

Update on AFFINITY National Falls and Bone Health Project August 2020

Welcome to the third update on the work of the AFFINITY National Falls & Bone Health Project. 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 olderpeople.strategy@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 is collaboration between the HSE and the State Claims Agency in partnership with Age Friendly Ireland. The aim is to develop a comprehensive falls and fracture prevention system 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 December 2019 to August 2020 include:

AFFINITY Project Group workshop – January 30th

A workshop was held on January 30th for project group members. The purpose of this workshop was to take stock of the work done to date and to plan our next phase for 2020-21. The workshop was facilitated by Mary Morrissey (HSE, Health intelligence, Research & Evidence).

The project priorities identified for 2020 included:

- Completion of Framework for Action/Guidance for CHO/Hospital level integrated approach.
- Recommendation of a Standardised Data set to Measure & Monitor services to prevent harm from falls.
- Development of a Guidance on Optimal Community Based Strength and Balance Programmes.
- Development of suite of service user materials with the AFFINITY Service User Panel & HSE Digital.
- To plan and deliver Symposium 2020 is now cancelled in line with Public Health guidelines.
- Phased roll out of training for leaders and cascade trainers for countrywide delivery in the evidence based OTAGO exercise programme for persons at increased risk of falls.

Unfortunately the work of AFFINITY had to be suspended for the four month period mid-March to Mid-July due to redeployment in response to the public health emergency with the CoVID-19. Since then the focus has been on reviewing the priorities set for 2020 to identify what it is possible to deliver in the context of CoVID-19.

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

We aim to deliver the guidance framework entitled “*Preventing Falls & Fractures as we Grow Older in Ireland – A Framework for Action*” to support implementation of integrated falls and bone health services at Community Health Organisation (CHO)/ Hospital level before the end of 2020. It will support service managers, clinical services leads working together with service users, multi-agency partners and community groups to examine falls and bone health services within their remit in mapping what is currently available, identifying gaps, defining areas for improvement and co designing sustainable solutions.

Due to the current uncertainty of living with CoVID-19 it is not possible to give firm timelines on the other priority areas listed below.

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. 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. A measurement/ data work stream will be convened to recommend standardised process and outcome measures for falls and bone health services in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Service User Materials Development:

Work was 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.

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 harmful falls in persons with disability.

Development Posts 2019-20:

Development funding was secured to enhance the coverage of falls and bone health services through the implementation of a key component of Integrated Falls and Bone Health Service across 4 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.

Though delayed the recruitment of the posts is progressing.

Evidence Based Community Exercise Programmes for Falls Prevention:

Funding has been secured from the Department of Health through Dormant Accounts for roll out of country wide training programme to increase access to the evidence based collaborative OTAGO programme for people at increased risk of falls. Plans to work with Later Life Training to deliver training for in excess of 90 OTAGO Exercise Programme leads and to train cascade trainers for sustainability of the programme are currently on hold due to public health and quarantine guidelines.

Next Steps – As before:

- 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:

(New or updated resource)**

- **The Health Quality & Safety Commission New Zealand has published a very comprehensive update on the latest falls evidence base including the 2020 Evidence Base (April, 2020) and an updated version of the 10 Topics (July, 2020)**:**
<https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/reducing-harm-from-falls/recommended-resources/2020-evidence-base/>
- **Major Trauma Audit National Report 2018**:**
http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/noca-uploads/general/Major_Trauma_Audit_National_Report_2018_Final_Version.pdf
- **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>

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://dementiaphways.ie/resources-for-practice/non-cognitive-symptoms-of-dementia>
- **SIGN 142 – Management of osteoporosis and the prevention of fragility fractures - Healthcare Improvement Scotland (2020)**:**
<https://www.sign.ac.uk/media/1646/sign142-2020-update.pdf>
- **Falls: Applying all our Health – Public Health England guidance updated January 2020**:**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/falls-applying-all-our-health/falls-applying-all-our-health>
- **“Let’s get Moving Again” - Booklet to encourage people to become active again after cocooning during CoVID-19**:**
<https://www.iscp.ie/news/Lets-Get-Moving-Again-Booklet-Launch>
- **HSE National Safety Programmes Falls 2020**:**
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/qid/nationalsafetyprogrammes/falls-2020.html>
- **National Audit of Inpatient Falls (NAIF), Royal College of Physicians, May 2020****
<https://www.hqip.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Ref-141-NAIF-audit-report-2020-FINAL.pdf>
- **Ageing Well: Why Older People Falls – Newcastle University:**
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/falls>

(**New or updated resource)