education activities using traditional and social media outlets.

Across the state, members provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. In select sites partners and members conducted falls risk screening events that included balance screenings, blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews/screening, and assessment using the CDC STEADI toolkit. Planners engaged physical therapy, occupational therapy, and pharmacy students in appropriate tasks of falls risk screenings.

Local programs were widely promoted including Matter of Balance, Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance, and Steady As You Go peer-led fall prevention exercise classes.

Partners included state/city health departments, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, New Mexico AARP, universities, NM Podiatry Association, and NM Clinical Research and Osteoporosis Center.

New Mexico reported that their key outcome was reaching over 6,500 community members with awareness and prevention messages, and/or screening for individual risk.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across New Mexico.
New York

The New York Fall Prevention for Older Adults Workgroup reported a wide range of observance periods from one day to 3 months. Approximately 54% of respondents held events/activities on September 23rd, while 34% of respondents indicated they held their FPAD activities as part of a larger event.

This year, Governor Cuomo’s Proclamation declared September 20 through 26, 2015 to be Fall Prevention Week in order to 1) better promote the idea of a longer awareness period; 2) encourage expanded activities and varied efforts across the state; and 3) promote inclusion for all since the holy day of Yom Kippur on September 23rd was observed by many New York state residents.

The September 23rd observance was supported by Governor Cuomo’s Proclamation as well as several local proclamations. Coalition members met with state and local elected officials and conducted evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations or educational sessions for those officials.

Press releases were written and distributed around the state. A joint press conference occurred at the Better Balance for Broome 2nd Annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day Event with the NYSOFA Director, the NYSDOH Older Adult Fall Prevention Program Manager, the Broome County Public Health Director, and the Broome County OFA Director participating.

Across the state, members provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and promoted greater public awareness using traditional media. One news article reported on a theater group’s mini-plays on topics important to older adults; these mini-plays were followed by discussion. To further promote activities, members announced and distributed the falls prevention flyer of scheduled events at the annual public hearing/aging network meeting. This is a countywide meeting where public officials, aging network professionals, health care agencies, and numerous seniors attend; the Statewide Senior Advocacy Group participated as partner.

At select sites across the state, members and partnering organizations offered fall risk assessments with balance screening, blood pressure checks, hearing screening, home safety checks, medication reviews/screening, vision screening, multifactorial screening, and bone density screening. As
appropriate, planners engaged physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, nursing, and social work grad students in falls risk screenings, educational workshops, falls prevention program classes or exercise, and blood pressure screenings.

At a falls prevention screening event, 80 older adults were screened for various fall risks at 10 stations. Falls prevention information was included in the weekly ‘Educate While You Wait’ sessions in the clinic of a hospital. One home care agency promoted the impact of falls by distributing fall statistics to their staff. They also sent reminders to therapists regarding balance and strengthening home exercise programs.

Members and partners also hosted introductions to Matter of Balance, SAIL, STEADI, Stepping On, Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance, and Tai Chi for Arthritis.

Sponsors included Onondaga County Step Up to Stop Falls Coalition, Onondaga County Office for Aging, Onondaga County Health Department and Upstate Medical University Trauma Unit, Eastern Adirondack Health Care Network (Rural Health Network), Lions Club, Doyle Medical Monitoring, YMCA, Brooks and WCA hospital physical therapy departments, Winthrop Hospital, and 2 local senators. A $550 grant was received to create a fall prevention tool box.

Active partnerships in promoting fall prevention included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, EMS and fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, pharmacies, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and universities. Other partners included doctors’ offices, optometrists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, Road Runners, home care agencies, a transitional care unit, an orthoptist, a Vision Zero program, an accessible living center, podiatrist, a rehab center physical therapy department, FDNY, Bone Builders classes, advocacy organizations, YMCAs, Lifeline, an adult daycare agency, Life Alert, nutrition services, and Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE).

The key outcome was increased awareness around falls prevention.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across New York.
North Carolina

The North Carolina Falls Prevention Coalition reported a week long observation supported by Governor McCrory’s Proclamation. Coalition members wrote and distributed a press release to promote greater awareness. Advocacy and awareness were further promoted using traditional and social media.

Across the state, members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Presentations included medication safety presentations and distribution of lock boxes; distribution of information at a county fair; and a demonstration of Tai Chi for falls prevention in the park by the Eastern NC Falls Prevention Coalition. The Eastern NC Falls Prevention Coalition hosted 55 attendees at this event, and about 19 signed up for Tai Chi classes afterwards. The Eastern NC Falls Prevention Coalition also held lectures on falls prevention and provided a display and handouts at three local churches during the month.

The Fit After 50 Health Fair at a YMCA showcased community-based programming and was an effective kick-off for promoting the rest of the week’s activities. A presentation at a senior center raised awareness of what they can do to prevent a fall or another fall from occurring in the home. At one site, falls prevention bingo opened up discussions and fostered great questions.

Another partner organization held a round table discussion about the impact of falls, which began to remove stigma from the issue of falling and provided a thoughtful forum for elders to consider how to prevent falls in their lives. The program included a session of brainstorming habits that would lessen occurrences of falls in the community. A Tai Chi demonstration led to increased awareness of Tai Chi for falls prevention and increased enrollment in Tai Chi classes.

At select sites, members conducted falls risk screening events including balance screening, medication screening, vision screening, and multifactorial screening. Planners engaged physical therapy and occupational therapy students in appropriate falls risk screening activities.
Across the state, members and partners also hosted programs including Matter of Balance, Otago Exercise Program, Tai Chi. Demonstrations of TUG, 4-Stage Balance Test, 30-sec Chair Rise, and Building Better Balance Screenings.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, EMS and fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, and pharmacies.

North Carolina reported that their key outcome was increased awareness and the building of new partnerships.

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Learn more about how you can help to prevent falls across North Carolina.
North Dakota

North Dakota promoted Falls Prevention Awareness Day through traditional and online media. The North Dakota Department of Health offered a free three-day training session to people who wanted to become leaders for the senior fall prevention program Stepping On.

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Ohio

Ohio reported a month long observance of National Falls Prevention Awareness with emphasis on September 23rd activities. To promote awareness of the epidemic of falls among older Ohioans, the STEADY U Ohio initiative challenged community organizations and individuals around the state to help take “10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls” throughout September. Across the state, 57 different organizations responded enthusiastically by sponsoring 57 community events. To promote greater public awareness and education, planners used traditional and social media.

Members and partners heavily promoted the use of the STEADI tool kit. Ohio designed easy-to-read collateral material and video for the STEADI tool kit, which could be useful on a national level to reach health care providers.

Across the state in select sites, members and partners conducted falls risk screening events, offered balance screening, home safety checks, medication reviews, STEADI, multiple risk factors screening/assessment, and vision screening. Planners engaged pharmacy students in reviewing medications.

Member organizations also promoted Matter of Balance, STEADI, and Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance.

Sponsors included local pharmacies, department store donations, hospitals, county fairs, and the Preventative Health and a Health Services Block Grant. Active partners included the Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Aging, Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, EMS and fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, pharmacies, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, universities, and Prevent Blindness Ohio.

Planners wrote and distributed a press release, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Ohio.
Oklahoma

The Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition reported a month-long observance of Falls Prevention Awareness Day, which included a variety of awareness and education activities. The events were kicked off by Governor Mary Fallin’s Proclamation, as well as with Tai Chi demonstrations during Senior Day at the Oklahoma State Fair. During this fair, educational materials were distributed and public awareness was increased. Additional presentations, lectures, and webinars were given throughout the month, with falls prevention promotion also being done through social media.

Oklahoma also kicked off a Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance workshop to help promote evidence-based programs. It is estimated that throughout these activities, approximately 500 people were reached. Partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, senior centers, trauma centers, senior housing facilities, and universities/colleges. Physical therapy and pharmacy students were also recruited to assist with falls risk screenings, educational workshops, and participation in workshop classes.

Oklahoma reports that the most important outcome from Falls Prevention Awareness Day was an immediate increased interest in evidence-based programs. After the press release and demonstrations, more than ten older adults contacted the Oklahoma State Department of Health looking for Tai Chi community classes with which to become involved. These activities raised awareness about the prevalence and prevention of falls and provided information on available resources. As a result of this increased interest, two Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance instructor classes were conducted, adding about 40 workshops to communities across the state.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls among older adults in Oklahoma.
Oregon

The Oregon Healthy Aging Network reported that the state observed one day of Falls Prevention Awareness, while several counties celebrated throughout the month. Activities were supported by Governor Brown’s Proclamation and several local proclamations. Network members met with many elected officials and conducted evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations or educational sessions to increase awareness of the issue and evidence-based interventions.

In July, leadership presented the Oregon falls prevention strategies for systems change, which serves as the focus for Fall Prevention Awareness observance. The fall prevention strategies include:

- Health systems: Embed activities into existing business models;
- Health plans and Medicare-beneficiary fitness programs: Cover activities as member benefit;
- Establish community fall prevention programs in sustainable settings including Tai Chi, Stepping On, and Otago;
- Increase clinician assessments and referrals (STEADI);
- Partner with aging services, community health workers, volunteers, professional organizations, first responders; and
- Increase public awareness of falls as a preventable issue.

Efforts across the state are aided by the Or. Rev. Stat. §410.420 which requires funds appropriated through Oregon Project Independence to be used for services to support community caregivers and strengthen the natural support systems for seniors including fall prevention activities.

Network members and partners wrote and distributed a press release, provided falls prevention presentations and lectures across the state, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs.

One promotional activity included the Tai Chi flash mob in downtown Portland with over 100 participants, including Native American Youth and Family Association elders, Promotores de Salud, LGBT elders from the Portland Q Center, and several Tai Chi groups. The event provided a
visible demonstration to the public of inclusive, vibrant, healthy aging.

Kaiser Permanente NW targeted at risk older adults for a 2nd annual STEADI health fair. Each resource table was staffed by a clinician who accessed patient charts with a laptop. Depending on the level of risk, patients were then referred to specialist tables or community tables to sign up for falls prevention classes and other state and local resources.

Across the state, network members hosted fall prevention awareness activities, including balance screening, blood pressure checks, hearing screening, medication reviews, STEADI (multiple risk factors) screening or assessment, and vision screening. Members also promoted the value and availability of the Otago Exercise Program, STEADI, Stepping On, and Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance.

Oregon reported that a key outcome was the development and strengthening of effective sustainable partnerships between public health, health care, aging services, community programs, and fitness centers.

Sponsoring agencies included Kaiser Permanente NW, American-Style Tai Chi, and the YMCA Beaverton Hoops. Active partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, senior centers, and hospitals.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Oregon.
Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Falls Prevention Coalition reported a single official observance day with a State Capital event on September 22, 2015. In addition, one county hosted activities throughout the month of September. Pennsylvania received two House Resolutions: the first was HR 461 by Representative Kinsey, designating September 18, 2015 as “Falls and Flu Prevention and Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania. The second resolution by Representative Farr recognized September 23, 2015 as “National Falls Prevention Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania. Coalition members and partners leveraged this support by promoting evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations and educational sessions for elected officials. Members also used traditional and social media to promote broader awareness of the issue and the availability of evidence-based interventions.

In collaborative observance, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and Department of Health held a “Falls Prevention and Immunization Awareness Event” at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building in Harrisburg, PA. The legislative office in the Department of Aging sent an email to all of the representatives and senators inviting them to the Capitol Rotunda for the awareness event. A variety of organizations came and set up tables so the public, house, and senate legislators could learn and acquire a variety of resources. Partnering organizations included the American Trauma Society, Genesis Health, Bureau of Blind and Visual Services, Pennsylvania Physical Therapy Association, and Quality Insights/Pennsylvania Immunization Coalition. There was also an AARP caregivers’ event going on in another part of the Capitol in which planners garnered spillover traffic from that day.

On September 23rd, the Erie County Health Department partnered with LIFEWORKS (the Area Center for Aging) to conduct a Falls Prevention Awareness Day. This day included demonstrations of local exercise programs including Matter of Balance (MOB), Gentle Fitness, Chair Yoga, and Tai Chi. The Greater YMCA of Erie and the LECOM Health and Wellness center
provided demonstrators and experts for this event. The day also included guest speakers, including a representative from Senator Sean Wiley’s office who spoke about the importance of falls prevention and other concerns that seniors have; Dr. Kristine Legters from Gannon University spoke about her research concerning the fear of falling; and Michael Quiggle who gave information about the MOB program in Erie.

On Thursday, September 24th, 2015, the Chester County Health Department (CCHD) and Neighborhood Health Senior HealthLink (an outreach service for older adults who need chronic care management) sponsored a Falls Prevention Awareness Expo at the West Chester Area Senior Center. The event included information on assistive devices, medication safety, vaccines, foot and shoe information and emergency preparedness, a prescription drop box provided by local police, hydration, hearing and vision screenings, blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, and falls risk screenings.

Across the state, members and partners promoted MOB with consumers which resulted in increased engagement by seniors. They also promoted STEADI with providers and distributed a number of STEADI toolkits. In select sites, partners and members of the coalition hosted fall risk assessments including balance screening, blood pressure checks, hearing screening, and vision screening.

Sponsors included the Erie County Lifeworks and the YMCA of Erie; the Chester County Health Department and the Neighborhood Health Senior HealthLink; and the two champion Pennsylvania Representatives (Kinsey, D- Philadelphia County and Farry, R-Bucks County).

Partnering agencies included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, and senior centers.

Pennsylvania reported that the most important outcome was reaching older adults who were at risk of falling with information on how to prevent falls, as well as educating them that falls are not an inevitable part of aging.

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Rhode Island

The Rhode Island Department of Health and Department of Human Services’ Division of Elderly Affairs joined with the Rhode Island Falls Injury Prevention Coalition, the National Council on Aging and the City of Warwick for the 8th Annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day Celebration, which was held at Warwick’s Pilgrim Senior Center. Programs such as Matter of Balance and Tai Chi were heavily promoted as available across the state.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent senior falls across Rhode Island.
South Carolina

The Trauma Assoc. of South Carolina (TASC) Injury Prevention Committee reported hosting a year-long Fall Prevention focus with increased activities, presentations and events in September to promote Awareness. TASC members distributed a Toolkit of Activities to all Trauma Centers and educated trauma staff so they could educate community members.

The effort was supported by Governor Haley’s Proclamation. A TASC statewide Press Release included a quote from U.S Congressman James E. Clyburn: “I commend the Trauma Association of South Carolina for collaborating with key partners across the state to provide falls prevention education and resources to our community dwelling older adults. South Carolina should continue to strive to improve the availability of evidence-based programs such as Senior Lifestyles & Falls Prevention, Better Choices Better Health, and Arthritis Foundation Exercise.”

Members and partners promoted greater awareness through the use of traditional and social media activities, as well as Tai Chi lunch and learn sessions, community awareness events, and presentations like Slips, Trips, and Falls Prevention. Planners also collaborated with EMS for presentations and screenings, and provided presentations to employees at several corporations.

Other awareness and education activities across the state were held in conjunction with different community events, expos, and festivals such as the Coastal Carolina Fair in Charleston. Members and partners participated in 5 large community events across the state (219 screens with a total of 1150 interactions with participants). This effort greatly expanded outreach to those at risk.

Members hosted 10 presentations across the state using Society of Trauma Nurses Senior Life Injury Prevention (406 participants). Nine Trauma Centers conducted Awareness Day events to include: assessments, Tai Chi Lunch & Learn, local press releases, hospital displays, cafeteria table tents, and prescription take back events. TASC also created a fall prevention brochure to distribute.

Members also offered risk screening events with balance screening, blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews, STEADI assessments, and multifactorial screenings. Planners engaged local occupational therapists and physical therapists to conduct...
assessments, and speech pathology to offer swallow studies. Planners also worked with community groups to widely distribute a home safety checklist.

Across the state partner organizations promoted the value and availability of programs including Matter of Balance, STEADI, Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance, Tai Chi for Arthritis.

Partners actively participating included: Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, EMS and Fire Departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, pharmacies, senior housing, retirement communities, and assisted living facilities.

South Carolina reported that their major outcome was growth, noting that their efforts continue to grow every year. For this 2015 Fall Prevention Awareness Month they participated in more events, collaborated with more community partners, engaged more trauma centers, and reached more people than ever before. South Carolina will continue to conduct statewide prevention programs year round.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent senior falls across South Carolina.
South Dakota

South Dakota offered a variety of activities across the state. **Linn County Public Health** hosted a free Fall Prevention Awareness Day on September 23rd at the Oakland Road Hy-Vee to help seniors reduce their risk of falling. Hosts offered bone density screenings, hearing aid cleanings, eyeglass maintenance, and information on diabetes with a recipe demonstration. The event also included medication pocket cards which described medications, what they’re used for, and when to take them.

**The Rapid City Fire Department** also joined in the promotion of fall prevention awareness. The day was supported by the mayor’s proclamation declaring September 23, 2015 as Falls Prevention Awareness Day.

*Reported by: Ruth Kern-Scott, PT*

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Tennessee

The Tennessee Falls Prevention Coalition reported a week-long observance supported by Governor Bill Haslam’s Proclamation. Coalition partners wrote and distributed a press release to promote statewide awareness of the issue and effective interventions. Local officials participated in Chattanooga and Knoxville’s falls prevention events.

Throughout the state, partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Public awareness and education were further expanded by using traditional and social media.

Partners conducted falls risk screening events in select sites where they hosted balance screening, home safety checks, STEADI screening or assessment, and vision screening. Planners engaged the assistance of physical therapists, occupational therapists, and nursing students in the delivery of falls risk screenings and educational workshops.

Members and partners also actively promoted the value and availability of Matter of Balance, Stepping On, and Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance. The Knoxville-Knox County Senior Safety Task Force was especially active in promoting SAIL.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), state/city health departments, emergency medical services and fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and universities. The Tennessee Occupational Therapy Association offered two professional training seminars in support of fall prevention awareness: “Fall Prevention and Home Modification” and the “Cognitive Disability Model.”

The most important outcome reported was a significantly increased number of master trainers and peer leaders now prepared to conduct evidence-based programs, such as MOB, Stepping On, and Tai Chi. This success is due in large part to the Chattanooga County Coalition partnerships that led to a $15,000 grant from the Chattanooga Community Foundation to train 20 MOB Trainers.

The Knox County Coalition recruited 25 local partners and recruited six “gold sponsors” and six “silver sponsors” to raise $2,900 to support prevention activities. This support will help create sustainable prevention efforts.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Tennessee.
Texas Falls Prevention Coalition reported a month long annual observance, supported by a statute enacted until 2017: Tex. Human Resources Code Ann. §161.351-3, which establishes “Fall Prevention Awareness Week.” It allows the state’s department of aging and disability services to develop recommendations to: raise public awareness about fall prevention; educate older adults and individuals who provide care to older adults about best practices to reduce the incidence and risk of falls among older adults; encourage state and local governments and the private sector to promote policies and programs that help reduce the incidence and risk of falls among older adults; encourage area agencies on aging to include fall prevention education in their services; develop a system for reporting falls to improve available information on falls; and incorporate fall prevention guidelines into state and local planning documents that affect housing, transportation, parks, recreational facilities and other public facilities.

The observance was aided by local proclamations. Members met with elected officials and presented evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations and educational sessions for those officials. Across the state, members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, and distributed falls prevention information. Greater public awareness of the issue and evidence-based interventions was promoted widely through traditional and social media.

Across the state members and partners offered Matter of Balance demonstrations promoting the value and availability of the program. In selected sites members fall risk assessment opportunities including balance screening, blood pressure checks, and home safety checks. Planners used Nursing Students in their assessment efforts.

On September 22nd, the Commissioners Court proclaimed the week of September 23-29 as Fall Prevention Awareness Week in Tarrant County. On the same day in Sundance Square, the proclamation was celebrated with live performances from Senior Citizen Services and information from the Falls Prevention Task Force of Fort Worth Safe Communities Coalition.
Entertainers included the Steppin’ Grannies of Fort Worth, a hip-hop line dance group of senior grandmothers ages 60+, and the Dukes of Uke and the Uke-A-Ladies ukulele band from White Settlement. See the article from the Star-Telegram.

Partners included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), EMS and fire departments, pharmacies, and universities.

The key outcome reported was the enhanced partnerships and communication with aging and trauma professionals.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Texas.
Utah

The Utah Falls Prevention Coalition reported one official day of observance, but noted local organizations and agencies promoted awareness throughout the entire month. Awareness was supported by Governor Herbert’s Proclamation, which emphasized the importance of falls prevention across the state. Staff wrote and distributed a press release to promote statewide awareness. Members also used traditional and social media venues to promote the issue of falls and supporting events across the state.

Coalition members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Other activities included promoting Stepping On and senior walks at various locations such as local parks and senior centers. The coalition-sponsored senior walk at a local park garnered lots of media attention and enhanced community awareness. The event was promoted by the Utah Department of Health, Violence and Injury Prevention Program, in conjunction with Salt Lake County Aging & Adult Services.

Senior walk events across the state offered several speakers, including a motivational speaker who works in home health. Other events included Tai Chi tutorials, falls trivia for seniors, and falls bingo for seniors. Some falls prevention activities were conducted as part of senior health expos, which included prescription drug takebacks, the presence of medical experts, and immunizations.

At select sites, members hosted balance screenings, blood pressure checks, and multifactorial screening. Planners engaged physical therapy students to assist in falls risk screenings. Local health departments and senior centers had sponsors for their falls prevention events, such as Humana.

The key outcomes reported by Utah were increased community awareness and enhanced relationships between coalition members, state, and local partners. Seniors learned and enjoyed themselves.

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Vermont

Falls Free Vermont celebrated a month long observance in collaboration with Go4Life month. In August, coalition members sent local proclamations to every state legislator with a cover letter on falls prevention. This included area population health data, citing the need to mitigate this serious and costly health issue (Vermont ranked 43rd out of 50 states). These personalized proclamations asked for their support of fall prevention and awareness, and also urged the Governor to recognize September as Falls Prevention Awareness Month. Many of the 220 proclamations were signed and forwarded by legislators, government officials, and state department staff to the Governor’s office.

Press releases, TV interviews, and Agency on Aging e-newsletters and print media reached more than 30,000 people. Sixty-eight clinicians donated their time to provide screenings including; falls risk, blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews/screening, and STEADI (multiple risk factors) screenings. Planners engaged Champlain College graduate students to assist with educational workshops and falls prevention programs and exercises.

During the month, the Stay Steady Vermont Initiative (supported by the Vermont Chapter of APTA), engaged 43 clinicians who provided 272 screening at 23 events throughout the state.

CVAA hosted a Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention demonstration and participatory event at Shelburne Farms, with almost 100 seniors attending. These seniors received additional listings for 27 new Tai Chi for Arthritis programs that were launched in September. They also received a schedule of Matter of Balance classes and lists of upcoming Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) programs. Among the handouts, participants received STEADI Stay Independent risk assessments, NIH AgePage resources, Go4Life books, Go4Life DVDS, and reinforcement of “owning” your health.

Additional Tai Chi for Health and Balance demonstrations were staged throughout the year, such as: University of Vermont Extension Annual Conference, the 50 Plus Expo, World Tai Chi Day events and both Center on Aging Gerontology Symposia including the keynote address.

The observance was supported by Governor Shumlin’s Proclamation, which was signed in early September.
coalition members’ plan on including more cross-marketing of CDSME programs with wellness activities throughout the year. Pre-diabetes self-risk assessments, hypertension initiatives and eating well programs need more exposure and expansion. The HomeMeds (medication risk mitigation re: falls prevention) program, was implemented by CVAA Wellness Benefits Counselors, targeting new Meals on Wheels client referrals and hospital discharge patients.

The AAAs coordinated with the Vermont Department of Health’s (VDH) EMS and Injury Prevention Department to connect local senior centers and other community-based service providers to the 25 EMS agencies trained to provide the FallScape evidence-based fall prevention program. AAAs, Senior Centers, and Meals on Wheels program staff were a key source of referral for seniors at risk of falls. CVAA included opportunities for VDH to present updates on the ACL grant at both Gerontology Symposiums.

Sponsors included the University of Vermont Center on Aging (statewide entity), Armistead Home Care Services (in-home support for older adults), Shelburne Farms (donated space and refreshments for the Tai Chi event), and the Vermont Chapter of APTA (provided in-kind support).

Partners included: AAAs, state and city health departments, home health agencies, EMS and fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and universities.

Successes cited by the planners included bringing the Agency of Human Services and the Department of Health on board through promoting awareness and education. There was a discovery of many ‘champions’ in state agencies, who made personal fall prevention commitments through their falls prevention advocacy.

The key reported outcomes were: expanding collaborations, making new partnerships, and encouraging the continuation of working together throughout the year.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Vermont.
The Southwestern Virginia Fall Prevention Coalition reported a week long observance supported by Governor Terry McAuliffe’s Proclamation, as well as local proclamations. The coalition wrote and distributed a press release to promote further awareness, in addition to social media outreach. Members met with elected officials, offering evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations or educational sessions for those officials.

The Coalition participated in a Groundbreaking event for Pulaski Adult Day Service & Fall Prevention Center. This event was attended by Delegate Nick Rush, Mayor Jeff Worrell, Issac Sarver, a field representative for Senator Mark Warner and field representative for Congressman Morgan Griffith, as well as local Town Council and Pulaski County Board of Supervisors’ members.

Coalition partners across the region provided falls prevention, presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. At select sites members and partners offered multifactorial fall risk assessment including balance screening, blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews, STEADI screening or assessment, and bone density testing.

Members and partners introduced STEADI and Tai Chi for Arthritis to participants. The Tai Chi for Arthritis demonstration raised awareness and resulted in scheduling further training for certified instructors in the area. Falls prevention awareness events raised awareness and impacted our regional conference by gaining new members for our coalition.

Sponsors of activities included Carilion Clinic, LewisGale Regional Health System, and the Pulaski Adult Day Service & Fall Prevention Center, Inc. Partners included Area Agencies on Aging, hospitals, trauma centers, senior housing, and universities.

The key outcome reported was increasing public awareness of evidenced-based fall prevention exercises through fall risk screening and education activities during the Falls Prevention Awareness Day events.

In 2016 the Virginia Department of Health, in collaboration with Radford University, will host a Virginia Fall Prevention Summit to engage stakeholders in creating a statewide Falls Prevention Coalition in Virginia.

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Washington Falls Free observed Fall Prevention Awareness for the full month of September. In addition to Governor Inslee’s Proclamation, fall prevention was promoted within the Washington Senior Citizens Foundation Annual Conference where over 350 advocates from across the state convened to address aging. This is the second year, the Washington Department of Health presented on fall prevention and healthy aging. Additional public awareness activities were promoted through traditional media across the state.

The annual Fall Prevention Observance is supported by Wash. Rev. Code §43.70.705 which requires the Department of Social and Health Services to establish a statewide fall prevention program, including: networking with community services; identifying service gaps, making affordable senior-based, evaluated exercise programs more available; providing consumer education to older adults, their adult children, and the community at large; and conducting professional education on fall risk identification and reduction.

Across the state, members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Twenty partnering organizations reported hosting a fall prevention day or month long observance. The state Department of Health participated in 6 different events and presentations.

Washington did not promote starter programs but did host a number of falls risk screening events including balance screening, STEADI screening or assessment, and multifactorial screening.

Partner organizations included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), State/city health departments, Senior Centers, hospitals, and universities. Washington was excited to engage Pharmacy to work on medication review and management in accordance with Senate Bill 5557 which allows Pharmacists to bill for medication reviews. Rule and regulations are being developed.

Washington reported the key outcome of fall prevention observance is the opportunity to bring advocates together for an event, recruit new partners and bring awareness to fall prevention.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Washington.
This year West Virginia hosted their first Falls Prevention Awareness day, which included hosting a week long observance held jointly within the Title III-D Programs and senior centers across the state. Public awareness was promoted primarily though social media and local events.

In July, West Virginia University students in the physical therapy, occupational therapy, and pharmacy programs, along with clinician supervisors, gathered at the Ripley Senior Center in Jackson County. They provided falls risk assessments and opportunities for collaboration.

Across the state, members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, and distributed falls prevention information. Organizations promoted the value and availability of evidence-based programs including Matter of Balance, Otago Exercise Program, Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance, and Tai Chi for Arthritis. Attendees reported demonstrations including Healthy-Steps for Older Adults were helpful in promoting awareness and recruiting for programs. Planners engaged Geri-Olympics students to participate in or lead falls prevention programs and exercises.

Members and partners also offered various exercises and demonstrations and distributed information to seniors using the Charleston Town Center Mall food court. Seniors truly enjoyed this day. Active partnering organizations included Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), Senior Centers, and Pharmacies.

WV reported that one of their key outcomes was a greater awareness of falls among seniors, especially that they can be prevented. In addition, seniors learned how strength and balance exercises could help prevent falls and fall-related injuries.

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Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Fall Prevention Initiative reported a full month observance with a focus on September 23rd. The observation was supported by Governor Walker’s Proclamation. Partners distributed press releases and used traditional and social media to promote broad awareness of the issue and available evidence-based interventions. Planners coordinated observances with the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act to expand outreach.

Across the state, members and partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and participated in health fairs. Members and partners promoted available programs including Stepping On, Strong Bones, NoFalls, and Tai Chi. Stepping On reunion classes were hosted to reinforce the messages and activities previously learned.

At select sites, community partners offered individual assessment opportunities to identify multiple fall risk factors including: balance screening, blood pressure checks, home safety checks, medication reviews, STEADI screening/assessment, vision screening, alcohol use assessment, and cognition changes. Planners engaged physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and nursing students to assist with falls risk screenings and the presentation of educational workshops.

The most important outcome noted was the growing use of the STEADI toolkit across multiple Wisconsin events. The STEADI toolkit provides consistent screenings, consistent identification of risk levels, and free educational materials. The widespread use of the toolkit helps assure a consistent statewide message and connects the work at the local level to the collective statewide efforts as a whole.

Sponsors included community businesses that donated door prizes and raffle items, plus hospitals, universities, Regional Trauma Advisory Councils, pharmacies, senior centers, and Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC’s).

Active partnering organizations included Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), state/city health departments, ADRC’s, EMS and fire departments, senior centers, hospitals, trauma centers, pharmacies, Wisconsin Chapters of the Red Cross, community coalitions, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living facilities, and universities.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Wisconsin.
Wyoming

Wyoming promoted the Falls Prevention Awareness Day campaign with the support of Governor Mead’s Proclamation. The Wyoming Department of Health, Injury Prevention Program and the Aging Division authored a joint press release to mark the occasion. The Injury Prevention Program and its partners highlighted this important public health issue to garner recognition that older adult falls have a significant impact on Wyoming residents.

To increase falls prevention education and evidence-based interventions, the Wyoming Injury Prevention Program hosted its first Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance Instructor Training, which resulted in 12 instructors from around the state being trained. The program plans to hold a second instructor training in 2016. The Injury Prevention Program also conducted two trainings on home fall risk assessments, interventions, and available resources at the Wyoming Trauma Conference. The training and tools delivered were designed to be utilized by EMS providers after responding to a fall related call. In addition, Wyoming worked with a long-term care facility to implement fall risk assessments and mitigation techniques.

The newly-formed Injury Prevention Program also developed a webpage this year. The webpage includes Wyoming rates of unintentional hospitalizations and deaths due to falls, strategies for addressing falls, and fall prevention online trainings and resources. Partners across the state can utilize this information to bolster their local prevention efforts.

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Learn more about what you can do to prevent falls across Wyoming.
RSVP Bone Builders Program, Tewksbury, MA. Photo submitted in the 2015 Falls Free® Photo Contest.