

Fall Prevention

Literature Review

Jessica Kavajecz

Lakeview College of Nursing

## **Fall Prevention**

Fall prevention is an important topic to discuss for primary and hospital care patients. According to the CDC, falls are the leading cause of injury death for adults age 65+ and is a major health concern (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). An increase in falls can cause an increase in patient fatalities and hospital liabilities. We will be going over a few qualitative research articles to determine how we can prevent falls from occurring through this literature review.

### **Factors influencing the implementation of falls prevention practice in primary care**

The main purpose of this article is to identify factors that influence the implementation of fall prevention practices in the primary care setting (McConville & Hooven, 2020). Falls are most common in adults 65+ and can cause decreased mobility, loss of independence, injuries, and death. Social isolation, activity limitation, and depression can also occur because of the individual's fear of falling (McConville & Hooven, 2020). "In 2015, medical costs related to fall-related injuries totaled \$50 billion, making falls one of the most expensive health conditions in people older than 65 years (Stevens & Lee, 2018)" (McConville & Hooven, 2020, p.1). This article will be exploring factors that lead to fall prevention practices. The key question that the authors address is what barriers to fall prevention management are in primary care. A study was done in Connecticut to identify barriers to the implementation in fall risk management, and it was concluded that only 30% of older adult patients were questioned about falls (McConville & Hooven, 2020). The most important information in this article is the data analysis. The data analysis consists of 18 articles that were included in this review. Of the 18 articles, there were common factors that influenced the implementation of fall prevention management (McConville

& Hooven, 2020). The main inferences in this article are that five consistent themes act as a barrier to fall prevention management and include; Provider beliefs and practice, lack of knowledge, patient engagement, time constraints, and financial factors (McConville & Hooven, 2020).

The key concepts that we need to understand in this article are that provider's beliefs and practice, lack of knowledge, patient engagement, time constraints, and financial factors are common themes that act as a barrier to fall prevention management. The provider's beliefs and practices is the most common barrier to fall prevention management because there was a lack of physician cooperation and availability, not enough resources in the community, and some physicians did not prioritize falls (McConville & Hooven, 2020). Another barrier to fall prevention management was a lack of knowledge. Of the 18 articles reviewed, it was determined that 89% suggested that insufficient knowledge was a factor in falls (McConville & Hooven, 2020). According to the National Center for biotechnology information website, the Washington State Department of Health administered a telephone survey to 50 employees and 101 elders in Washington State, only 38% of employees felt "very knowledgeable" about fall prevention (Laing et al., 2011). Patient engagement also acted as a barrier to fall prevention. "Health professionals felt that patients underreported gait disturbances and falls because they normalized falls as a part of aging (Chou et al., 2006; Loganathan et al., 2015; Phelan et al., 2015)" (McConville & Hooven, 2020). Providers are often under a large workload, so it makes sense that time constraints act as a barrier to fall prevention. Providers often have limited time to assess the patient and perform a physical exam, so falls go unreported, and a fall risk may not be detected (McConville & Hooven, 2020). Financial factors is the final barrier that was most

common to preventing falls. Depending on the type of insurance a client may have, they may not be able to afford proper interventions or assistive devices (McConville & Hooven, 2020).

The main assumption underlying the authors' thinking is that there are things to provide proper fall prevention protocol. It is up to the healthcare professionals who work in a primary care setting to assess their patients properly by identifying fall risk factors. If they are at risk, they need to be provided with proper resources (McConville & Hooven, 2020). If we take this assumption seriously, the number of patient falls can potentially decrease, improving their quality of life and care. If we fail to take this assumption seriously, the number of patient falls will not decrease, which can affect the patient's quality of life and even result in death.

In conclusion, Falls are the leading cause of injury in the older adult population. The number of falls can decrease if proper fall prevention protocol is acquired. Five common themes were identified as being a fall prevention barrier, and these include; Provider beliefs and practices, lack of knowledge, patient engagement, time constraints, and financial factors. If we break through these barriers, the number of patient falls will decrease and benefit the older adult population by improving their quality of life.

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## Conclusion

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## References

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McConville, A., & Hooven, K. (2020). Factors influencing the implementation of falls prevention practice in primary care. *Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners*. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JXX.0000000000000360>