

## Pennsylvania

### *Making a Difference to Address Falls Prevention*



**Did you Know...** every year in the United States, more than 1/4 of adults age 65+ have a fall, with approximately 1/5 of fallers sustaining a serious injury? Research indicates that people who fall are 2-3 times more likely to fall again, and each fall increases the likelihood of more serious injury or death.

### Pennsylvania Falls Facts

- As of 2013, Pennsylvania ranked 5th in the nation in older adult population aged 65 or older. As of 2015, it was estimated that Pennsylvania's older adults aged 65 or older represented 17% of its population.
- In 2013, Pennsylvania reported that 1,362 older adults aged 65 or older died from fall related injuries.
- In 2013, total hospital charges in Pennsylvania for all injuries and ages exceeded \$9.1 Billion of which more than \$3.7 Billion was directly contributed to falls from older adults aged 65 or older.

### Fall Deaths are Only the Tip of the Iceberg

- Annual number of deaths from falls: 1,229
- Annual number of hospitalizations from falls: 47,079

As the population ages, the impact and cost of fall-related deaths and injuries will increase dramatically unless funding is increased to address the issue.

### Pennsylvania Responds

Falling is NOT an inevitable result of aging. Through evidence-based interventions, practical lifestyle adjustments, and capacity-building to address falls prevention through community partnerships, we can substantially reduce the number of falls. Pennsylvania is taking action to prevent falls through the following initiatives:

- The Pennsylvania Department of Aging, through its Area Agencies on Aging network, offers the Healthy Steps for Older Adults (HSOA) program. HSOA is a 2-day falls prevention evidence-based

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workshop that educates older adults about preventing falls and injuries and staying healthy and active. HSOA is available for free to Pennsylvania residents aged 50 and older and is designed to:

- Be fun, sociable, and validating.
  - Raise awareness of the causes of falls and learn how falls can be prevented.
  - Provide opportunities and ideas for physical activities.
  - Identify and problem-solve barriers to change.
  - Provide home activities that reinforce what is learned.
  - Include frequent breaks and activity changes.
- Healthy Steps for Older Adults (HSOA) Program Statistics SFY 2015-2016:
    - 93% of participants indicated that they had not fallen during the month following the workshop.
    - 75% of participants indicated that they had increased their socialization activities outside of the home by one or more times per week.
    - 58% of participants indicated that they had increased their amount of physical activities by one or more times per week of which 30% increased their physical activities to three times per week.
    - 71% of participants indicated that they were less fearful of falling since attending the workshop.
    - For more information, please visit the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's website under Aging Services / Health & Wellness: <http://www.aging.pa.gov/aging-services/health-wellness/Pages/default.aspx>.
  - The Pennsylvania Department of Aging, through its Area Agencies on Aging network, also offers the Healthy Steps In Motion (HSIM) program as a supplement to the Healthy Steps for Older Adults (HSOA) program. HSIM is an 8-week falls prevention exercise program with two, one-hour classes each week. These classes will provide more exercises including exercises for people with different fitness levels. Like HSOA, HSIM is available for free to Pennsylvania residents aged 50 and older. The goals for participants of the HSIM program are to:
    - Reduce their risk of falling.
    - Learn new exercises.
    - Learn the parts of an exercise routine.
    - Build strength, especially in the lower body.
    - Increase their flexibility to improve movement.
    - Improve their balance.
  - Healthy Steps in Motion (HSIM) Program Statistics SFY 2015-2016:
    - 84% of participants indicated that they plan to be more physically active on a regular basis since attending the exercise program.
    - 87% of participants indicated that they feel healthier.

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- 95% of participants indicated that exercising in a group improved their interest in exercising.
- 96% of participants indicated that exercising under the direction of an instructor improved their ability to perform the exercise correctly.
- 98% of participants indicated that they would recommend HSIM to others.
- 94% of participants indicated that they would continue HSIM after the first eight-week session.
- For more information, please visit the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's website under Aging Services / Health & Wellness: <http://www.aging.pa.gov/aging-services/health-wellness/Pages/default.aspx>.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Health through the Division of Health Risk Reduction administers the A Matter of Balance (MOB): Managing Concerns about Falls program. MOB program is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults. A Matter of Balance includes eight two-hour sessions for a small group led by a trained facilitator. During the classes participants learn to view falls as controllable, set goals for increasing activity, make changes to reduce fall risk at home, and exercise to increase strength and balance. Currently, we partner with five county/municipal health departments (Allentown, Chester, Erie, Montgomery, and York) and four regional tobacco primary contractors (Adagio, Burn Prevention, COGI, and Erie County Health Department) to provide these programs free of cost to the public.
- Matter of Balance (MOB) Program Statistics SFY 2015-2016:
  - Our partners conducted 40 MOB community programs to 439 participants.
  - 97% of participants are more comfortable talking about their fear of falling.
  - 99% of participants continue to exercise after completion of the program.
  - For more information, please visit the MaineHealth website: <http://www.mainehealth.org/mob>.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Health through the Division of Health Risk Reduction administers the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries (STEADI) Tool Kit. STEADI toolkit contains resources and tools that helps make fall prevention an integral part of clinical practice. This toolkit aids health care providers to identify patients risk for a fall; identify modifiable risk factors; and offer effective interventions.
- STEADI Tool Kit Statistics SFY 2015-2016:
  - Our partners disseminated 168 STEADI toolkits to clinical practices.
  - More information can be found on the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/steady/index.html>.

## Contact Information

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## Pennsylvania Website

<http://www.health.pa.gov>

## About the Falls Free® Initiative

The National Council on Aging leads the Falls Free® Initiative, a national effort to address the growing public health issue of falls, fall-related injuries and deaths. The initiative includes a 44-member State Coalition on Falls Prevention Workgroup charged with collaboratively promoting effective strategies to address falls. 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. Learn more at [www.NCOA.org/FallsFreeInitiative](http://www.NCOA.org/FallsFreeInitiative).

## Data Sources

- Deaths: Pennsylvania Department of Health Enterprise Data Dissemination Informatics Exchange "EDDIE" <https://www.phaim.health.pa.gov/EDD/WebForms/DeathCntySt.aspx>
- Hospitalizations: Pennsylvania Health Statistics <http://www.statistics.health.pa.gov/HealthStatistics/BehavioralStatistics/InjuryStatistics>

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