

CRE PFI Newsletter 2022

Welcome to the NHMRC Funded CRE Prevention of Fall-related Injuries newsletter. We hope you are staying healthy and safe across Australia. In this edition we feature some of the work our investigators, early career researchers and students are working on.

Action on Falls Prevention

On Friday 29th April 2022, a brainstorming session led by CRE Prevention of Falls Injuries Prof Cathie Sherrington, ANZ Fall Prevention Society Prof Kim Delbaere and NSW Falls Prevention and Healthy Ageing Network Prof Stephen Lord was held on what we can do differently to increase the focus on fall prevention in community dwellers in policy and program funding in NSW and nationally. As a result a Falls action plan was devised and a page focused on action is now available on the ANZ Fall prevention Society page: <https://www.anzfallsprevention.org/action-on-falls-prevention/>. Falls are everybody's business. A fall can happen to anyone, and the consequences can be devastating. As health professionals and health policy experts, we believe more needs to be done to reduce the risk of falls.

PDF of the flyer can be downloaded from our website

<https://crepreventfallsinjuries.org.au/call-to-action-on-falls/>

See below the link to an article for the Conversation written by Profs Anne Tiedemann, Prof Kim Delbaere and Prof Cathie Sherrington.

<https://theconversation.com/im-getting-older-how-can-i-prevent->

Why we need to pay more attention to falls

Falls are a significant problem, yet they do not receive significant attention.

Every day **364** Australians aged 65+ have a fall that puts them in hospital

Every day **14** will die from a fall

Falls among those aged 65+ cost our health systems **\$2.5b** each year

Approx **1/3** of falls can be prevented

Falls can happen to anyone, and they can have devastating consequences.
 "I fell into the street, stepping off the curb...that fall was scary."
 excerpt from Annie's story, heartofida.org

Coordinated efforts are needed to prevent falls. We need better commitment and action:

- Government**: Policy, coordinated planning, funding, communication and awareness
- Investment**: Nationally-funded fall prevention strategies, frameworks, and actions
- Community-wide**: Commitment and action at all levels, with accessible fall prevention programs for home, community, hospitals and aged care available

Currently prevention of falls is under-funded, poorly coordinated, inadequately resourced with low awareness across government and the community.

Among the many evidence based interventions to avoid a fall, exercise that aims to improve balance and leg strength is most effective. As an individual, you can take action and reduce your risk of falling. Talk to your doctor for other effective strategies.

Incorporate balance and strength exercises 2-3 times a week into your weekly recommended 150-300 minutes of moderate exercise.

Balance and functional strength exercise

DID YOU KNOW: there are benefits to improving your balance and strength - at any age.

Safe exercises you can do at home www.safeexercisethome.org.au

Australian & New Zealand Falls Prevention Society | NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence | Prevention of Falls Injuries

Reference: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare web report 7 April 2022. Falls in older Australians 2019-20: hospitalisations and deaths among people aged 65 and over.

Meet some of the CRE Research team

Professor Vasi Naganathan CRE Investigator

An academic at the University of Sydney, a Geriatrician at the Centre for Education and Research on Ageing and the Deputy Project Director of the Concord Health and Ageing in Men Project. His research interests are wide including health of older men, oral health, falls, fractures and osteoporosis, pharmacology in the older people and the application of evidence-based medicine to older people.

His research strength is his ability to collaborate with people from a variety of disciplines who share his passion and interest in conducting research that has the potential to improve the health and quality of life of older people.

Falls in Older People. (2021). In S. Lord, C. Sherrington, & V. Naganathan (Eds.), *Falls in Older People: Risk Factors, Strategies for Prevention and Implications for Practice* (pp. I-II). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Mr Rik Dawson PhD candidate

Rik Dawson is an experienced aged care physiotherapist. Rik was the owner of Agewell Physiotherapy, a practice that employed physiotherapists and occupational therapists in aged care across Australia. Rik is currently enrolled at Sydney University as HDR candidate where he is focusing on telehealth for older people under the supervision of Professor Sherrington and Dr Pinheiro. He will investigate the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and acceptability of physiotherapy led exercise programs delivered via telehealth for older Australians. This research will answer key questions about whether the role of technology can reduce falls, enhance mobility and quality of life of older people with and without dementia receiving aged care services in their home or in residential aged care.



Upcoming News/Events

- **CRE Research Seminar 3 Topic – Update on Falls in Residential Care on 13th July 2022 at 1pm**
Presenters

Prof Anne Marie Hill "Physical activity and exercise - can increasing mobility reduce falls in aged care?"
Mr Rik Dawson "Exercise in aged care - what next?"

Register your interest

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/topic-update-on-falls-in-residential-care-tickets-345143522567>

- **The Fragility Fracture Network, FFN**, are hosting their annual Congress in Melbourne, Australia from Thursday 20 October - Saturday 22 October 2022 with information available at the official Congress website: <https://www.ffnglobalcongress2022.com.au/>.
- **14th World Conference on Injury Prevention & Safety Promotion** Sunday 27 to Wednesday 30 November 2022 Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia. Early bird registration closes 8th July 2022. Website: <https://www.worldsafety2022.com/registration>.