

Update on AFFINITY National Falls and Bone Health Project December 2019

Welcome to the second update on the work of the AFFINITY National Falls & Bone Health Project during 2019. We plan to keep you informed of progress on a regular basis. If you have any suggestions on content or want further information please contact Eileen.Moriarty@hse.ie

About AFFINITY (2018-2023):

This project has been set-up to;

- increase awareness of the preventable nature of falls
- empower older people, communities and health and social care providers to work together to reduce the risk and rate of falling where possible
- reduce the severity of injuries, and
- Promote the best possible outcomes for people who have suffered a falls-related injury.

The project, which is collaboration between the HSE and the State Claims Agency, aims to coordinate the development of a comprehensive falls and fracture prevention system. Such a system involves all parties focussing on a common agenda of reducing falls and fractures and their impacts. This can be achieved by bringing together and integrating primary prevention, secondary prevention and rehabilitation as well as measuring outcomes collectively.

Further information about the AFFINITY project can be found at: www.hse.ie/affinity

Highlights for July to December 2019 include:

2nd AFFINITY Symposium:

The HSE, together with the State Claims Agency, hosted the second AFFINITY - National Falls & Bone Health Symposium on September 18th in Dublin. Building on the success of the inaugural symposium last year, this year's event provided a forum for a capacity crowd of approximately 300 attendees to network, share and celebrate innovative practices in falls prevention and bone health across the country. This year's theme was ***Preventing Harm from Falls - Making it Happen Together***. Delegates included health care professionals, members of Age Friendly Ireland, and representatives from Older Peoples Councils and service users; all of whom have a common interest in working together to reduce harm from falls. All presentations are available for download by clicking on the link below.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/olderpeople/falls-prevention-and-bone-health/events/affinity-national-falls-and-bone-health-symposium-2019.html>

There was a strong focus on service user involvement with the addition of a service user workshop designed by the AFFINITY Service User Panel which was set up in July 2019. The panel consists of volunteers nominated through the National Older Person's Council network. The nomination process was facilitated by Age Friendly Ireland which is a partner in the project. The key areas of focus for the Service User panel going forward are to provide service user perspective on the framework guidance document & to co-design service user information resources including a website.

Save the Date: The 3rd AFFINITY Symposium is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8th 2020 in the Hibernia Conference Centre, Dublin Castle.

Evaluation:

The Centre for Effective Services, which was engaged to support the project group in this area, has provided a suite of 3 documents consisting of the Evaluation Framework, Data Gap Analysis & Literature Review. These are in process of being signed off through the project governance structure and will be published on sign off. The Data Gap Analysis and the Literature Review will provide the basis for recommending a standardised national data set for measuring and monitoring integrated services to prevent harm from falls.

Service User Materials Development:

Scoping is underway with HSE Digital on the development of Falls & Bone Health information for service users. As well as ensuring people have access to accurate and useful information, the material will be published online and will be a resource for Falls & Bone Health services around the country. This work will be guided by the Service User panel.

Framework/ Guidance-for Integrated Falls and Bone Health Services:

Work is on-going on the framework guidance for integrated falls services at Community Health Organisation (CHO)/ Hospital level. It will support service managers, clinical services leads working together with service users and multi-agency partners and community groups to examine falls and bone health services within their remit in terms of mapping what is currently available, identifying gaps, defining areas for improvement and co designing possible solutions.

Preventing Harm from Falls in People with Disability:

There is a work stream underway led by Marie Kehoe (National Disability Specialist, Quality Improvement) to address the specific needs of persons with disabilities. The aim is to develop and implement a framework for action which will promote staying well, active and independent by raising awareness of bone health and the preventable nature of falls in persons with disability.

Development Posts:

2019 Development funding was secured to enhance coverage of current falls and bone health services through the implementation of a key component of Integrated Falls and Bone Health Service across 3 sites i.e.

- Collaborative Implementation of community based exercise programmes for strength and balance programmes across the continuum of functional ability
- Implementation of an integrated clinical pathway for falls and bone health in an additional CHO.
- Development of community based fracture liaison to complement existing falls and fracture liaison pathways.

The sites have been selected on the basis of the complementary nature of the new development and pre-existing elements of a comprehensive falls and bone health service in the selected site.

Evidence Based Community Exercise Programmes for Falls Prevention:

The Department of Health has secured funding through Dormant Accounts for Physical Activity / Fall Prevention, a portion of which is being targeted to improving access to evidence informed exercise opportunities for falls prevention and bone health through the AFFINITY 2020 work plan.

Next Steps:

- Finalise the Framework/ Guidance Document on integrated falls and bone health services.
- Development of a National Guidance for Community Exercise Programmes for older people to reduce falls risks and enhance bone health.
- Progress the Service User resources and website.

Recommended Resources:

- **Major Trauma Audit (2017):**
<https://www.noca.ie/documents/major-trauma-audit-national-report-2017>
- **Implementing Integrated Care for Older Persons in Ireland:**
https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/29601c_505486cc6a1c472b8c23ee10ae29ce4c.pdf
- **Centre for Ageing: Raising the Bar on Strength & Balance:**
https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-02/Raising-the-bar-on-strength-and-balance_0.pdf
- **National Osteoporosis Society: Strong, Steady & Straight. Quick Guide:**
<https://theros.org.uk/media/100224/strong-steady-straight-quick-guide.pdf>
- **Reducing harm from falls- recommended evidence based resources 2019 including a resource on interventions to reduce falls and harm from falls in older people with cognitive impairment:**
<https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/reducing-harm-from-falls/recommended-resources/2019-evidence-base/>

Recent Publications and Resources :

- **National Patient Safety Strategy (2019 – 2024):**
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/qavd/patient-safety/hse-patient-safety-strategy-2019-2024.pdf>
- **Irish Hip Fracture Database National Report (2018):**
<https://www.noca.ie/documents/ihfd-national-report-2018>
- **Physical Activity Guidelines: UK Chief Medical Officers' report:**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-uk-chief-medical-officers-report>

- **HSE Quality Improvement Toolkit:**
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/qid/nationalsafetyprogrammes/national-quality-improvement-toolkit.html>
- **New Clinical Guideline: Appropriate prescribing of psychotropic medication for non-cognitive symptoms in people with dementia:**
<https://dementiathways.ie/resources-for-practice/non-cognitive-symptoms-of-dementia>