
Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2014

Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow

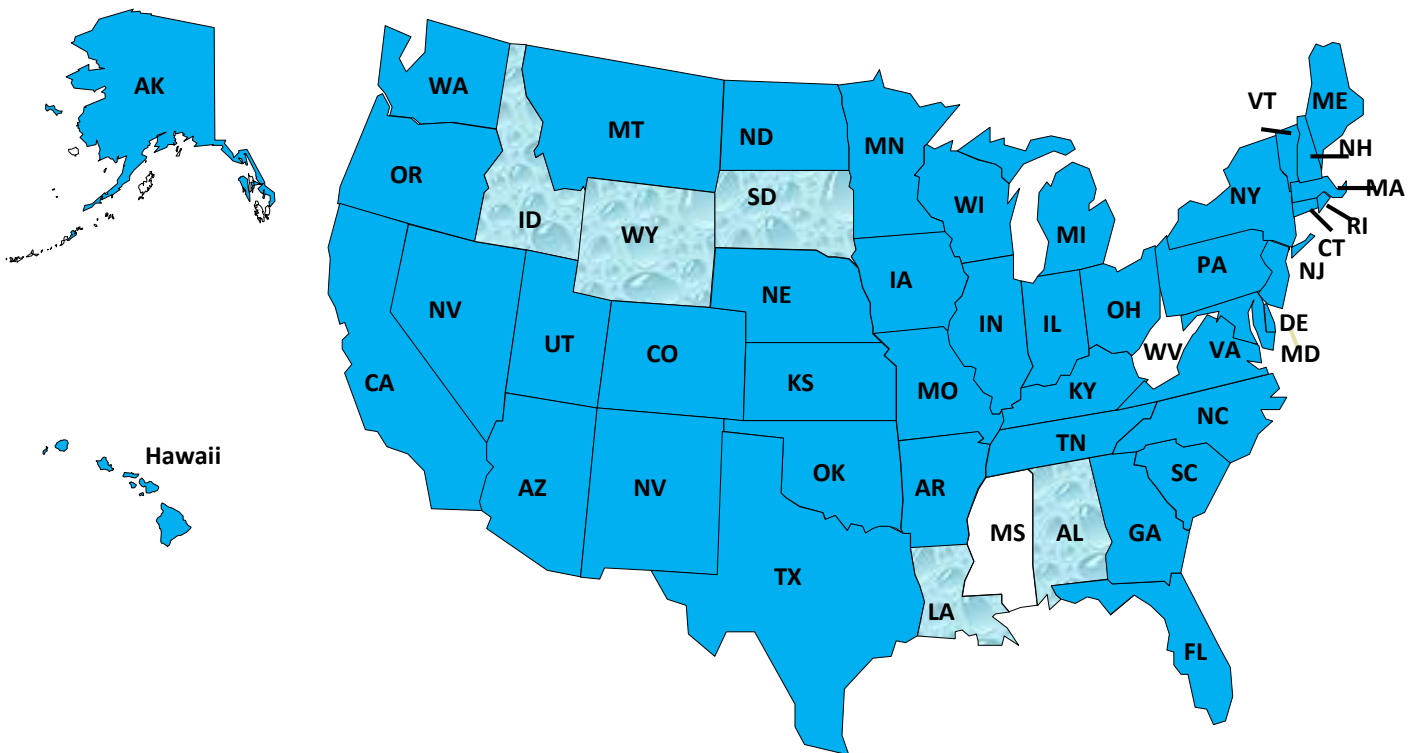
A Compendium of State and National Activities

February 2015

48 states participated in Falls Prevention Awareness Day

On Sept. 23, 48 states and DC celebrated Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) with education, falls risk screenings, evidence-based programs, and advocacy.





43 states are members of the National Council on Aging’s facilitated [State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup](#). All state members participated in the 7th annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day and were joined by Alabama, Idaho, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Louisiana

🌟 News Flash 🌟

In 2014, federal funding within the Prevention and Public Health Fund provided the opportunity for the US Administration on Community Living/US Administration on Aging to [fund ten states and four tribal grants](#) to further dissemination of evidence-based fall prevention programs. These grants are leveraging state and local partnership building, ongoing community fall prevention efforts, and the Falls Prevention Awareness Day public education campaigns depicted in this report. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is pleased to continue working with states on coalition building and Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities and to have been named the US Administration on Aging’s National Falls Prevention Resource Center to assist state and tribal grantees.

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Overview & Highlights

The 7th annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD), sponsored by the [National Council on Aging](#) (NCOA) [Falls Free® Initiative](#) on September 23, 2014, exceeded 2013's record, with 48 states and the District of Columbia participating. This summary is based on the annual survey of the [State Coalitions on Falls Prevention Workgroup](#) and includes survey results from a majority of participating states. This survey estimates national reach and the number and type of activities held by state and local coalitions on falls prevention and provides insight into what states' biggest successes and challenges were in their plans and activities.

The 2014 FPAD theme, *Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow*, was selected by the States' Awareness and Advocacy Committee after careful deliberation of numerous theme ideas from the field. *Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow* was intended to unite professionals, older adults, caregivers, and family members in raising awareness and preventing falls.

In preparation for the celebration, NCOA's [Falls Prevention Awareness Day](#) web page was updated with new tools, resources, and initiatives submitted by states and local communities; two member conference calls were hosted; and a well-attended organizing webinar was presented. The webinar, [Implementing Effective Falls Prevention Programs in Your Community: Reaching New Audiences](#), reached over 900 attendees.

A growing number of partners promoted this webinar. Examples include:

Webinar: Make the most of Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2014!

Join our Falls Free® Initiative on Aug. 21 for a free webinar on how you can participate in this year's national event on Sept. 23. The 2014 theme is Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow. Discover how to spread the message, launch a comprehensive approach to falls prevention programming in your community, and reach new audiences of older adults.

Register [here](#)



National Declaration

US Senate Resolution 569 designated September 23, 2014 as National Falls Prevention Awareness Day. It was introduced in the Senate on September 18 and passed unanimously on December 4. In recognition of the issue and work being done by partners in the state of Florida, Senator Bill Nelson sponsored the 2014 US Senate National Fall Prevention

Resolution; co-sponsors similarly recognized work in Maryland (Senator Mikulski), Vermont (Senator Sanders), and Maine (Senator Collins).

S. 569 further recognized that there are cost-effective falls prevention programs and policies. The resolution also commends the Falls Free® Coalition and others for their efforts to increase awareness of falls prevention. It further urges the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Administration for Community Living (ACL), and others to continue developing, evaluating, and promoting interventions and programs to prevent falls. Although it passed well after the day due to many factors of the US Senate calendar, it nonetheless served its purpose to bring greater attention to the issue across the Senate and resulted in the 7th annual national resolution. It also served as draft language for state and local proclamations. This year, a record number of states (29) obtained Governors' Proclamations.

Across the 43 states completing the survey, an estimated **12,463,276 individuals** were reached during FPAD 2014 activities. Of those:

- An estimated 19,102 older adults were physically screened for fall risks.
- Over 15,000 participated in evidence-based programs.
- Over 12.4 million older adults, family caregivers, professionals, and policymakers were reached through advocacy events and education and awareness campaigns in person and in the media – an estimated 11.8 million were reached through Hawaii's summer long effort enfolded providers, consumers, and legislators across their island state.

The available data is a strong indicator for the overall progress and impact of the 2014 Falls Prevention Awareness Day. The reporting states are representative of their peers. Forty-four percent (44%) of states observed falls prevention awareness for the entire month of September, while 29% reported activities extending for an entire week and 25% observed one day of activity. Hawaii began its observance in June in conjunction with other observations, extending awareness activities through September. Listed below are many highlights of activities reported by state coalitions to provide a taste of the breadth and dedication of those at the state and community level who do so much; the individual state narratives are rich with many more creative ideas, initiatives, partnerships, and activities. We hope you join them in promoting Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015 on September 23rd, the first official day of fall.

Awareness & Education

One hundred percent (100%) of reporting states (43 of 48 observing falls prevention awareness) organized awareness and education programs during FPAD 2014, and 29.5% of states reported combining Falls Prevention with other observations such as Active Aging Week, Senior Center Month, Grandparents Day, and the *Flu + You* campaign. States were innovative in their events, leveraging ongoing activities, new initiatives, and partnerships.

Some of the creative and rich examples reported include:

- **Arizona** Fall Prevention Coalition members and Banner Health facilitated a Flash Mob at the Metro Center Mall, which was covered extensively by the local media.
- **California** put informative magnetic signs on some local ambulance transport units, displayed table tents at meal sites, and provided tip sheets to recipients of home delivered meals. Falls prevention educational information was distributed to over 300 facilities including senior centers, meal sites, libraries, senior housing sites, and board and care homes.
- **Delaware** submitted an article to a free, state-wide senior newsletter. Also, within two of the state's larger hospitals, information was disseminated within their intranet regarding falls prevention strategies and free Matter of Balance classes that are offered throughout the state.
- **Florida** hosted its sixth annual Fall Prevention webcast for providers and older adults. More than three dozen viewing sites were set up around the state at senior centers, Area Agencies on Aging, and county health departments; countless others watched on home computers or accessed the posted webcast online.
- **Georgia** Falls Prevention Coalition members put together a falls prevention flash mob. Participants hula hooped, danced, and carried signs with falls prevention messages to promote awareness. Over 60 informational flyers were distributed.
- **Hawaii** facilitated a large bus poster campaign that reached 11.8 million viewers.
- **Illinois** participated in an informational city fair with presentations on fall risks and home safety. Physical therapists gave an informative PowerPoint presentation, while community vendors offered resources on in-home assistance, medical alert devices, and exercise programs. Attendees also enjoyed a "spin and win" Roulette wheel.
- A **Massachusetts** long-term care facility hosted a Falls Prevention Carnival to educate staff about falls awareness. Volunteer stage performers acted out potential fall hazards.
- A **Massachusetts** hospital published a "Falls Prevention Issue" of its bi-monthly patient care services magazine; the issue included articles from various units sharing ideas for falls prevention and promotion of an in-house falls prevention program.
- **New Jersey's** Newark Beth Israel Hospital set up a falls prevention display table and handed out over 400 pieces of educational materials to consumers and staff.
- **North Carolina** hosted "Fit After 50" in conjunction with Falls Prevention Awareness Week and Active Aging Week. They provided lectures, demonstrations, and activities focusing on fall prevention programs that are available in the area. Free health screenings and entertainment were geared towards helping older adults live long, injury-free, productive lives.
- **Rhode Island** distributed 1,600 night lights to organizations that serve the older adult population as an incentive for them to host a falls prevention awareness week event.
- **Texas** provided free falls prevention training for community health workers in Arlington while also introducing this provider group to Otago.
- **Utah** hosted multiple *Walk to Prevent Falls* events, which included a 1-mile walk in conjunction with health/medication/vision screenings and health fairs.
- **Vermont** participated in a radio program called "Aging Matters," heard throughout the state.
- **Wisconsin** provided fall prevention training to home meal delivery volunteers.

Evidence-Based Programs

Eighty-two percent (82%) of states said they promoted or kicked-off an evidence-based intervention as part of FPAD 2014. Of those reporting, the majority of states launched Matter of Balance, while others promoted Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance (now known as [Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance](#)), Otago, and Stepping On.



Stepping On Logo

Other programs included:

- [Stay Active for Independent for Life Program \(SAIL\)](#)
- [Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries Program \(STEADI\)](#)
- [Enhance Fitness](#)
- [Strong Women](#) and [Project Healthy Bones](#)
- [Walk with Ease Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program](#)
- [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#)
- Bone Builders classes
- [Remembering When™](#): A Fire and Fall Prevention Program for Older Adults

Creative Program Recruitment Initiatives Reported by States

As part of the Falls Prevention Awareness Day observance, Arizona offered demonstrations of [Matter of Balance](#) (MOB) and [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#) for elected officials and consumers. Physical therapists, occupational therapists, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and other health professionals in AT Still University's professional education programs were trained as master trainers in MOB, which they will help deliver throughout the year, leveraging increased consumer awareness.

During their week long observance across the state, California partners sought to bring greater awareness to a number of falls prevention programs readily available in the community, including: Tai Chi (other) and [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance); [Stepping On](#); [Matter of Balance](#); and [FallsTalk/FallScope](#).

In Montana, the [Missoula Fall Prevention Project](#) hosted a one day event and health fair offering older adults multifactorial screening using the [STEADI](#), *Geriatric Depression Scale*, Mini-Mental Exam, and the *Modified Falls Efficacy Scale (MFES)*. In this multidisciplinary approach, physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, nursing, and social work

students were actively enfolded. Throughout the event, the [Otago Exercise Program](#) was heavily promoted among physical therapists and physical therapy students.

The Southern Nevada Health District—a founding Nevada Fall Prevention Coalition member—partnered with the Health District in Public Safety & Education to promote awareness and education. Partners offered 6 new [Stepping On](#) classes coordinated with fall screenings in sites where classes could be hosted. This strategy, promoted in print and [online](#), facilitated direct referral of individuals at risk to Stepping On classes that were convenient for the individual.

North Carolina partners conducted many Falls Prevention Awareness Week events and activities and demonstrated that falls prevention activities can be fun! Activities included lectures, demonstrations, and events focusing on the effectiveness and availability of falls prevention programs, including [Matter of Balance](#), [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) and the [Otago Exercise Program](#).

Vermont's month-long activities were timed to coincide with the launch of 20 [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#) programs in September. Many other Tai Chi for Arthritis demonstrations hosted around the state served to recruit new partnerships and participants. Promotion was enhanced through a radio program called "Aging Matters" that is heard throughout the state. Champlain Valley Agency on Aging and a falls prevention senior trainer with the Tai Chi for Health Institute participated; partners also distributed consumer calendars highlighting additional programs such as strength training, [Matter of Balance](#) and [Chronic Disease Self-Management Education](#).

In observance of Falls Prevention Awareness Day, free falls prevention training for [Community Health Workers](#) was sponsored by the Texas Falls Prevention Coalition and held in Arlington, TX along with an [Otago Exercise Program](#) training webinar, which highlighted falls as an important topic for those with "boots on the ground."

Many Wisconsin communities promoted the growing number of [Stepping On](#) programs as part of local awareness campaigns. In Eau Claire, Stepping On graduates were invited to a reunion event and asked to bring a friend. They used this as an opportunity to provide falls prevention education and promote the workshop to the friends. They filmed each Stepping On graduate answering the question, "What would you want people to know about Stepping On?" which will be turned into a creative promotional video for future workshops.

Fall Risk Screenings

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of reporting states held fall risk screenings as part of their 2014 falls prevention awareness activities, including individual screenings of balance, medications, or vision—or held multi-factorial screenings. The majority of states reported conducting balance assessments (86%), medication screenings (72%), and multifactorial screens (67%). Additional screens included vision, hearing, blood pressure, bone density, glucose, fracture risk, and home safety.

Advocacy or Public Education

Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents reported advocacy/public education initiatives during their 2014 falls prevention awareness observance, including Governor's Proclamations (81% of those reporting) and local government proclamations (22%). Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents reported meeting directly with elected officials. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of reporting states conducted demonstrations or educational sessions for elected officials. Examples include:

- **Arizona** launched the Arizona State Healthy Aging Strategic Plan, including strategies for falls prevention.
- **California's** Contra Costa County requested Falls Prevention Awareness Week proclamations from all cities and the Board of Supervisors. Volunteers attended the meetings to accept the proclamations and talk about the Falls Prevention Coalition.
- **Hawaii** successfully advocated for the creation of a full-time positions for a State Falls Prevention Associate to continue growing their impressive work.
- A **Maryland** state senator attended a falls prevention awareness event and completed a fall risk assessment; Senator Mikulski was a key co-sponsor of the US Senate Resolution.
- **Massachusetts** obtained a State Senate Resolution to commemorate Falls Prevention Awareness Day, celebrating with a State House event where elected officials, partners, and seniors participated.
- **New Hampshire** and the Concord Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) presented the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence film, "[The Falling Monologues](#)," followed by a discussion about causes of falls and fall prevention tips.
- The **New Jersey** Foundation on Aging hosted a public access cable show, aired multiple times during the month. The topic was falls prevention. Two workgroup members, a physical therapist, and a pharmacist were the guests.
- **Pennsylvania** held an event at the Capitol Rotunda to engage state legislators in information sharing.
- **Vermont** worked with the Governor's Commission on Successful Aging Health Care Reform subcommittee to submit key findings and make recommendations for the creation of a State Plan on Falls Prevention; Senator Sanders was a key co-sponsor of the US Senate Resolution.

Partnership Building

Nearly all respondents reported creative sponsorship and partner activities:

- **California** partnered with Pleasant Hill Senior Center to hold a Pancake Breakfast resource/health fair and fundraiser. The event was sponsored by local businesses and emceed by the mayor of Pleasant Hill.
- **Florida** partnered with the local fire department, pharmacies, Home Depot®, and emergency management personnel to conduct health screenings and promote falls prevention awareness at fairs throughout the community. They also established a partnership with a local Fire Department and their volunteer Community Assistance

Teams that are now facilitating workshops for Matter of Balance and Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance as well as collaborating in several falls prevention awareness fairs.

- The **Georgia** Falls Prevention Coalition worked with the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia and Mercer University to bring together physical therapist volunteers to conduct STEADI assessments at the Falls Prevention Awareness Day event.
- In **Hawaii**, through FPAD activities, Tai Chi for Health became a permanent part of Kaiser Permanente, Kauai Parks and Recreation, and Catholic Charities.
- **Iowa** partnered with a large statewide grocery store's pharmacists to provide falls prevention education and medication review to customers 65 years and older. They also distributed falls prevention awareness flyers to the general public.
- **Nebraska** and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Dizziness & Balance Disorder Lab partnered to conduct free fall risk screenings.
- The **New Hampshire** Fall Prevention Task Force existing partnerships were strengthened with the RSVP Volunteer Center and the Littleton Area Senior Center through 18 RSVP Bone Builders classes sponsored as part of the Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities that reached over 240 participants.
- **New Jersey** reported all 21 Area Agencies on Aging actively participated in Falls Prevention Awareness activities, including distributing placemats to Meals on Wheels clients and congregate meal sites.
- **New York** partnered with NCOA and F.Y. Eye to produce a falls prevention public service video loop announcement that played on many nonprofit closed circuit TVs.
- **Ohio** partnered with the Ohio Pharmacy Association to conduct fall risk screenings, and with a large grocery store chain to conduct medication reviews for adults 65 years and older; Ohio Affiliate of Prevent Blindness (a national partner) partnered with the coalition to bring awareness to their constituent base.
- In **Oregon**, Kaiser Permanente Northwest sponsored a STEADI health fair to target patients who had fallen or expressed fear of falling in a medical visit. A targeted mailing list invited participants to visit with geriatricians, specialists, and community resource tables at the health fair. Medical specialists at the resource fair had on-site access to participants' medical charts.
- **Tennessee** partnered with Blue Cross Blue Shield to obtain the Governor's Declaration. They also partnered with the Commissioner's Council on Injury Prevention to educate injury prevention professionals regarding available home and community-based services and supports.
- In **Virginia**, the LewisGale Regional Health System and Carilion Clinic sponsored a luncheon for the Falls Prevention Conference.

In support of FPAD 2014, state and local coalitions secured creative partnerships and sponsorships with a wide variety of partners. This list includes: rehabilitation services, hospital systems, local businesses (e.g. pharmacies, home improvement stores) and corporations (e.g. durable medical equipment manufacturers), EMS and fire departments, trauma coordinators, county health departments, radio stations and newspapers, a sheriff's office, local mental health associations, retirement communities, home health agencies, parks and recreation, brain injury/TBI groups, schools of public health, law schools, and physical therapy, occupational therapy, nursing, and pharmacy students.

Alabama

Falls Free® was pleased to add Alabama to the list of states observing Falls Prevention Awareness Day, with activities extending over three days in September (22-24). Across Alabama, partners provided falls prevention presentations, lectures, and webinars and distributed falls prevention information. In addition, balance screening events were hosted at Independent and Assisted Living facilities, and a Senior Nutrition Center.

Alabama creatively promoted the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) during balance screenings. CDSMP promotes better self-management of chronic conditions including depression, medications and inactivity—all risk factors for falling.

On September 23, four nursing and six physical therapy students (with faculty) from the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Alabama hosted a fall prevention fair. Fifty residents participated in a fall risk assessment and an educational event using the CDC [STEADI](#) materials. Healthy snacks and door prizes added to the fun.

The University nursing and physical therapy students regularly conduct an interprofessional student prevention/wellness clinic every Tuesday afternoon at Cathedral Place Apartments, an independent living facility for adults 55+ in Mobile, Alabama.



Pictured: University of South Alabama interprofessional physical therapy and nursing students assessing older adults during the Fall Prevention Awareness Fair.

Four physical therapy students were scheduled to receive [Matter of Balance](#) coach training in November to begin facilitating workshops in January at Cathedral Place.

Reported by: Marie Cafferty, Program Coordinator Health & Wellness, South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, AAA, mcafferty@sarpc.org.

Alaska

The [Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition](#) reported observing one week of falls prevention awareness during September 16-26, partnering with tribal organizations, health care providers, and personal trainers in the private sector. Across the state, coalition members provided falls prevention presentations and lectures, distributed falls prevention information, and offered falls prevention exercise training.

As part of the observation, Alaska offered [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance) and [Stay Active and Independent for Life \(SAIL\)](#) and hosted a falls prevention clinic offering balance, vision screening, and home safety self-assessments and referrals to providers and/or programs.

In 2012, the Alaska Commission on Aging and coalition partners were successful in getting additional funding in the state budget for senior falls prevention in recognition of costs due to fall-related senior hip fractures. Successful legislative advocacy efforts resulted in funding which is now being used for a pilot project in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough focusing on using evidence-based strategies for senior falls prevention. Fall Prevention Awareness Week activities helped to bring greater awareness to this initiative.

Alaska reported two key outcomes: 1) Hosting a successful fall risk screening prevention clinic, and 2) Providing two train-the-trainers events for falls prevention exercise programs.



Injuries Are Preventable!

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Arizona

The [Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition](#) reported that Governor Brewer issued a state proclamation recognizing September 23, 2014 as Falls Prevention Awareness Day. The proclamation is posted on the [Arizona Fall Prevention Coalition website](#). Coalition partners across the state distributed falls prevention information and promoted a public education and awareness campaign, including social media.

The Arizona Statewide Fall Prevention Coalition partnered with the Arizona Department of Health Services, Healthy Aging Program at the September Statewide Fall Prevention Coalition meeting. During the meeting, the Healthy Aging Program launched its 2014 - 2018 [Arizona State Healthy Aging Strategic Plan](#) in which falls prevention is one of the three pillars of Healthy Aging.

The largest community event was sponsored by Northeast Valley Coalition (the Foothills Caring Corps, Carefree Physical Therapy, The Foothills Community Foundation, the Rural-Metro Fire Department, Scottsdale Healthcare, the Desert Foothills Library and Sonora Quest Laboratories) featuring:

Learn to Prevent Slips, Trips, and Falls

The event included vision screening, fall risk assessments, medication risk assessments, medication review and questions, a take back prescription drug event, fall prevention giveaways, resources, and demonstrations.

Exhibits from the Arizona Falls Prevention Coalition included:

- Home Modification—inexpensive ways to make your home safe.
- Medication Management—resources on using medications wisely.
- Physical Activities—fun and easy exercises to prevent falls and information on upcoming classes in the community.

AZ also provided a variety of falls prevention presentations, the largest of which was a lighthearted yet impactful presentation delivered by Dr. Babak Nayeri to nearly 1,400 attendees before the National Indian Council on Aging.

As part of the observation, Arizona offered demonstrations of [Matter of Balance](#) (MOB) and [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#) for elected officials and consumers. Physical therapists, occupational therapists, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and other health professionals in A.T. Still University professional education programs were trained as master trainers in MOB, which they will help deliver throughout the year.

Banner Health and other members of the Coalition sponsored a [flash mob](#) approach for physical activity at the Metro Center Mall, which was covered by the local media.

A key outcome was the engagement of partners and consumers and the reignited passion, as well as increased collaboration, with the ultimate outcome being greater awareness.

Reported jointly by: Dr. Babak M. Nayeri, Executive Consultant, Healthy Aging, Arizona Department of Health Services, babak.nayeri@azdhs.gov and Anna Alonzo, Office Chief, Chronic Disease, Arizona Department of Health Services.

California

The [California Fall Prevention Network](#) and local coalitions across the state sponsored a week-long observance, partnering with Grandparents Day and Active Aging Week. Champions and partners in Contra Costa County worked to obtain Fall Prevention Awareness Week Proclamations for all the cities and the Board of Supervisors in the County. Volunteers attended the meetings to talk about the coalition and accept the proclamations. Partners with the Pleasant Hill Senior Center held a Pancake Breakfast resource/health fair and fundraiser, sponsored by local businesses and emceed by the mayor of Pleasant Hill.

Throughout the state, partners hosted a variety of events, including a broad public education campaign with a PSA, newspaper articles, and social media. Highlights are shared below. Partners distributed press releases, provided a variety of presentations and webinars, and widely distributed falls prevention materials including 10,000 copies of [NCOA's Six Steps to Prevent Falls](#). An array of activities included skits, walks, fairs, a home safety model tour, presentations, a flash mob dance, and educational info sent to over 300 facilities including senior centers, meal sites, libraries, senior housing sites, and board and care homes. Also, Zumba and Zumba Gold demonstrations, vestibular disorders evaluations, nutrition demonstrations were hosted.

"Fall Facts" were announced all week long at the 33 different Young at Heart class locations. "Fall Prevention Starts Here and Now" represented a city-wide cane and walker donation in partnership with the City Health Department.

The [Fall Prevention Center of Excellence](#) coordinated and hosted a safe homes summit on October 9th at the USC Davis School of Gerontology titled, [Designing California's Future: Aging in Place Innovations](#). With about 250 attendees, speakers and breakout groups focused on three areas: falls prevention, home modification and universal design, and service connections.

As part of their inclusive Fall Prevention Awareness Week educational campaign, California partners offered a variety of falls prevention and physical activity programs including [Matter of Balance](#), Tai Chi, Young at Heart Group Fitness, comprehensive balance screening, the Art of Moving, [Strong Bones](#), Qi Gong, [FallProof](#), [Walk with Ease](#) (the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program), and employed the STEADI fall risk screening to help older adults recognize their risk and the value of these community programs.

Partners enfolded a variety of students, supervising faculty, and health care professionals in their effort including physical therapy, occupational therapy, nursing, pharmacy, kinesiology, EMS Corps, and high school students from a local tech program who all participated in risk screenings (balance, blood pressure checks, medication management reviews, and assisted with home safety checks), attended health fairs, and conducted educational workshops. Other screening activities included the [Senior Fitness Test](#) and [Short-form FAB](#).



Alameda County's 2014 FPAW activities

Alameda County Public Health [video](#) featured Alameda's Fall Prevention Center Open House & Fair at Highland Hospital FPAW.



USOAC Walking Club promoting fall prevention awareness



Alameda County Walk—Posters throughout the walk were displayed educating the seniors who participated.

For the second year in a row, the nonprofit LIFE ElderCare choreographed a [flash mob](#) dance for seniors and people of all ages at the New Park Mall Shopping Center in Newark/Fremont, CA during Fall Prevention Awareness Week.



In Sonoma County, Fall Prevention magnetic signs were placed on all ambulance transport units, table tents were set up at all meal sites, and tip sheets were provided on food trays to recipients of home delivered meals.

To start planning for Fall Prevention Awareness Week and Day 2015, visit the [Fall Prevention Center of Excellence's website](#).

Reported by: Emily Nabors, Program Manager, Fall Prevention Center of Excellence, Andrus Gerontology Center, University of Southern California, emily.nabors@usc.edu.

Colorado

The [Colorado Older Adult Falls Coalition](#) reported a week long observance, September 22-26, with a variety of statewide activities. Partners across Colorado provided an array of falls prevention presentations and lectures, actively distributed falls prevention information, and promoted public education on the prevention of falls. In support, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment created an [information page for consumers](#).

Partners also participated in a health fair, providing older adults with multifactorial screening including balance, vision, and medications. Physical therapy students assisted with balance screenings at the event.

During their week-long observance across the state, partners sought to bring greater awareness to a number of falls prevention programs already available in the community, including Tai Chi and [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance); [Stepping On](#); [Matter of Balance](#); and [FallsTalk/FallScope](#).

During Falls Prevention Awareness Week, one community hospital providing Stepping On located a new partner, a community-based organization providing coordinated services to older adults, allowing them to reach more adults at risk.

A display in a hospital cafeteria helped hospital staff understand how their actions affect falls prevention, making the connection with inpatient and at-home progress.

The Boulder County AAA group was among the most active, utilizing their coalition to plan over 30 events during the week and marketing through a variety of mediums, including this poster:



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Delaware

[The Delaware Coalition for Injury Prevention-Falls Prevention Team](#) observed a single day of falls prevention awareness on September 23 in which partners participated in a number of state-wide events. Delaware promoted public education and awareness by writing and widely distributing a press release and a newspaper article. Partners also broadly distributed falls prevention information on reducing fall risk.

Delaware has implemented [Matter of Balance](#) (MOB) as the key falls prevention program for aging Delaware residents, sponsored through RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program). The coalition used Falls Prevention Awareness Day to promote the value and availability of MOB.

The coalition partnered with the State Department of Public Health and the State Department of Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities. They appreciated working with a Department of Aging and Disability representative to get information into a widely distributed senior publication.

At Delaware's large Level One Trauma Center, Kathy Boyer, the Injury Prevention Coordinator, set up an informational table on falls prevention for seniors. She also submitted an article to a state-wide, free senior newsletter. Additionally, information was disseminated within the intranet of two of the state's larger hospitals regarding falls prevention strategies and free Matter of Balance classes that are offered throughout the state.



Pictured: MOB instructors and coordinators: Rich Phillips, Debby Vandiver, and Scott Martin.

Delaware made a determined effort to increase awareness of the free Matter of Balance classes offered throughout the state.

The Delaware Coalition for Injury Prevention reported their key outcome was increased awareness of falls prevention activities.

Reported by: Diana Curtis, RN, MSN, Co-Chair of Falls Prevention Team, Bayhealth Medical Center, Kent Campus, diana_curtis@bayhealth.org

District of Columbia

This year, the growing District of Columbia (DC) coalition was facilitated out of the DC Office on Aging (DCOA). Building on the successes of 2013, the DC Office on Aging coordinated fall risk screening events (TUG, strength testing, medicine reviews) and educational presentations at eight sites: George Washington University Hospital, a congregate meal site, and all of DCOA's Wellness Centers. There were 25 to 40 older adults at each site.

DC's Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities at the sites included falls prevention education/awareness, speakers on home safety, Timed Up and Go tests, strength tests, physical therapists and occupational therapists available for consultation, medication reviews, and vision testing. Assessments were delivered by a broad array of partnering physical therapists (and students), occupational therapists, pharmacists, and optometrists. An ophthalmologist provided an overall review of risk factors with recommendations for follow up.



Pictured: A Walmart pharmacist reviewing medications with an at-risk senior.

After the first of the year, DCOA will begin a fall prevention and home safety program where older adults can receive an in-home fall risk assessment by an occupational therapist.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Linda Irizarry LGSW, Public Health Analyst, Project Lead Lifespan Respite, District of Columbia Office on Aging, linda.irizarry@dc.gov

Florida

The [Florida Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported a month-long observance of falls prevention awareness with many events occurring on September 23. Local proclamations and Governor Scott's [proclamation](#) and [press release](#) anchored the state's efforts. Key partners across the state met with elected officials to offer evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations and/or educational sessions.



In recognition of National Falls Prevention Awareness Day, the Florida Department of Health, Injury Prevention Section (IPS), and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs Division of Statewide Community-Based Services (DOEA) hosted the [Sixth Annual Statewide Older Adult Falls Prevention Webcast](#) on September 10, 2014.

Four expert speakers discussed a variety of falls prevention related topics with over 200 participants. Nearly 400 additional viewers accessed the archived webcast.

Additionally, six Falls Awareness Senior Health Fairs were hosted in Southern Florida. Lead agencies included the Health Care District Palm Beach County and Palm Beach County Fire Rescue, partnering with the two local Trauma Centers, non-trauma hospitals, and 20-30 community partners that provide services to the senior community. Both lead groups participated in a pre-recorded TV program focusing on falls awareness for seniors; the program was aired in November on the government channel.

Using a multifactorial approach to older adult falls prevention, Florida agencies and health departments collaborated with several healthcare professionals and organizations. Agencies partnered with pharmacists on flu shot distribution, wherein pharmacists reviewed medication lists and answered questions. Social services educated participants; students from The University of St. Augustine conducted balance assessments; critical care nurses assisted with Falls Prevention Awareness Day and stroke education; occupational therapists assisted with Car Fit, provided assistance at events, and demonstrated/led exercises.

In one falls prevention event, the National Council on Aging sponsored *Flu + You Campaign* partnered with the Alliance for Aging to include integrated information on the risks of both the flu and falls, while also providing onsite flu shots to over 100 seniors. Presentations were also given to a stroke survivors group, a local high school medical academy, and a local Kiwanis group; presenters included a physician to answer participants' questions. Additionally, Florida promoted its year-long cane distribution effort with educational videos to teach older adults how to safely use canes and prevent falls.

The annual Safety Expo was sponsored by Putnam County Senior Center, Cane Masters International, Brooks Rehabilitation, Brooks Home Care/Bartram Lakes, and Humana.

Participating vendors provided information on falls prevention. Funds that were not spent on the Safety Expo were donated back to the St. Johns County Falls Prevention Coalition to buy grab bars and tub mats for people having in-home safety assessments through the St. Johns County Council on Aging Care Connection service.

The Florida Department of Health in Calhoun County and Liberty County promoted their [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance) classes through the FLASH (Fit Lifestyle Active Strong Healthy) Healthy Challenge. FLASH is a 12-week Healthiest Weight event in which Tai Chi, PiYo, Bootcamp, and Zumba are featured at the Veteran's Memorial Civic Center and W.T.Neal Civic Center. In addition to physical activity, nutrition was promoted through meal plans and healthy food demonstrations. Over 400 people participated in the FLASH Challenge.

Florida established a new partnership with a local fire department and their volunteer Community Assistance Teams, who are now facilitating workshops for [Matter of Balance](#) and Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance as well as collaborating in several fall prevention awareness fairs. Additional partnerships with the local civic center in Calhoun and Liberty counties will provide new sites for free Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance classes. In collaboration with the Area Agency on Aging, the Winter Park Health Foundation, and local health service providers, Florida also partnered with the Lee County Injury Prevention Coalition to host a Balance Awareness and Falls Prevention Health Fair.

The Manatee County School for the Arts Thespian class created an interactive, informative, and educational event that was open to the public and focused on the prevention of falls in seniors. Students used the evidence to write a series of skits that were sponsored by Blake Medical-Trauma Center. "Ruzzolare," a matinee variety show, was hosted by Brookdale Senior Living in Bradenton and the Manatee County Falls Prevention Coalition. As the 80 attendees arrived, each received a bag full of information on community services and goods.



Additional information and opportunities included: Manatee County EMS provided information on lift assistance calls and simulated the difficulties experienced by impaired vision and/or mobility; the County Sherriff's Office provided a Drug Drop opportunity; the County Falls Prevention Coalition provided additional information on falls prevention and Tai Chi classes available in the community; and Blake Trauma Center provided information on falls prevention/falls statistics.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Lisa VanderWerf-Hourigan, Injury Prevention Section Administrator/MS, Florida Department of Health, Lisa.VanderWerf-Hourigan@flhealth.gov

Georgia

The [Georgia Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported a month-long observance with a particular focus on several dates including September 12, 24, 23, and 26.

Promoting statewide awareness was aided by Governor Deal's [Proclamation](#) declaring September 23 as Falls Prevention Awareness Day.

The Falls Prevention Coalition collaborated with the Division of Aging Services (also a coalition member) to promote a [flash mob](#) on September 12 in front of the CNN Center. Over 60 flyers were distributed. Participants hula hooped, carried signs with falls prevention messages, or danced to promote awareness about falls prevention in Atlanta.

The Georgia Falls Prevention Coalition partnered with Shepherd Center to host the September 26 Falls Prevention Awareness Day event. Shepherd Center provided the facility, food for attendees, and event posters. [Prevent Blindness Georgia](#), which provides information about aging eye diseases and falls prevention, hosted an exhibit booth.



In this news article, [Shepherd Center Ramps Up its Fall Prevention Efforts Statewide](#), a former patient injured in a fall lends his perspective on injury prevention.

The Falls Prevention Coalition also partnered with the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia (PTAG) and David Taylor, PT of Mercer University, to bring together physical therapist volunteers to conduct [STEADI](#) assessments at the falls prevention awareness event on September 26. Multifactorial screening included balance, vision, medications, hearing, blood pressure, blood sugar, and genetic interaction with medications (cheek swab). Job Corps brought nursing and other students to participate in the event at Shepherd Center.

Evidence-based programming demonstrations ([Matter of Balance](#), [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#), Music Therapy, and Tango dance) were conducted throughout the events. Participating older adults LOVED the demonstrations. Georgia plans to offer opportunities for more participation by attendees.

Reported by: Elizabeth Head, Program Coordinator, GA DPH, Injury Prevention Program
elizabeth.head@dph.ga.gov.

Hawaii

The [Hawaii State Fall Prevention Consortium](#) hosted a summer-long campaign that began in June. They partnered with both the Senior Fair and the Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society Annual Conference, in conjunction with a special Fall Prevention Track, that included:

- [How to Integrate Tai Chi into your Program or Community](#)
- [Fall Prevention Track: Polypharmacy - The Relationship of Falls and Medications](#)
- [Investigation of the Risk Factors of Falls in Older Adults and Planning Its Preventive Measures](#)

Hawaii Governor Abercrombie recognized falls prevention urgency in the [May 2014 "Safe Today. Healthy Tomorrow"](#) release for Older Americans. Consortium partners then wrote and distributed a press release. The Mayor of Kauai issued a proclamation to honor the hard work of the Kauai Fall Prevention Alliance and the Tai Chi for Health team.

The Consortium's public education campaign ratcheted up with a state-wide bus poster campaign on 510 buses:

4 Fall Prevention Tips for Seniors **YOU EVER FALL?**

- 1** Have Your Medications Reviewed
- 2** Have Your Eyes Checked
- 3** Make Your Home Safe
- 4** Stay Active and Exercise

FOR INFORMATION CALL 733-9202

Other partner activities included:

- 41 stores statewide representing seven major market and pharmacy corporations distributed 82,000 “bag-stuffers” that contain falls prevention tips for seniors plus information on additional resources. “Stuffers” were personalized for each store.
- Over 120 in-store pharmacists from sponsoring stores statewide conducted medication reviews (by appointment) of seniors’ medicines to help identify medications that could cause or contribute to a fall.
- State Senator Brickwood Galuteria invited coalition leads to his show, *Kupuna Power*, which is broadcast twice a week in the morning “senior slot” on Olelo. The show ran four times in the initial broadcast schedule in late July/early August. KITV4 ran a segment on fall prevention: [How to help your kupuna prevent falls.](#)

- A new [GPS fall prevention locator program](#) launched on the Department of Health website. This interactive program, with informational pop-up banners, enables individuals and family members locate falls prevention services closest to their community.
- Statewide, the Hawaii Community Pharmacists Association provided medication reviews and balance screenings at all 41 of its member stores and pharmacies.

As part of the awareness activities, Hawaii promoted available programs like Tai Chi and hosted [Tai Chi for Health](#) demonstrations and instructor workshops. Partners also conducted evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations or educational sessions for elected officials, including 25 Senators and 51 Representatives.

Tai Chi for Health is now a permanent part of Kaiser Permanente, Kauai Parks and Recreation, Catholic Charities, and the Hawaii Electric Industries. It is hosted twice a week by the Director of Corporate Health and Wellness and is a permanent ongoing program.

The Consortium participated in a health fair offering balance screenings for 210 older adults and medication screenings for 480 older adults. Third year pharmacy students from UH Hilo College of Pharmacy helped with the medication review screenings, while UH Medical School Family Practitioners hosted Tai Chi classes and curriculum placement. UH Medical School now has one professor certified in Tai Chi for Fall Prevention/Arthritis.

Hawaii noted that an important outcome of statewide advocacy and education was the successful passage of a bill that created a new, full-time state falls prevention position.

Tai Chi demonstrations at AARP events, public meetings, organizations, and in educational videos in hospital waiting rooms created an increased demand for additional classes.

Other outcomes included the adoption and use of Tai Chi for Health by many new organizations and agencies due to the large public desire to participate after seeing bus posters, "bag-stuffers" at pharmacies, demonstrations, and TV stories.



[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Stan Michaels, Fall Prevention Coordinator, Hawaii Department of Health EMSIPSB, stanley.j.michaels@doh.hawaii.gov.

Idaho

Although Idaho does not yet host a coalition, they leveraged Falls Prevention Awareness Day to marshal media attention to the issue and the [Fit and Fall Proof Program](#) offered in Central Idaho. The South Central Public Health District facilitated a news release: [Fall Awareness Week brings attention to danger faced by older Americans](#).

Southeastern Idaho Public Health (SIPH), located in Pocatello, Idaho, held several events and presentations to bring awareness to National Falls Prevention Awareness Week. The SIPH website homepage and social media pages posted information about the importance of falls prevention.

On September 25, they held a presentation at Quail Ridge Assisted Living center to educate 20 staff members and residents on the importance of falls prevention and the benefits of participating in Idaho's [Fit and Fall Proof™ program](#).

Falls prevention awareness information was submitted to the Pocatello Chamber of Commerce E-Newsletter.

All county offices of the SIPH department displayed health information in staff and public bathrooms; the October topic focused on falls prevention.

On October 17, SIPH partnered with Idaho State University medical students from pharmacy, physical and occupational therapy, and nutrition/dietetics to hold a senior health fair that included health screenings, such as falls risk assessments, diabetes foot checks, medication reviews, and flu shots. Approximately 23 older adults participated in the event.

Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH), located in Idaho Falls, Idaho, partnered with Rigby Physical Therapy to promote falls prevention and Fit and Fall Proof™ (FFP) through a “Spin N Win” activity. Prizes were donated by Rigby Physical Therapy, FFP, and EIPH to promote the FFP classes; prizes included water bottles, t-shirts, bags, mugs, bands, and more. Attendees were invited to spin a big wheel and win a prize.

In addition, attendees were provided with FFP brochures and a local class schedule. “Spin N Win” activities were held at Liberty Square Sr. Housing, Rigby Sr. Center, and Elk Creek Sr. Living. Thirty people participated in the three events. In addition, a Fit and Fall Proof™ class leader and the Health District Public Information Officer were interviewed by the Standard Journal Newspaper out of Rexburg, Idaho. An article appeared in the paper.

Reported by: Katie Lamansky, Health Program Specialist, Idaho Department of Health & Welfare, LamanskK@dhw.idaho.gov.

Illinois

The [Illinois Fall Prevention Coalition](#) reported several Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) activities. These activities were hosted by members affiliated with a variety of organizations and institutions, most of whom sponsored one-day FPAD observances. FPAD activities in Illinois ranged from public awareness campaigns to health fairs. Although Illinois was unable to procure a Governor's proclamation, a number of local community proclamations were obtained, and press releases were utilized by representatives from Judson University and the Hines Veterans Association.

The FPAD activities organized by RUSH Medical Center and Palos Community Hospital (PCH) are strong examples of interdisciplinary falls prevention efforts going on in Illinois. RUSH FPAD organizers effectively leveraged their multi-disciplinary relationships within RUSH Medical Center to provide a comprehensive Falls Prevention Program. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, pharmacy, nursing, ophthalmology, and audiology students worked together to provide multifactorial health screening activities that included balance, vision, blood pressure and medication checks. Eighty people registered for the event and sixty older adults completed fall risk screenings. The event also included activities to promote the [Matter of Balance](#) programming at RUSH.

Palos Community Hospital (PCH) in Palos Heights, IL, sponsored a fall risk assessment that utilized the CDC's [STEADI toolkit](#) and included assessments of footwear, assistive devices, vestibular functioning, orthostatic hypotension, and home safety. Over eighty participants attended the health fair sponsored by PCH, which included a presentation by a physician on osteoporosis and falls prevention, an exercise demonstration by a fitness instructor, and information about the Matter of Balance program offered at PCH.



Presentation At Palos Community Hospital, Palos Heights, IL, on Osteoporosis & Fall Prevention by Dr. Yasmin Ozcan

Other partners included staff from physical therapy, occupational therapy, and pharmacy, as well as nurses from the home health department and fitness instructors. Two vendors from the community—*Foot Solutions* and *Right At Home*—participated in the PCH program. Seven occupational therapy students from University of Illinois, Chicago, participated in the PCH Fall Prevention Fair. The students answered questions and provided information at many stations (e.g., balance screening, Timed Up and Go, low vision, home safety, Matter of Balance, what to do if you fall, resources/osteoporosis information).

Judson University hosted a *Falls Awareness Health and Wellness Fair* and presented a workshop titled “If I Knew Then What I Know Now About Falls.” The Judson University President and Dean opened the event with a proclamation and prayer; lunch was provided by the Golden Diners Club and Salvation Army. Thirty-eight students were involved in the FPAD programming with over 80 seniors participating. Additional partners included the City of Elgin, Chiro-One Wellness Center, Elgin Senior Services, Gail Borden Library, Presence St. Joseph Hospital, Sherman Hospital, Taylor Family Branch YMCA, and TRIAD.

The City of Des Plaines’ Health and Human Services Division, hosted a health fair and conducted fall risk screenings with contributions made by a number of vendors, including representatives from: Home Helpers, who offer medical alert devices and in-home assistance; Manor Care, the local senior center; and physical therapists from Northwest Community Hospital. The physical therapists provided an informative PowerPoint presentation that focused on understanding falls, risks, and home safety. NCOA and CDC resources were used extensively to inform the FPAD programming.

Numerous channels were used in Illinois to support knowledge of FPAD resources and falls prevention strategies. For example, the Falls Prevention Coalition Quarterly Newsletter was used to increase awareness of FPAD resources to all Coalition members. In addition to offering fall prevention screenings, John M. Sigle, DPM, FACFAS of the Foot and Ankle Center of Illinois, wrote an article for Health Cells Magazine and utilized WSOY radio to disseminate information about falls prevention strategies.

The Hines Veterans’ Administration Hospital sponsored a health fair utilizing a “spin and win” Roulette wheel to create a fun and interactive experience for attendees. At the Hines VA-sponsored health fair, a Tai Chi expert talked with attendees and presented a CD on Tai Chi demonstrations. A poster featured CDC information regarding the top 10 reasons people go to the ED, and another highlighted the NCOA’s “Six Steps to Prevent a Fall.” Coalition members from the Hines VA disseminated NCOA’s falls prevention information through their media networks and have plans to continue to do so throughout the year.

The Lake County Fall Prevention Task Force with the Senior Services Coalition of Lake County and the Lake County Council for Seniors co-sponsored a program for senior service organizations. This program will help those organizations strengthen their role in reducing falls in their communities.

Two key outcomes reported by Illinois included:

- The number of Illinois-based Coalition partners who participated in FPAD activities in 2014 increased at least two-fold from 2013.
- Compared to FPAD 2013, which involved activities that primarily took place in Chicago and near-suburbs, FPAD 2014 resulted in reaching a greater number of older adults who live outside the metropolitan Chicago area.

Reported by: Liz Peterson, Clinical Professor and Director of Professional Education, University of Illinois at Chicago, epeterso@uic.edu.

Indiana

The [Indiana Fall Prevention Coalition](#) facilitated a one month observance extending across September and October. To increase awareness, the coalition distributed a press release and offered a number of falls prevention presentations.

Indiana's aging services network observed Falls Prevention Awareness Day in partnership with In-Home Solutions and the United Northeast Community Development Corporation. They hosted Safe at Home, a one-day [statewide event](#) surrounding falls prevention. Many additional events were hosted by the 16 [Indiana AAAs/ADRCs](#) during a high-impact half-day of service to low-income homeowners age 60 and over to help make their homes and yards safe and accessible for daily living. During the half-day service, volunteers performed a variety of services, including:

- Installing grab bars bathrooms
- Installing banisters for interior stairwells
- Adding handrails for exterior steps
- Yard clean-up
- Distributing falls prevention information

In addition, for this [event](#), the National Council on Aging sponsored *Flu + You* campaign partnered with CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions (Senior Center) to include integrated information on the risks of both flu and falls while also providing onsite flu shots.

The coalition, in partnership with IU Health, also facilitated a health fair screening for balance, vision, and other multifactorial risk factors, creatively enrolling occupational therapy, physical therapy, and pharmacy students. Brown-Mackie College OTA students also conducted fall risk screenings.

Readily available community programs were promoted throughout the events including [Matter of Balance](#), [EnhanceFitness](#), and [Safe at Home](#).

Key outcome reported: Benefit to seniors and that they are able to remain safe in their homes and in the community. Safe at Home provides home accessibility modifications and helps reduce the number of falls in the home.

[Learn More.](#)

Reported by: Patric McDowell, CAPS and Safe at Home Coordinator,
CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions: pmcdowell@cicoa.org



Iowa

The [Iowa Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported a month-long observance in which they promoted falls prevention at interagency meetings, utilized organizational newsletters, and promoted Governor Terry Branstad's [Fall Prevention Proclamation](#). The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Bureau of Emergency Services' Trauma System Advisory Council, the IDPH Office of Injury, Disability and Violence Prevention, the Iowa Department on Aging (IDA), and the Iowa Falls Prevention Coalition joined the governor in this recognition.

Falls prevention information was disseminated via the [Iowa Department of Public Health Website](#). Leadership developed an article for press release and facilitated the distribution of falls prevention awareness brochures. The coalition also hosted a professional webinar entitled, *Aging, Fall Risk and Prevention through Exercise*.

Through a partnership developed by the Advisory Council on Brain Injuries, HyVee (one of Iowa's largest grocers) [provided education and medication review](#) to their customers filling prescriptions who were over 65 years of age. A falls prevention awareness flyer was available in their pharmacies for the general public. HyVee also provided calcium rich yogurt parfaits for some Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities.

WesleyLife (a retirement community), Des Moines University, and Drake University partnered for a health screening event. Physical therapy and pharmacy students and faculty provided multifactorial screening with balance, medication, home assessment, bone density, blood pressure, and functional reach tests. Two experienced community-based instructors led Tai Chi and yoga demonstrations.

In addition, the coalition facilitated falls prevention workshops at senior centers across the state, such as the event in [Davenport](#).

Key outcomes reported included:

- Increased awareness of falls and number of individualized assessments/screenings provided to seniors.
- Strong engagement by the 50 participants on the "Falls Risk and Prevention" webinar, giving an overall rating of 4.01/5.00 for "providing value to my work."
- Increased awareness of falls prevention and education by health care team members participating in the collaboration between Des Moines University, Drake University, and WesleyLife.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Carlene Russell, Nutrition Director, Iowa Department on Aging,
Carlene.Russell@iowa.gov.

Kentucky

The [Kentucky Safe Aging Coalition](#) reported a month-long observance initiated September 23 and culminating on October 23. Falls Prevention Awareness Day was anchored by a proclamation from Governor Beshear. The Safe Aging Coalition worked with partners from around the state to conduct awareness activities.

Kentucky has developed a [cache of radio spots and Governor PSAs](#) that were widely disseminated as part of their public awareness efforts. The Occupational Safety and Health Program developed an array of 2014 [Fall Prevention logos and messages](#) available for downloading.

WPSD TV 6 hosted a few TV spots promoting the observance. This online example [Tuesday is Falls Prevention Awareness Day](#) empaneled a variety of falls prevention experts.



The Barren River Health Department District sponsored a falls prevention fair at Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center (SkyPac) to teach older adults about preventing falls, with 70 seniors in attendance. Health fair screenings were offered for multifactorial risk factors, including balance, medications, and vision. Physical therapy and pharmacy students offered fall screenings and pharmacy reviews.

The Winchester Sun printed an article, [National Falls Prevention Awareness Day is Sept. 23](#), that highlighted UK Extension Specialist for Family Life. The article presented the four major risk factors for falls in older adults: lack of exercise, vision problems, medication side effects, and home and environmental hazards. The Frankfort, KY State Journal published [Health: Strong Today, Means Falls Free Tomorrow](#).

[Learn more about Kentucky's efforts in fall prevention.](#)

Reported by: Hannah Keeler, Kentucky Safe Aging Coalition Coordinator, MPH, Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, hannahkeeler@uky.edu.

Louisiana

While Louisiana does not yet host a coalition, the Aging Office leveraged Falls Prevention Awareness Day to marshal media attention to the issue, promoted in the [Elder News](#).

Examples are included below:

Fall 2014

Volume 11, Issue 3

Elder News

**Governor's Office of Elderly
Affairs**

**“Serving Seniors
Successfully”**



Falls Prevention Awareness Day

The first Falls Free Prevention Awareness Day was approved and observed in 2008. To continue efforts in fall prevention, the National Falls Prevention Awareness Day for 2014 is Tuesday, September 23.

Did you know that one in three individuals over age 65 falls each year and it increases to one in two persons by age 80. The cost in spent annually on treating older adults for falls is approximately \$28.2 Billion per year. If you would like to obtain more resources and tools regarding Falls Prevention and share with your clients and staff, visit [National Council on Aging](#).

Maine

The [Maine Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported promoting [Matter of Balance](#) as the focus of the observance across three dates that coincided with start dates for workshops. Governor LePage published a letter in support of Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD), and Senator Collins [blogged](#) about this issue to recognize FPAD.

A key partner, the Southern Maine Agency on Aging (SMAA), hosted three free Fall Prevention Screening Days, utilizing the [STEADI](#) self-assessment and screening tools in Southern Maine and formal assessments and home visits in Northern Maine. Partners offered vision and medication screenings performed by physical therapy students, faculty and private practice physical therapists and home health physical therapists. A medication review was performed by pharmacy students; their professor guided the discussions. Local community programs and services were recommended during screening.

[Spectrum Generations](#) hosted a month-long observance with a variety of activities that kicked off in early September through the first week in October.

The University of New England Geriatric Education Center [promoted awareness](#) among its faculty, students, and older adults. The National Association of Geriatric Education Centers is a national partner of Falls Free®.

A local reporter who wrote a blog about FPAD events with Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging, Diane Atwood, covered a community falls screening offered with SMAA, Maine Medical Center, MaineHealth and University of New England, Maine students. [Access the blog](#) through the Bangor News.

At the Eastern Maine Area Agency on Aging (EAAA), falls prevention awareness was jointly observed with Medicare Enrollment activities. In collaboration with EAAA, physical therapy students from Husson College helped sponsor events in Northern Maine, while in Southern Maine, physical therapy students from UNE, SMAA, and MaineHealth helped sponsor screening and education events.

The demand was great—Maine partners and coalition members are already meeting to expand screening sites and hope to expand to other areas of the state.

Reported jointly by: Matter of Balance National Program Manager, MaineHealth's Partnership for Healthy Aging: leagup@mainhealth.org and the Health and Wellness Coordinator, Spectrum Generations.



Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2014



Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow

Maine is part of the national Falls Free® Initiative, which includes more than 40 states and 70 national organizations, professional associations, and federal agencies across the country dedicated to reducing fall-related injuries and deaths among older adults.

In recognition of Falls Prevention Awareness Day, we are collaborating with the University of New England, MaineHealth and others to offer fall-risk screening events in Southern Maine, along with information and resource tables to help people understand the risk factors for falls and learn more about fall prevention strategies and local resources.

Join us at any of these events to learn more about what YOU can do to prevent falls!

Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2014 Fall-Risk Screening Events:

Date:	Monday Sept. 22	Wednesday Sept. 24	Wednesday Sept. 24	Friday Sept. 26
Time:	1-3pm	10a-12p	10a-12p	10a-12p
Location:	<u>Southern Maine Agency on Aging</u> 136 US Route 1 Scarborough	<u>Woodfords Congregational Church</u> 202 Woodford Street Portland	<u>Ross Center</u> 189 Alfred Street Biddeford	<u>Park Street School</u> 14 Park Street Kennebunk



Maryland

The [Maryland Fall Prevention Advisory Group](#) observed a week-long falls prevention awareness observance from September 21-27, 2014. They leveraged [Governor O'Malley's Proclamation](#), writing and distributing a press release.

The coalition and partners promoted an active observance including:

- Parkville Senior Center hosted “Are You at Risk? A Balance Awareness Clinic” on Tuesday, September 16 and Fall Risk Assessment Screening on Thursday, September 18.
- The Baltimore County Department of Aging hosted a “Get Ready, Get Set, Get Fit – 5K Run/1 Mile Walk” on Sunday, September 21.
- The Fleming Senior Center hosted a community health fair and “Gait Way 2 Better Balance” event on the 23.
- On the 24, the Calvert County Office on Aging offered a presentation from an audiologist who spoke about the inner workings of our ears and brain and the effect on balance.



State Senator Klausmeier, D-MD taking the Timed Up and Go test



Tai Chi demonstration—as part of the awareness activities, Maryland promoted Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance and Stepping On

In addition, the Elkton Center and the Healthy Lifestyle Fitness Center hosted balance exercise programs, and senior centers in Charles County offered falls prevention lectures and exercises. The Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center/University of Maryland, Baltimore Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research Program/Johns Hopkins Geriatric Education Center Consortium offered a two part educational presentation on frailty and falls.

Local physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and nursing school students participated in their local health fairs, screenings, and/or workshops.



Above is an example of a variety of available resources and handouts with local information incorporated into the educational materials and screening events. Some local agencies needed a lot of time in advance to print out materials; next year the state health department will do the printing.

A key outcome reported was the growing interest in older adult falls across the community.

Reported by: Jade Leung, Chief, Division of Injury Prevention, MD Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, jade.leung@maryland.gov.

Massachusetts

The [Massachusetts Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported obtaining a state Senate Resolution commemorating Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD). Massachusetts held their annual FPAD "main event" at the State House that drew about 125 attendees. In addition, some coalition members held alternative events/activities in communities across the state on or near the September date. A [Public Health Blog](#) about Falls Prevention Awareness Day was posted by the State Commissioner of Public Health. Social media was leveraged to promote all these events.

Several key state leaders spoke at the annual State House event including members of the House and Senate, the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health, and the Massachusetts Secretary of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. The program also featured some topical presentations including one on how to speak to your physician about falls and another about a successful falls prevention program at a long term care facility. Another highlight of the event included an interactive balance and muscle strengthening exercise demonstration led by a physical therapist/falls prevention educator who engaged the entire audience including older adults and public officials. There was also a raffle where winning audience members could choose a nightlight, flashlight, or bath mat. Participation fostered partners' efforts to educate elected officials and to conduct evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations.

The annual event included information tables organized around [NCOA's 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall infographic](#); for example, at one table, pharmacy students, accompanied by their professor from the MA College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, performed medication reviews, another member performed balance and functional mobility screenings using the Timed Up and Go test, etc. Other tables promoted evidence-based Tai Chi, [Matter of Balance](#), and [Remembering When™ \(Fire and Fall Prevention Program\)](#), as well as other programming.

Coalition members/organizations generously donated funds and services for the main event: e.g., food for the event, rental fee for room, tote bags with the coalition logo filled with falls prevention information, a bus service for older adult attendees provided by local ASAP, mini-flashlights with the Falls Free® logo, prevention-related raffle items, and printing of falls prevention materials and brochures.



Key outcomes reported by Massachusetts: Positive feedback about the event(s); and securing state leaders (legislators, agency heads) to not only attend the main FPAD State House event, but to also address the audience about the importance of prevention, demonstrating their commitment as partners to the coalition.



The Massachusetts Falls Prevention Coalition
Invites You to Join Us for Our
8th Annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day Event:
"Strong Today, Falls Free@ Tomorrow"

When: Tuesday, September 23, 2014
Time: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
Where: MA State House, Boston-Great Hall

Every year in the U.S., one-third of persons age 65 and older falls;
Every 13 minutes in Massachusetts (on average), an older adult is seen in an Emergency Department because of fall-related injuries; and
Every 25 minutes in Massachusetts, an older adult is hospitalized due to those in that are often serious and sometimes life threatening.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day is an opportunity to learn more about how risks for falls can be reduced and more importantly, falls can be prevented. Event highlights:

- * Meet Legislators and Other State Officials
- * See Interesting Presentations
- * Receive Helpful Info. and Free Giveaways
- * Enjoy Light refreshments



Some examples of activities that occurred separately from the State House event included the following: several falls prevention education/health fair events were held that offered older adults screening for vision, medications, balance, other multifactorial risk factors, blood pressure, podiatric care, cane and walker adjustment, and the promotion of a myriad of evidence-based falls prevention programs, etc. Additionally, a long-term care facility member hosted a Falls Prevention Carnival to educate staff about falls awareness. Volunteer actors staged scenes depicting potential fall hazards as part of the program; a hospital member hosted a Grand Rounds/Case Conference on fractures in the elderly for a geriatric clinician audience and published a "Falls Prevention Issue" of their patient care services magazine that is printed every 2 weeks including articles from various units sharing ideas for falls prevention and promotion of an in-house falls prevention program.

[Learn more about the Massachusetts Falls Prevention Coalition.](#)

Reported by: Carla Cicerchia, MA Dept. of Public Health/Div. of Violence and Injury Prevention, carla.cicerchia@state.ma.us.



Michigan

The [Michigan Fall Prevention Partnership](#) observed one day of awareness anchored by Governor Snyder's [proclamation](#) of September 23, 2014 as Michigan Falls Prevention Awareness Day. The Office of Services to the Aging and the Injury and Violence Prevention Section of the Department of Community Health [jointly observed](#) the day, distributing a press release and falls prevention information using relevant state departments' social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter).

Other partners included [Home Care Safe at Home](#) and the [Michigan Physical Therapy Association](#). Michigan also made general recommendations to seek out community based falls prevention workshops with links.

Reported by: Laura Rowen, Injury Prevention Consultant, Michigan Department of Community Health, RowenL@michigan.gov.

Minnesota

The [Minnesota Falls Prevention Initiative](#) reported a one week falls prevention observance anchored by Governor Dayton's [proclamation](#).

Each of the area agencies on aging and the Minnesota Physical Therapy Association developed a unique and creative partnership support for activities during Falls Prevention Awareness Week. These partnerships and/or sponsorships included several healthcare systems and providers, local universities with physical therapy or nursing students, articles in local newspapers, outpatient physical therapy providers, and local non-profits reaching older adults. Highlights include:

- Dr. Eva Norman presented on falls prevention and screened nearly 20 seniors at the YMCA Andover using the [STEADI](#) tools. Jodi Blowers, the Active Older Adult Program Coordinator, organized the event and supported the need for this education to help seniors stay strong and free of falls.
- Kris Gerde, Minnesota Physical Therapy Association, screened a group of 25 older adults in a community exercise class using the [STEADI toolkit](#) and the NCOA 6 Steps flyer.
- A presentation by the falls coalition of Olmsted County to a Parkinson's support group with an attendance of 60-70 was very well received.

[North Memorial Hospital Health Care](#) and the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging partnered on a Falls Prevention Awareness Day event that included:

- Fall risk assessments.
- Information tables with information.
- Presentations on falls prevention.

South East Minnesota Area Agency on Aging conducted a media campaign in Wabasha, Winona and Goodhue counties. Press releases regarding Falls Prevention Awareness Day were sent out by many partnering organizations to recruit additional partners and seniors interested in attending a workshop, and to promote overall awareness of falls prevention and the [Matter of Balance](#) program.

The Central Minnesota Council on Aging collaborated with numerous partners to promote the [Traveling Health Fair \(St Joseph and Sauk Rapids MN\)](#), a product of a major collaboration between over 14 organizations. The College of St. Benedicts and St. Cloud State University Nursing Departments have partnered to create a process that allows older adults to visit various screening stations that will provide data on a wide range of health indicators including balance, blood pressure, cognition, and nutrition. A variety of educational information was available, including local community resources and offerings that have been developed to promote exercise, health promotion, and falls prevention.

At the Whitney Falls and Safety Fair (St Cloud) several seniors signed up to have a home assessment done and many others received important information on falls prevention. A variety of technology and medical device vendors were on hand to demonstrate and educate participants on the latest support tools to promote independence and safety at home.

Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging participated in a Falls Prevention Awareness Day event at the Senior Living in Warroad.

Lutheran Social Service disseminated falls prevention placements at all congregate and home-delivered meal sites across their service areas.

The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging facilitated radio promotions and discussions on falls on KNUJ (New Ulm), SAM (Sleepy Eye), and KTOE (Mankato). KWLM Radio (Willmar) promoted the ambulance service's [free home fall hazard inspection](#) in conjunction with falls prevention awareness.

The Minnesota Alliance for Patient Safety and the Minnesota Hospital Association promoted awareness among members and participation in an October Fall Prevention Pre-Conference on fall prevention.

The key outcomes reported included increased awareness of the prevalence of falls and what each person can do to reduce that risk, as well as the wide spread distribution of information about falls and fall risk assessment.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Mary Hertel, Healthy Aging Programs Consultant, Minnesota Board on Aging, mary.hertel@state.mn.us.

Missouri

The [Show Me Falls Free Missouri Coalition](#) reported a one day observance on September 23, but noted local organizations varied in the actual recognition day.

Governor Jay Nixon [proclaimed Sept. 21](#) as Falls Prevention Awareness Day in Missouri. Thirty-six [statewide events](#) were hosted across Missouri in September. The [Missouri Center for Patient Safety](#) partnered to promote falls prevention awareness and resources.

The Missouri Area Agency on Aging Association again promoted the sending of [e-cards](#) to friends. Via the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services website, visitors can select a falls prevention card, personalize it, and send it on its way.

Missouri hosted a number of health fairs including Fulton, Jefferson City, Mt. Vernon, St. Clair, St. Peters, and others like the [Mid-East Area Agency on Aging](#), offering balance, vision, medications, and orthostatic hypotension screening. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, pharmacy, and nursing students assisted with screenings, medication review, and handing out information. New this year was an orthostatic blood pressure screening where some people tested positive. This screening was found to be time consuming to conduct, but fruitful.



Missouri reported over 200 events across the state with at least 5,000 people reached with activities and more with newsletters and PSAs.

Evidence-based programs readily available for senior participation were highlighted in each event including [Matter of Balance](#) and Tai Chi.

Missouri's coalition reported a key outcome of always having many activities going on throughout the state through which they have reached a significant number of older adults over the past few years.

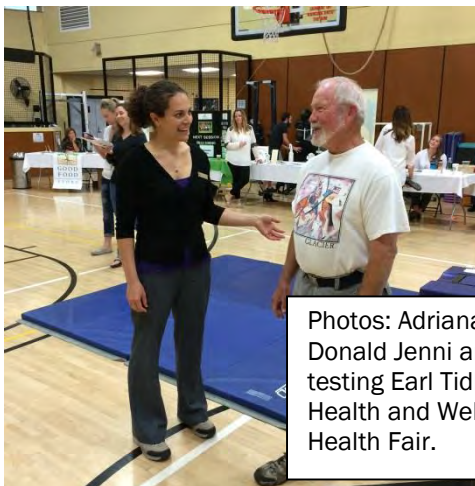
[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Helen Lach, Associate Professor/ PhD, RN, Saint Louis University, lachh@slu.edu.

Montana

[Falls Free Montana](#) reported a full and active week-long observance in collaboration with Active Aging Week, beginning with a letter of proclamation from Governor Bullock and a press release from the coalition. Montana champions promoted widespread observance by posting a toolkit to assist local communities across the state to raise awareness about falls prevention strategies among older adults: [How to Promote Fall Prevention in Your Community](#).

The [Missoula Fall Prevention Project](#) hosted a one day event and health fair offering older adults multifactorial screening including balance and medications using the [STEADI](#), Geriatric Depression Scale, Mini Mental Exam, and the Modified Falls Efficacy Scale (MFES). This event incorporated students from a variety of disciplines: occupational therapy, physical therapy, pharmacy, nursing, and social work. Pharmacy students performed medication reviews and heel scans for osteoporosis, nursing students tested orthostatic hypotension, social work students performed depression and fear-of-falling testing, and physical therapy students performed other elements of the STEADI balance/strength tests. A new partner [MonTECH](#) presented information on home safety.



Photos: Adriana Degani testing Donald Jenni and Aurora Martin testing Earl Tidball at the Peak Health and Wellness/Alpine PT's Health Fair.

Collaboration with the Montana Chapter of the American Occupational Therapy Association led to the inclusion of occupational therapy students in the falls prevention activities, adding students from a new occupational therapy program in Billings, Montana at the University of Mary. At a separate event, occupational therapy students were engaged with basic falls prevention education and outreach as their first year's involvement.

Placemats were printed and widely distributed to congregate meal sites and Meals-on-Wheels delivery. Magazine articles were published in Missoulian's *55+ Magazine* and the [Bozeman Magazine](#).

Partners such as the [Montana Gerontology Society](#) and [University of Montana](#) promoted awareness online.

Throughout the events, the readily available community program [Stepping On](#) was promoted, recruiting at-risk seniors to enroll. The [Montana State Aging office](#) and the [Montana Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Bureau](#) helped to promote Stepping On, showing 21 sites on state maps. The [Otago Exercise Program](#) was heavily promoted among physical therapists and students.

A key outcome reported: Montana identified over 100 people with high fall risk before their first fall occurred and referred them appropriately for intervention and prevention.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Mindy Renfro, PT, PhD, GCS, CPH, Clinical Coordinator, University of Montana, mindy.renfro@umontana.edu.

Nebraska

Falls Free® is pleased to have the [Nebraska Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reporting in for 2014. Nebraska observed a month of falls prevention awareness from September 1-26, 2014.

Hillcrest Health Services [offered complimentary fall risk assessments](#) on Falls Prevention Awareness Day within its facilities in Nebraska and Iowa. The screenings were intended for older adults or anyone who may be at risk for falling due to instability, injury, or another health issue. Hillcrest's physical and occupational therapists conducted the screenings and provided simple at-home exercises to strengthen and improve balance or, for those at high risk, a recommendation to consult with a physician. Participants also received information on home safety and improving balance, along with a complimentary gift bag.

Partners also participated in health fairs including multifactorial screenings for older adults. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Dizziness and Balance Disorder Lab offered free walk-in fall-risk screenings to promote awareness of fall risk and prevention. A Falls Coalition member and audiology Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska took a lead role in coordinating the free fall-risk screenings this year.

Across the state, partners creatively used the month of awareness to recruit program enrollees, filling registrations for [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) and disseminating [STEADI](#) patient education materials. The Visiting Nurse Association Senior Speaker series hosted a September presentation and radio segment focusing on falls prevention.

Key outcomes reported include: 1) Creative Partnership with the University of Nebraska Dizziness and Balance Disorder Lab; 2) Creative Partnership with Aging Partners and HHS to continue and grow Stepping On in Nebraska; and 3) A newly designed poster and congregate meal placemat mirroring the same "6 steps to Prevent a Fall" as the national infographic.

Reported by: Greta Glenn, Community Health Educator, Health and Human Services, Injury Prevention, Greta.Glenn@nebraska.gov.



Nevada

The [Nevada Goes Falls Free Coalition](#) reported a month-long observance, partnering with the [Nevada Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association](#) to jointly observe National Physical Therapy Month in October.

As a key element of a public awareness effort, the coalition held a press event with Jennifer Nash, PT, DPT, NCS, Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health, Cleveland Clinic as the key speaker, linking falls, head injuries, and cognitive declines. The Southern Nevada Health District Health Educator gave a separate presentation in Spanish about senior falls prevention and the CDC's STEADI assessment for fall risk at a meeting of the Latin Chamber of Commerce.

The Southern Nevada Health District, a founding coalition member, partnered with the Health District in Public Safety and Education to [promote awareness and education](#). Partners offered six new [Stepping On](#) classes coordinated with fall screenings in sites where classes could be hosted. This strategy facilitated direct referral of individuals at risk to Stepping On classes that were convenient for the individual.

The Southern Nevada Health District and its Nevada Goes Falls Free Coalition partners designated September 22-26 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week. The health district and partners offered free senior fall risk assessments at several locations throughout the valley. Seniors were offered balance screenings and physical tests from the CDC [STEADI](#), plus the self-assessment survey.

Physical therapy students from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), occupational therapy students from Touro University Nevada, physical therapy assistant (PTA) students from PIMA Medical Institute, and PTA students from the College of Southern Nevada were trained by coalition members and then assisted with some of the fall screenings and one of the Stepping On classes.

A key outcome reported: Identifying individuals at risk and referring them to Stepping On classes.

[Learn more on Facebook.](#)

Reported by: Sue Schuerman, PT, GCS, MBA, PhD, Assistant Professor, UNLVPT and Co-Chair, Nevada Goes Falls Free Coalition, sue.schuerman@unlv.edu.

New Hampshire

The [New Hampshire Falls Risk Reduction Task Force](#) observance was anchored by Governor Hassan's [Proclamation](#), which was broadly disseminated across the state. The proclamation and press release were communicated to the entire New Hampshire Falls Risk Reduction Task Force, shared with participants at *Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance* (formally [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#)) training, and displayed at the quarterly Greater Concord Safe Community Coalition Meeting. Information was also posted on Facebook and emailed to all New Hampshire Health Department employees.

Across the state, partners also displayed posters and distributed fliers promoting the Oct 7 Webinar *Everyday Materials and Their Use in Falls Risk Reduction* by Therese Wilkomm, PhD, Director, New Hampshire State Assistive Technology Program and Clinical Assistant Professor in Occupational Therapy for the University of New Hampshire. This session was sponsored by the Northern New England Geriatric Education Center and the New Hampshire Falls Risk Reduction Task Force.

The Task Force collaborated with the state injury surveillance program coordinator, JoAnne Miles, to develop maps that show emergency department and hospital discharges for falls by senatorial district. These maps were later displayed at two events in November, the *Tri-State Roundtable on Aging and Navigating for Health: Insurance Coverage and Using Health Services*. Plans are being made to meet with key legislators to present the maps and discuss falls risk reduction efforts across the state.

Promoting availability and participation in programming and services was central to the effort. A volunteer with the RSVP Volunteer Center (serving Grafton & Sullivan Counties, sponsored Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, Inc.) is a trained Matter of Balance Master Trainer. She worked with the Littleton Area Senior Center to provide a Matter of Balance workshop, hosting 6 older adults. Eighteen [RSVP Bone Builders classes](#) were offered at 14 sites in Grafton and Sullivan Counties, recording 260 participants.

In New Hampshire, RSVP Bone Builders has grown in popularity since its introduction in 2005. Three of the trained volunteers are in their 90s. Through this effort, partnerships were strengthened with the RSVP Volunteer Center and the Littleton Area Senior Center. The Dartmouth Centers for Health and Aging sponsored a workshop given by a Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center Physical Therapist and Task Force member entitled, "Don't Let Your Next Trip be a Fall."

The Horseshoe Pond Place Senior Resource Center hosted several free Falls Prevention Awareness programs:

- Throughout the month of September, free "Simple Tai Chi for Seniors" classes were offered on Mondays and Thursdays.
- On Monday, September 15, [Remembering When™: A Fire and Fall Prevention Program for Older Adults](#), was presented by the New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's Office.

On Wednesday, September 17, the Concord VNA presented “[The Falling Monologues](#),” a film and discussion about the causes of falls and falls prevention tips. An innovative collection of stories inspired by real-life scenarios, “The Falling Monologues” covers common causes of falls and fall prevention tips as well as other frequently overlooked issues including how crippling a fear of falling can become. A post-film discussion and falls prevention resources rounded out the session that was co-sponsored by the Concord Regional Visiting Nurse Association.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Debra A. Samaha, Program Director, Injury Prevention Center at Dartmouth, Lebanon, NH Debra.A.Samaha@dartmouth.edu.

New Jersey

The [New Jersey Statewide Falls Prevention Workgroup](#), staffed by the New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of Aging Services, reported a week-long falls prevention awareness observance anchored by Governor Christie's [Proclamation](#). For 2014, all 21 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) promoted falls prevention week through various media channels, screenings, and educational presentations. Further, the AAAs all distributed falls prevention focused placemats to congregate meal sites and home-delivered meals clients.

Key elements of the New Jersey public awareness campaign included a Robert Wood Johnson hosted event wherein the Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Aging Services presented the Governor's proclamation. The New Jersey Foundation for Aging (NJFA) promoted a [falls prevention video](#) (episode 37) focusing on falls prevention strategies, including many ways to improve balance, strength, and overall health to avoid falls. In the video, NJFA's Program Manager, Melissa Chalker, hosted this episode with guests Linda Lucuski, Director of Rehab at University Medical Center of Princeton and Mary Wagner, Professor of Pharmacy at Ernest Mario School at Rutgers. The Foundation also promoted falls prevention on their public access show, reaching many people who are not in the aging network. The same program has been posted on [YouTube](#).

Another key partner, the Traumatic Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey, promoted the New Jersey Falls Prevention website on their home page. The New Jersey Hospital Association engaged hospitals to participate. As an example, Newark Beth Israel Hospital set up a display table and distributed over 400 pieces of educational materials.



Falls Prevention Awareness Week, held at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center September 21-27, included a rehabilitation and nursing staffed information table from 8 a.m.–3 p.m., Monday through Friday, providing information to seniors and visitors to the hospital.

A number of fall risk screenings (balance, vision, medications, foot screening, hearing, blood pressure) were conducted across the state; aging and health care staff went out to local senior centers throughout the week to do additional screenings. Fun photos were posted on [Facebook](#) by the Department of Human Services. At many sites, physical therapy students helped with balance screenings, and pharmacy students helped with medication reviews.

Throughout the state-wide effort, available programs and services were promoted to garner participation in effective programs like [Matter of Balance](#), [Project Healthy Bones](#), and [Move Today. Standing Tall Against Falls](#), a PowerPoint presentation developed by the New Jersey Institute for Successful Aging, was delivered in 27 locations throughout the state, reaching 472 people.

The New Jersey Statewide Falls Prevention Workgroup is under the auspices of the New Jersey Interagency Council on Osteoporosis. A number of [educational brochures](#) were developed in 2014 to address osteoporosis, strengthening bones, and falls prevention.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Maryann Marian, Program Specialist, New Jersey Department of Human Services, maryann.marian@dhs.state.nj.us.

New Mexico

The [New Mexico Adult Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported an extended event over ten days anchored by [Governor Martinez's recognition](#) of September 22nd as New Mexico Falls Prevention Awareness Day. A press release helped to expand awareness and interest across the state.

Partners collaborated in a [fall risk screening at the New Mexico State Fair](#) offering multifactorial screening, emphasizing balance and medications. Seniors were also provided falls prevention education, [vial of life packets](#), and blood pressure checks. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and nutrition students from the Pima Medical Institute and the University of New Mexico participated. Over 100 seniors participated in the fall risk screening. Students' participation in the fall risk screening event at the state fair increased their awareness and understanding of the issue and the need for falls prevention within the state.

The fall risk screening at the New Mexico State Fair raised interest in Telemundo, a Spanish speaking television station. Reporters interviewed Janet Popp, PT, Executive Chair for the Fall Prevention Coalition, and participants undergoing screening. They will promote the New Mexico Adult Falls Prevention Coalition web site once the content is translated into Spanish.

New Mexico is pleased to have a [2014 state legislative mandate](#) to establish a state-wide fall risk awareness and prevention program and community implementations by January 2015. Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities serve to bring greater attention to this initiative.

The key outcomes reported included raising awareness, promoting an interdisciplinary approach, and increasing numbers of celebrations across the state.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Marnie Doctor, PTA, MPH, Pima Medical Institute, Albuquerque, NM, mdoctor@pmi.edu.

New York

The [New York Fall Prevention for Older Adults Workgroup](#) reported a month-long observance promoting falls prevention in older adults. Central to the campaign, the Acting Director of the New York State Office for Aging, Corinda Crossdale, hosted a [press conference](#). A state-wide press release promoting awareness generated a lot of media attention. One example is the WBNG 12 Television [interview](#) highlighting the Broome County Health Department's Better Balance for Broome initiative and a video: [Preventing Falls in Fall](#).



A key partner, the New York Physical Therapy Association, posted messages and promoted awareness and participation by members using the theme: [Support a Strong Today – Falls Free® Tomorrow on Falls Prevention Awareness Day](#). Partners like [Phelps Memorial Hospital Center](#) offered day long awareness activities for seniors.

Recently the New York State Older Adult Fall Prevention Program was featured in a [brief film](#) for the 2014 American Public Health Association (APHA) Meeting.

In a unique partnership with one fire department, falls prevention information was distributed while batteries were replaced in fire detectors. State health department staff provided county health departments and aging offices with free night lights and brochures to support falls prevention awareness events. Other examples of activities include Catholic Charities in Brooklyn promoting [Matter of Balance](#) and partnering with pharmacy and physical therapy students to conduct medication reviews and balance testing.

The New York State Osteoporosis Prevention and Education promoted the [STEADI toolkit](#) that includes tools for healthcare providers to assess fall risk and refer older adult patients to evidence-based community falls prevention programs.

[Lifespan](#), which provides non-medical services for seniors and their caregivers, offered a free workshop from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on preventing falls, including balance assessments and information on home modifications, managing medications, vision and adaptive

equipment, and personal emergency response systems. Flu shots were made available and A Matter of Balance was also hosted.

A number of falls prevention programs were promoted throughout the state including [Matter of Balance](#), [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance), [Stepping On](#), [EnhanceFitness](#), [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#), SilverSneakers®, and [Bone Builders](#).

New York City participated in a creative partnership with NCOA and [F.Y. Eye](#) to produce a falls prevention public service announcement that was carried through nonprofit video feeds in senior centers and other venues.



Saratoga County Public Health falls prevention information booth



NY reported the key outcome was the largest number of county participants of any year since the state health department began coordinating the event in 2010.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Harrison Moss, Program Manager, NYS Older Adult Fall Prevention Program, New York State Department of Health, harrison.moss@health.ny.gov.

North Carolina

The [North Carolina Falls Prevention Coalition](#) hosted a statewide week-long observation. In some areas of the state, events were held in conjunction with Active Aging Week. To extend awareness across the state, North Carolina obtained Governor McCrory's [proclamation](#) along with several local community proclamations. This year, partners further increased promotion via social media and [blogs](#). Activities and resources were promoted on the [coalition website](#).

Coalition members participated in multifactorial screening events. The Eastern North Carolina Falls Prevention Coalition hosted the Healthy Aging and Wellness Expo, offering balance, vision, medications, and many other screenings. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, pharmacy, and nursing students participated in the screenings and health fair. Numerous falls prevention fairs were also held in other regions of the state. Approximately 540 older adults were screened for falls risks and referred to appropriate services, which was believed to be the single most important outcome of the week.



Wellness Expo Photos



Partners conducted many Falls Prevention Awareness Week events and activities and demonstrated that falls prevention activities can be fun! Activities included lectures, demonstrations, and events focusing on the effectiveness and availability of fall prevention programs, including [Matter of Balance](#), [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) and the [Otago Exercise Program](#).

One coalition partner, AARP, conducted "Taking Steps," "Home Fit," and "My Home and Community" activities, while the Home Care and Hospice Association distributed "be safe" materials.

A health department-based agency hosted "Fit After 50" in conjunction with Falls Prevention Awareness Week and Active Aging Week. They provided lectures, demonstrations, and activities focusing on falls prevention programs that are available in the area. Free health screenings and entertainment were geared towards helping older adults live long, productive lives.

A key outcome reported was the growing number of partners and Falls Prevention Awareness Week events and activities across the state, all demonstrating that falls prevention activities can be fun!



The Appalachian Trail Conservancy Walking Club meets and does activities throughout the year and always has an emphasis on falls prevention. The club walked the Givens Highland Farms Retirement Community campus during Falls Prevention Awareness Week and distributed falls prevention water bottles.

Reported by: Ellen Schneider, Research Scientist, UNC-Chapel Hill, ecschnei@email.unc.edu.



North Dakota

[North Dakota State Falls Free](#) reported a single-day observance for falls prevention awareness during which time partners provided falls prevention presentations and participated in an interview on a public radio program called "Main Street."

In observance of Falls Prevention Awareness Day in Grand Forks, ND, partners offered the [STEADI](#) assessment to nearly 100 community-dwelling older adults over 65 years old at five different sites with three dates in September and two in October. Volunteers for the functional assessment tests included area physical therapists, three retired physical therapists, along with two students from the University of North Dakota and one student from Mayo who were doing clinical rotations at one facility. A falls prevention education session and PowerPoint presentation were offered at each of the sites.

At the Grand Forks Senior Center, after the falls prevention education session and screening events, partners were asked to present again to another two groups (a Diabetes group and a TOPS group). The students accepted the challenge and used that as their required in-service project!



The photos are of students participating in the STEADI assessment at the Altru Medical Fitness Center.

Other partners included AARP and the North Dakota State University Extension Service; 18 Extension agents are currently leading [Stepping On](#) workshops. Five master trainers are now available across the state. NDSU Extension Service—Mercer County featured "[September is Falls Prevention Awareness Month](#)" on their web pages, promoting falls prevention and Stepping On.

The key outcome reported was the increased education about falls free programs across the state.

Reported jointly by: Diana Read, North Dakota Department of Health, dread@nd.gov and Pat Carter PT, NDPTA Vice President, Altru Health System, Grand Forks, ND, ndcarters@gmail.com.

Ohio

The [Ohio Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported both a one [month general observance](#) and one day of heightened awareness in which the Ohio Department of Aging and Ohio Department of Health wrote and distributed a press release in coordination with Governor Kasich's [proclamation](#).



**Preventing Falls...
One Step at a Time**

[STEADY U Ohio](#) is a comprehensive falls prevention initiative led by Governor John Kasich and the Ohio Department of Aging, and supported by Ohio government and state business partners, to strengthen existing falls prevention activities, identify opportunities for new initiatives, and coordinate a statewide educational campaign to bring falls prevention to the forefront of planning for individuals, families, health care providers, business and community leaders, and all Ohioans. STEADY U Ohio and the Ohio Falls Prevention Coalition partnered with [Kroger Pharmacies](#) to provide free prescription screenings in Kroger chains across Ohio on Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Kroger pharmacy interns provided medication reviews for customers while coalition members were on hand to provide information to older adults related to falls prevention.



Pictured: Kroger pharmacists participating in Falls Prevention Awareness Day



The coalition also partnered with the Ohio Pharmacy Association to conduct screening events across the state of Ohio, engaging students in the medication screening efforts. Coalition partners were on hand to provide information to older adults related to falls prevention.

In addition, the Ohio Affiliate of Prevent Blindness (a national partner) partnered with the coalition to bring awareness to their constituent base.



National Falls Prevention Awareness Day on Sept. 23

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Brenda Rock, Coalition Coordinator, Union County Health Department, brenda.rock@uchd.net.

Oklahoma

Falls Free® is pleased to have the [Oklahoma Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reporting in this year. The Falls Prevention Awareness observation extended over one month. In addition, during May observances of Older Americans' Month, the Oklahoma State Department of Health promoted falls prevention messaging through the [Injury Prevention Service \(IPS\) web page](#), a [compendium of general falls prevention resources](#), and Governor Fallin's Proclamation.

Oklahoma promoted [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance), an evidence-based falls prevention program. A demonstration of Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance and a falls prevention presentation were conducted during Senior Day at the Oklahoma State Fair.

Partnering agencies for Older Americans' Month, including [BrightStar Care](#), and [ElderCare Resources](#), continued to promote falls prevention awareness resources across the state.

Activities raised awareness of the prevalence of falls, identified what individuals and organizations could do to prevent falls, and provided up-to-date community resources. The Oklahoma Injury Prevention Service hosted two Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance Instructor Trainings in September to raise awareness among community stakeholders and expand Tai Chi classes across Oklahoma, adding 27 more Tai Chi instructors.

The key outcome reported was the broad dissemination of information and education on older adult falls prevention to various agencies/organizations within Oklahoma.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Avy Redus, Project Coordinator, Oklahoma State Department of Health, AvyD@health.ok.gov.

Oregon

Oregon reported a week-long observance anchored by Governor Kitzhaber's proclamation of September 23 as Falls Prevention Awareness Day. A local proclamation was released by Multnomah County that jointly observed Falls Prevention Awareness Day and Senior Center Month in September.

Other activities reported included:

- Beaverton YMCA hosted a Tai Chi demonstration.
- Kaiser Permanente NW hosted a falls prevention health fair on September 23 for Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2014; 75 Kaiser Permanente patients attended. A mailing was sent out with follow-up calls to encourage attendance. Each patient completed the Stay Independent questionnaire with a nurse or health coach and visited stations that followed the STEADI algorithm in making recommendations, including geriatricians, physical therapy, podiatry, and ophthalmology. Community resources were also displayed, such as Matter of Balance, Silver and Fit, American Medical Response, and OHA. Each clinical station had laptops to access the patients' medical charts.
- Kaiser Permanente invited a new partner, OHSU ThinkFirst Oregon. OHA provided a resource table and a group demonstration of Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance with a group from Maranatha Church.
- PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center offered a Falls Prevention Health Fair in Springfield.
- A Tai Chi flash mob was hosted in downtown Portland and sponsored by a group called "American Style Tai Chi."



September 18, Commissioner Loretta Smith led Multnomah County Commissioners in signing a proclamation for Falls Prevention Awareness and Senior Center Month. The photo is of county commissioners trying Tai Chi with instructor John McKinney. Commissioner Smith is in front with her shoes off.



Kaiser Health Fair, Portland



YMCA Tai Chi Demonstration, Beaverton



Tai Chi Flash Mob, Portland



[Learn more about Oregon's efforts in Fall Prevention.](#)

Reported by: Lisa Shields, Senior Falls Prevention Program Coordinator, Oregon Health Authority, Center for Prevention and Health Promotion, Injury and Violence Prevention Program, lisa.m.shields@state.or.us.

Pennsylvania

[Pennsylvania State Fall Prevention Coalition](#) observed FPAD on September 23 with the Pennsylvania Departments of Aging and Health, encouraging all Pennsylvania residents at an event at the state capitol and through a [press release](#) to join in the observance of Falls Prevention Awareness Day. In addition, Pennsylvania obtained a Governor's proclamation, [Senate Proclamation](#), and many local community proclamations.

Events across the state were anchored by the second annual Legislative Breakfast event in Capitol Rotunda sponsored by Genesis Rehab Services. The Department of Aging sponsored a falls prevention awareness event from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. after a Legislative Breakfast. This provided partners with a greater opportunity to engage legislators in information sharing.



Lois Shelton, Department of Aging and Donna Reinaker, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Council on Aging participating in the falls prevention awareness event in the Capitol.



Secretary Duke, Department of Aging and Representative Frank Farry (Buck Co) sponsor of the House Resolution for Falls Prevention.



Carol Thornton, Department of Public Health and Lois Shelton, Department of Aging standing at the map of where Matter of Balance, Healthy Steps for Older Adults, and Healthy Steps in Motion are offered in the state.



Secretary Duke, Department of Aging; Carol Thornton, Department of Health; Jennifer C. Sidelinker-PT, DPT, GCS, Clinical Manager Genesis Rehab Services; and State Representative Tim Hennessey (standing), speaker at the breakfast about falls prevention.



In addition, the National Council on Aging sponsored *Flu + You* campaign partnered with Philadelphia in the Park to include presentations, information, and handouts on both the risk of falls and the risk of flu, providing onsite flu shots to over 290 participants.

A [50+ Expo](#) in York County promoting health and aging included a variety of participating providers.

Key outcomes reported included increased knowledge among policymakers regarding existence of prevention programs and the burden of fall-related hospitalizations among their constituents.

Reported by: Carol Thornton, Section Chief, PA Department of Health, cathornton@pa.gov and Lois Shelton, PrimeTime Health State Coordinator, Department of Aging, Bureau of Outreach and Education, lselton@pa.gov.

Rhode Island

[Rhode Island Falls Injury Prevention Subcommittee](#) hosted a one week observance September 22- 26. On September 22, the Rhode Island Falls Injury Prevention Coalition hosted its 5th annual Falls Prevention Awareness event: “Strong Today, Falls Free Tomorrow” in the State Room at the Rhode Island State House. State officials and community-based organizations discussed how falls can be prevented and the resources available, and celebrated the work being done to reduce the risk of falls for Rhode Island older adults.

A press event was also held in the state house to raise awareness. The media event coincided with a legislative break and will be moved to a senior center in 2015 to garner more attendance. Nonetheless, attendees were actively engaged. As part of the State House event, the Lieutenant Governor, the Director of Health, and the Director of Division of Elderly Affairs (a physician) offered a Tai Chi demonstration. Additionally, Matter of Balance testimonial was presented.

Across the state, physical therapy and pharmacy students volunteered at agencies that serve the older adult population to perform free balance screenings and medication reviews. Sites distributed falls prevention information and free night lights. Both Tai Chi and [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance) were highlighted to encourage participation in these readily available classes.

Important outcomes reported included:

- Providing evidence-based falls prevention demonstrations and education for elected officials.
- 1,600 night lights were distributed to organizations that serve the older adult population as an incentive for them to host a falls prevention awareness week event.

[Learn more about Rhode Island’s efforts to prevent falls.](#)

Reported by: Jennifer Koziol, MPH, Injury Prevention Coordinator, Rhode Island Department of Health, jennifer.koziol@health.ri.gov.

South Dakota

South Dakota does not yet host a state coalition, but held a one-day observance in key areas of the state where partners distributed falls prevention information and facilitated falls prevention educational presentations.

Faculty and students from the University of South Dakota participated in health fair screenings for balance, vision, medications, blood pressure, and home safety. Students participated with licensed physical therapists and occupational therapists to provide screening and education at three sites (Sioux Falls, SD-independent living facility; Yankton, SD-senior center; and Vermillion, SD-senior center).



The Rapid City Fire Department hosted a class to provide steps for seniors on how to reduce the risk of fall-related injuries. Mayor Sam Kooiker signed a proclamation to make Tuesday, September 23 Falls Prevention Awareness Day. It was reported by [KEVN News](#) and [NC1 Today](#).

Key outcomes reported were the growing participant awareness of their balance limitations and the engagement of physical therapy and occupational therapy students in falls prevention efforts in the community.

Reported by: Becca Jordre, PT/ Associate Professor, University of South Dakota, becca.jordre@usd.edu.

Tennessee

The [Tennessee Falls Prevention Initiative](#) observed one day of falls prevention awareness promoted through a [Governor's Proclamation](#). Key partner Blue Cross/Blue Shield worked to obtain the Governor's Declaration and subsequently partnered with the Commissioner's Council on Injury Prevention to educate injury prevention professionals regarding the CHOICES program (Home and Community Based Services). Tennessee wrote and distributed a press release and obtained news coverage from the [Times Free Press](#) and the [Chattanooga](#).

Tennessee has been developing interest and partnerships aided by Falls Prevention Summits in Nashville and Chattanooga, which were hosted in July and August and brought many sectors together.

For the second year, Lowe's partnered to sponsor two events; multiple local, regional and state partners were engaged. These free community events at Lowe's offered: falls prevention and home safety presentations; home safety stations with UTC Inter-professional Care Teams; education about assistive devices from aging in place specialists; a Matter of Balance demonstration; visits with members of the Chattanooga Fire Department; and opportunities to learn about programs and resources available in the community. Refer to the [web site](#) to see pictures, falls prevention resources, and other materials.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day!



Come by and learn what **YOU** can do to **Prevent Falls!**

- Watch a fall prevention and home safety presentation at 10am.
- Tour home safety stations with UTC Inter-professional Care Teams.
- Talk to Aging in Place Specialists about assistive devices.
- See an *A Matter of Balance* demo.
- Stop by the fire truck outside.
- Learn about programs and resources in your community.

TUESDAY
September 23, 2014
10am - 12pm
Hixson LOWE'S

For more information:
423-209-8203
FallPreventionChattanooga.com



Home Safety Event!

In honor of Falls Prevention Awareness Day!

Falls Prevention Awareness Day connects health care professionals, older adults, caregivers, and family members to raise awareness about preventing falls among older adults.



Join Us!

Friday, Sept. 19th, 2014

10 am - 12:00 pm

at

LOWE'S

3080 Mallory Lane
Franklin, TN 37067

FREE!

For more information, please contact Williamson County Health Educator Patty Norem at 915-485-6260.

Come by and learn what **YOU** can do to **Prevent Falls!**

- Tour home safety stations
- Talk to Aging in Place Specialists about assistive devices and proper use.
- See a balance exercise demo
- Learn about fall prevention programs and classes in your community.
- Participants receive 10% off purchases during the event. Cannot be combined with other offers.



The Falls Prevention Awareness Day in Hamilton County (Lowe's in Hixson) brought together multiple agencies in partnership (including business) to promote home safety, assistive devices, Matter of Balance, balance screenings, Tai Chi demonstrations, and increased collaboration among multiple disciplines. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, and nursing students participated in the event in Hamilton County, providing information at booths to participants.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Injury Prevention Manager, Tennessee Department of Health:
terrence.love@tn.gov.

Texas

The [Texas Falls Prevention Coalition](#) (TFPC) hosted a month-long observance of falls prevention awareness that included a public education campaign, distribution of falls prevention information, falls prevention presentations, and a [webinar](#). To reach across the state, Texas wrote and distributed a press release and a falls fact sheet.

A free falls prevention training for [Community Health Workers](#) was held in Arlington, TX, which highlighted falls as an important topic for those with “boots on the ground,” along with an [Otago Exercise Program](#) training webinar.

In North Texas, the [Fellowship Corner's Steppin' Grannies](#) from Senior Citizen Services held a flash mob at Hulen Mall to promote falls prevention awareness.

In addition, the National Council on Aging sponsored *Flu + You* campaign partnered with [Harris County Area Agency on Aging](#) (Houston) to include presentations, information, and handouts on the risk of falls and the risk of flu, and provided onsite flu shots to over 300 participants (pictured below).



The growing Texas Fall Prevention Coalition partnerships include representatives from the AAAs, United Way, private insurance, physical therapists, and gerontology practitioners. [Prevent Blindness Texas](#) also partnered to bring greater awareness to the fall risk associated with vision loss.

The TFPC recently launched a [website](#) as a centralized resource on fall prevention and related activities,

Reported by: Doris Howell, Assistant Director, Evidence-Based Programs (EBP) Program on Healthy Aging, School of Public Health, Texas A&M Health Science Center, dhowell@tamhsc.edu.



Utah

The [Utah Falls Prevention Coalition](#) reported a single day of observance. Two counties held multiple "Walk to Prevent Falls" events which included a one mile walk and a variety of other activities, such as falls prevention themed BINGO games and health screenings (medication/vision/ multifactorial risk factors).

Local agencies implemented nine walks to engage health promotion and chronic disease prevention efforts and programs. Two counties in particular stepped up and planned several events to engage community members. Millcreek Community Center, Salt Lake City received [media attention](#) for their efforts.

Partners at the University of Utah Physical Therapy Program posted a [falls prevention video](#) on September 23. Another uplifting video of participants in the [Move Strong Program](#) was also posted on September 23.

The [Stepping On](#) program is central to Utah falls prevention efforts in the community and continues to grow in Utah. Several classes were started on or near Falls Prevention Awareness Day and ran throughout the fall months.



[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Jenny Johnson, Injury Prevention Coordinator, Utah Department of Health, jennyjohnson@utah.gov.

Vermont

NCOA is pleased this year to have the [Falls Free Vermont Coalition](#) reporting on events that took place over a month-long observance. Vermont elected to focus on public awareness and advocacy. As a part of the efforts, the biannual [CVAA Voice](#)—an insert in the state-wide Burlington Free Press—featured an entire two-page spread devoted to falls prevention and Falls Prevention Awareness Day. The feature also highlighted Dr. Lam's [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#) workshop. Vermont printed and distributed 42,000 issues, while an email version reached even deeper into the community.

Activities were timed to coincide with the launch of twenty Tai Chi for Arthritis programs in September. Many other Tai Chi for Arthritis demonstrations hosted around the state served to recruit new partnerships. Promotion was enhanced through a radio program called "Aging Matters," which was heard throughout the state. Participants included the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging and a Falls Prevention Senior Trainer with the Tai Chi for Health Institute.



Photos: Dr. Lam's Depth of Tai Chi workshop hosted in mid-September by Shelburne Farm, Shelburne VT. 65 seniors participated, with 8 Senior and Master Trainers, including Dr. Lam.

Partners also distributed calendars for additional programs like strength training, [Matter of Balance](#) and Chronic Disease Self-Management. Additionally, [Remembering When: A Fires and Falls Prevention Program](#) for older adults was incorporated into some of the workshops, reflecting a new partnership with Department of Public Safety and the National Fire Prevention Association.



Left: Tai Chi for Arthritis Falls Prevention, Bristol, VT. **Right:** Tai Chi for Arthritis falls prevention demo in Vergennes at a community meal site.

Vermont partners distributed many products associated with falls prevention, such as pill boxes and pill cutters, nightlights, and keychain flashlights, and educated seniors about medication management strategies. Go4Life booklets were also widely distributed to help seniors make lifestyle changes. Champlain Valley Agency on Aging (CVAA) in partnership with Addison County Home Health and Porter Hospital, shared information on the [Chronic Disease Self-Management](#) programs available in the community.

A growing number of partners promoted falls prevention awareness across the state, including the Vermont Department of Public Safety, home health agencies, APTA Vermont Chapter, services and support at home organizations, the UVM Center on Aging, Fletcher Allen Health Care, Porter Hospital, the Governor's Commission on Health Care Reform, Vermont Agencies on Aging, the National Fire Prevention Association, the Tai Chi for Health Institute, and Dr. Paul Lam. Senior housing and community meal programs partnered to promote education outreach and fall risk assessments. National Health Care Associates posted [information graphics](#) for public awareness.

Vermont APTA partnered with senior housing staff around the state to provide the CDC's [STEADI](#) program and to conduct the three recommended balance screening tests: 30 second chair stands, TUG, and 4-position balance tests. This was the VT APTA's third year providing these screenings, and many residents returned for a progress assessment. Eastview at Middlebury, a senior community living facility, hosted a health fair that included a pharmacist to discuss medication management practices. Local physical therapists talked about winter safety practices and engaged participants in interactive discussions around situational falls awareness.



Left: Tai Chi demo with participants waiting to be screened. **Right:** screening event.

Key outcomes reported included: Expansion of partners and building upon collaborations; creating interest in membership of the Falls Free Coalition of Vermont; and working with the Governor's Commission on Successful Aging, Health Care Reform sub-committee to submit key findings and recommendations regarding the creation of a State Plan on Falls Prevention.

[Learn more.](#)

Reported by: Mary West, Assistant Nutrition Director, Champlain Valley Agency on Aging, mary@cvaa.org

Virginia

The Southwestern Virginia Fall Prevention Coalition reported a week-long observance of falls prevention awareness during September 22-26. They celebrated by holding falls prevention events in member hospitals. Events educated staff and the public. Broader public awareness was promoted across the state with Governor McAuliffe's [proclamation](#), which declared the week of September 22 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week for Virginia.

On September 26, the coalition hosted the [second annual Fall Prevention Conference](#) at New River Community College. Carilion Clinic and LewisGale Regional Health System sponsored the luncheon for the conference. The Virginia Nurses Association sent out an online invitation to members for the event, which was worth six contact hours of continuing education.

The conference included several speakers: Dr. Linda Davis, DNP, *The Problem of Falls in Virginia*; Dr. Soheir Boshra, MD, *Medication and Falls*; Dr. Julia Castleberry, DPT, *What You Can Do to Prevent Falls*; Dr. Sheila Krajnik EdD, OT/RL, *Home Modification to Prevent Falls*; Dr. Madhoun, MD, *Dementia and Falls*; and May Johnson, *Traumatic Brain Injury and Falls*. Heather Board with the Virginia Department of Injury and Violence Prevention presented on the public health approach to Virginia fall injuries.

Delegate Nick Rush and Delegate Joseph Yost presented on their position of support for the Southwestern Virginia Fall Prevention Coalition and the need for a statewide Fall Prevention Coalition, and Heather Board supported their position.

The conference included demonstrations by Meghan Bryant, Master Trainer, Tai Chi for Health Institute on [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#).



Participants at the conference included students from the Physical Therapy Assistant Program at Wytheville Community College and Radford University School of Nursing; the general public joined the Tai Chi demonstration.



The Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired provided an exhibit with resources for providers and the public; the events reached more than 100 people. The Stay Independent brochure from the STEADI toolkit was distributed and self-fall risk assessments were facilitated.

The key outcome reported was a commitment from leadership at the state level to build a state of Virginia Fall Prevention Coalition. The Fall Prevention Conference raised awareness among older adults and caregivers, students, and healthcare providers.

Reported by: Linda Sue Davis, DNP, RN, GCNS-BC, Radford University, lsdavis@radford.edu.

Washington

The [Washington Older Adult Fall Prevention Network](#) reported a month-long observance in which local coalitions hosted events during September. Governor Jay Inslee declared the week of September 22 an observance for falls prevention awareness. At the [State Senior Citizens Lobby](#) annual conference, the Department of Health hosted a conference vendor table distributing falls prevention information. During the month, a variety of activities were hosted across the state.

The Spokane Fall Free Coalition hosted a daylong falls prevention conference that addressed key issues related to falls. Physical therapists, occupational therapists, and group exercise/fitness trainers discussed senior falls prevention in small group break-outs (“circuit” trainings”) and large group sessions. The day wrapped up with nationally recognized geriatric specialist Dr. Carole Lewis, PT, presenting “Age Defying Fitness.” Over 200 people attended the event.

On September 24, 25, and 26, Aging and Disability Services of Seattle-King County conducted three “Lunch & Learn” workshops on falls prevention for senior residents of supported facilities. The event featured a presentation by Lisa Mosley-Johnson, PT, UW Medicine/Northwest Hospital and Medical Center ([Falls Prevention: It’s not the falling that hurts ...It’s the landing!](#)).

Throughout the month of September, the [Aging and Disability Services Area Agency on Aging](#) heavily promoted falls prevention awareness. The Aging and Disability Services AAA and partners promoted the annual older adult conference hosted in October, which targeted [FALLS PREVENTION: A Project with Russian/Ukrainian Speaking-Elders](#).

The AgeWise online communication service of Seattle King County Aging and Disability Services promoted Falls Prevention Awareness Day with its September article, [Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow](#). They continued to promote prevention with their December article, [Holidays—What a Trip!](#)

Falls Prevention Programs in Seattle-King County were key to the awareness activities:

- [Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls](#)
- [Fall Prevention Clinic at Harborview](#), UW Medicine
- [HomeStretch](#)
- [Living Well With Chronic Conditions](#) (Chronic Disease Self-Management Program)
- [One Step Ahead Fall Prevention Program](#) (King County EMS)
- [Project Enhance](#) (Enhance Fitness and Enhance Wellness)

In addition, [Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance](#) (now known as Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance) and [Stay Active and Independent for Life \(SAIL\)](#) were promoted.

On September 23, the Pierce County Fall Prevention Coalition celebrated with free education and individual risk assessments for seniors at the Puyallup Activity Center.



The Thurston County Senior Action Network presented a day long “Living Well, Living Long” health and wellness expo. Over 300 attendees heard presentations on falls prevention and brain health research. Breakout sessions included sessions on meditation, Tai Chi, yoga, fall risk assessment, and other topics. Ninety people were assessed with Timed Up and Go, Sit to Stand, reaching forward with out-stretched arm while standing, and blood pressure checks.

Jefferson Health Care ER, along with East Jefferson EMS, launched a falls prevention program on September 15. The goal of the program was to increase primary care providers’ awareness of lift assist and falls. Each time EMS attends to a patient in the field for a lift assist or fall, they complete a referral form for a physical therapy referral, with emphasis on gait and balance assessment. The referral is then forwarded to the patient’s primary care provider. On October 12, the Jefferson Health Care Center hosted a public education campaign geared towards seniors. Senior participants received a multi-disciplinary risk assessment that focused on fall risk screening. The community is focusing on creating additional evidenced-based strength and balance programs for referral.

Washington reported the Department of Health was asked to participate as a vendor and a presenter in falls prevention at the [State Senior Citizens Lobby](#) annual conference.

Washington reports an important outcome is the awareness that is expanding their falls prevention network within the state, creating a demand for more evidence-based programs.

Reported by: Mary Borges, Fall Prevention Coordinator, Washington State Department of Health, mary.borges@doh.wa.gov.

Wisconsin

The [Wisconsin Fall Prevention Initiative](#) hosted a month-long observance, with Governor Walker proclaiming [September 2014 as Falls Prevention Awareness Month](#) and September 23 as Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Other local municipalities, such as [Appleton](#), issued proclamations as well. A key partner, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), wrote and distributed a [press release](#) to promote awareness across the state. Additionally, they hosted a webinar updating all Wisconsin Public Health Officers on recent fall statistics and ways to get involved with prevention throughout the year.

Some partners held activities in conjunction with Healthy Aging Week. The Wisconsin Aging and Disability Resource Center/Lincoln Center and Portage County's Live Well Live Long Coalition hosted a [Falls Prevention Awareness Day](#) on Tuesday, September 23, 2014. The event showcased a variety of fall prevention strategies: the DHS Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired presented on vision's role in preventing falls; a physical therapist from Ministry Saint Michael's Hospital presented on how being Strong Today will keep you Fall Free Tomorrow. In addition to guest speakers, the event provided multiple health screenings, falls prevention displays, informational booths, refreshments, and prizes. Similar to the event in Portage County, day-long falls prevention events were held throughout Wisconsin.

At the Dane County event, "Only Leaves Should Fall," physical therapy, occupational therapy, nursing, and pharmacy students paired one-on-one with older adults to walk them through multiple health screening stations, assist with paperwork, and socialize with them during lunch. Additionally, the students collected and analyzed evaluations and performed follow-up phone calls with older adults. [STEADI materials](#) and other screenings helped identify older adults at risk to get them referred to evidence-based prevention workshops. Health screenings conducted included medication review, vision, balance, bladder health, alcohol use, footwear assessments, memory assessments, and blood pressure.

The partnerships and screening events in Portage and Dane County mirror events that happened across many counties in Wisconsin. Additionally, many communities promoted the [Stepping On](#) program as part of their awareness campaigns. In Eau Claire, Stepping On graduates were invited to a reunion event and asked to bring a friend. They used this as an opportunity to provide falls prevention education and promote the workshop to the friends. They filmed each Stepping On graduate answering the question, "What would you want people to know about Stepping On?" which will be turned into a creative promotional video for future workshops.

Across the state, partners provided falls prevention presentations and lectures and distributed falls prevention information via newspapers, in person, and through social media (Twitter and Facebook). Many hospital systems served as partners to their local community events. New partnerships were formed, including YMCAs, fire departments, and a running shoe store. These new partnerships will help fill future workshops, provide new locations to host workshops, and gain access to more guest experts and workshop attendees. Wisconsin also provided falls prevention training to home meal delivery volunteers.

Reported by: Becky Turpin, MA Adult Injury Prevention Coordinator, University of Wisconsin Hospital & Clinics, rturpin@uwhealth.org.

What Did We Learn?

To assist in planning for 2015, we asked states to identify key challenges, barriers, and successes related to the 7th National Falls Prevention Awareness Day, as well as needs for expanding their effectiveness.

Challenges/Barriers

This year, 15% of respondents reported challenges related to media involvement and marketing. Falls Prevention Awareness efforts could be enhanced by improving outreach strategies and marketing materials. Over 20% of states reported challenges with the Falls Prevention Awareness Day planning process. Many states intend to start the planning and partnership building process earlier in the year.

- **Arizona** found it challenging to reach rural communities due to a lack of readily available transportation and resources.
- **California** noted there's a need to find a better way to get the conversation started with seniors who are reluctant to discuss risk. There is also a growing need for a bilingual forum.
- **Delaware** and **Rhode Island** found it challenging to coordinate state leadership falls prevention awareness efforts around the short state legislative sessions.
- **Georgia** noted that the scheduling of a falls prevention awareness event was critical; this year, the event started later in the afternoon, and many people left early to go home. In 2015, they will schedule their event in the morning.
- **Illinois** and **California** found the timing and structuring of their events to be critical. Participant engagement could be enhanced by providing intermissions, spacing out speaking presentations with exercise demonstrations, and offering more opportunities for participation.
- **Indiana** found the lack of dedicated funding support falls prevention initiatives to be challenging.
- **New Jersey** found it challenging to obtain timely feedback from local partners; next year, they will use their own SurveyMonkey® to expedite the process.
- **Oklahoma** found it challenging to schedule activities with busy stakeholders; In 2015, they plan to identify partnerships and activities earlier to maximize participation.
- **Wisconsin** found it challenging to build partnerships with physicians.

Successes

States were asked to share what was considered a key success, offering us further insight into the dedication, reach, and energy of local and state champions.

- **Alaska** held a successful falls prevention clinic and two train-the-trainer events for falls prevention exercise programs. They also secured additional funds for Falls

Prevention Awareness Day in the annual DHSS Division of Senior and Disabilities Services budget to provide targeted multi-year grants for evidence-based senior falls prevention interventions.

- One county in **California** held its 7th annual community event that brought together 28 organizations and businesses that serve seniors. Other communities in California provided home safety visits; fundraised to provide assistive home devices to low-income seniors; provided programs with bilingual materials and translation availability; and empowered seniors to take responsibility for their safety through falls prevention programs.
- A display in a **Colorado** hospital cafeteria helped hospital staff understand how their actions effect outpatient falls prevention, making the connection with inpatient and at-home progress.
- The **Hawaii** State Fall Prevention Coalition created an online, [interactive map](#) to help Islanders identify local falls prevention resources. The map indicates where seniors can find falls prevention workshops, medication management advice, vision checks, home assessments, and more. Hawaii also sparked additional interest in falls prevention programs through a large bus poster campaign.
- **Illinois** connected falls prevention to the greater community by having the Judson University President and Dean open the Rush comprehensive Falls Prevention Program with the Falls Prevention Awareness Day proclamation. Illinois continued to expand participation in the Matter of Balance program. Due to the continued success of the program and Fall Prevention Fair, Illinois will be offering additional Matter of Balance classes to meet the demand of their waitlist.
- A **Massachusetts** physical therapy/falls prevention educator engaged the entire State House audience in a balance and muscle strengthening exercise demonstration.
- **Montana** identified over 100 people at-risk for falls before their first fall occurred and appropriately referred them for intervention and prevention.
- **Nevada** coordinated fall risk screenings to locate them where they could teach Stepping On classes; this allowed them to directly refer at-risk seniors to local Stepping On classes.
- The fall risk screening at the **New Mexico** state fair raised interest by *Telemundo*, a Spanish-speaking television station. Reporters interviewed Janet Popp, PT (Fall Prevention Coalition Executive Chair) and participants undergoing screening. Once the New Mexico Adult Falls Prevention Coalition website content is translated into Spanish, *Telemundo* will promote the site.
- In **Oklahoma**, two instructor trainings for Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance raised awareness among community stakeholders and prompted the expansion of Tai Chi classes across the state.
- In **Oregon**, a Tai Chi demonstration at the Multnomah County Commissioner's proclamation signing raised awareness among local officials.
- **Texas** broadened both reach and partnerships by providing free falls prevention training for community health workers.
- **Washington** expanded their falls prevention network within the state and created an increased demand for evidence-based programs.
- In **Wisconsin**, STEADI materials and other screenings helped identify older adults at risk and refer them to the appropriate evidence-based prevention workshops.

Future Needs

Reporting states offered NCOA a variety of suggestions to help make 2015 an even bigger and more successful falls prevention awareness event. NCOA and its national and state partners will consider all the requests and look at funding options. A sampling of specific requests grouped by category is listed below. If you wish to help with addressing any of the following suggestions, please reach out to fallsfree@ncoa.org.

National visibility

- A national television public service announcement about the preventability of falls.
- Recruiting a notable public person to help with falls prevention efforts.
- It would be beneficial if NCOA, ACL, and the CDC combine their resources to get the media involved at a national level; local organizations would have an easier time engaging their local media if there was a national media campaign to stand behind.
- To create a greater sense of community and national buzz, NCOA could promote a nationwide event that all coalitions would do at the same date and time. For instance: at noon on September 23, all participants would do Tai Chi or a flash mob. This could also be a great way for smaller communities with low participation to feel like they are part of something larger. A national effort might also garner greater attention from the media and legislators.
- Videos with rotating messages for public service announcements, waiting room TVs, training purposes, etc.
- More ideas for social media messages, such as tweets and Facebook statuses.
- Guidance for how to estimate the number of people reached through awareness and education.
- Establish an image library specific to falls prevention, evidence-based programs, and people participating in the programs. For example, pictures of Tai Chi classes, fall risk screenings, vision exams, safety home modifications, etc.
- Continue offering falls prevention awareness webinars; they provide great ideas, tools, and resources.
- Release the NCOA press release at least two months in advance of Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2015.
- An online warehouse/store where participating organizations or individuals could purchase incentives for participating in Fall Prevention Awareness Week (FPAW). Items could include stretch bands, bags, t-shirts, signs, and magnets with the FPAW logo. Also, allow each participant provider to add their own logo to the order (for their FPAW support and recognition).

Resource needs

- A "safety shopping list" to give to people. Family members often ask about safety devices for the home for their elders. The list could include non-specific items such as nightlights and grab bars in the bathroom, anti-slip devices in the shower, etc.
- A simplified handout about medication management and pill boxes.

- Since resistance is often a major barrier to seniors engaging in fall risk reduction, it would be valuable if there was a document that addresses how to approach seniors' resistance to exercise, home safety, and/or falls prevention.
- Create and post YouTube videos related to falls prevention or getting up from a fall – something dynamic that could easily be linked from coalition members' websites.
- Make the falls prevention topic more approachable to older adults; perhaps more ideas around fun activities, skits, or plays that could be acted out, falls prevention music with lyrics related to falls, or a contest.
- Greater access to professionally printed publications and resources; printing from a PDF can be burdensome when hundreds of copies are needed.
- A calendar timeline or planning tool to help states with the planning process.
- A handout on taking falls prevention steps in day-to-day life; ways to incorporate falls prevention into daily life.
- A handout/how to plan for first time participants on the simple tried and true Falls Prevention Awareness Day events such as flash mobs, education, webinars, etc.

National Efforts

The momentum and impact of FPAD has grown exponentially since the first national FPAD celebration in 2008, when 11 states began hosting activities. NCOA made a commitment to support states' efforts, housing state and local FPAD tools and resources on its dedicated web page: www.ncoa.org/FPAD.

Website Metrics

For 2014, the volume of website traffic to NCOA's Falls Prevention resources between May and September attests to their popularity:

- Falls Prevention Awareness Day page (www.ncoa.org/FPAD): 37,483 views representing a 25% increase from 2013
- Falls Prevention page (www.ncoa.org/FallsPrevention): 20,068 views representing a 24% increase
- Take Control of Your Health: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall (now available in Spanish, English, and Portuguese) (www.ncoa.org/6StepstoPreventaFall): 14,040 views representing a 19% increase
- Falls Prevention Awareness Day Media Toolkit (<http://www.ncoa.org/FPADMedia>): 14,041 views representing a 25% increase
- Another popular 2014 resource was the Falls Prevention Fact Sheet (7,031 views) (<http://www.ncoa.org/press-room/fact-sheets/falls-prevention-fact-sheet.html>)

Media Coverage

The NCOA/Falls Free® national media message was released on September 21 and generated more than 70 stories written about Falls Prevention Awareness Day. This resulted in 162+ million unique impressions from September 9-29. Source: BusinessWire, NewsTrak Report.

**Take Control of Your Health:
6 Steps to Prevent a Fall**

Every 15 seconds, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury.
Sept. 22 is Falls Prevention Awareness Day.
Stay safe with these tips!

- 1** Find a good balance and exercise program
Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for referrals. Find a program you like and take it often.
- 2** Talk to your health care provider
Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.
- 3** Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist
Make sure side effects aren't increasing your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed.
- 4** Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses
Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.
- 5** Keep your home safe
Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and make grab bars in key areas.
- 6** Talk to your family members
Enter their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a winter issue.

FALLS FREE® ncoa National Council on Aging
To learn more, visit ncoa.org/FallsPrevention.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING
1901 L Street, NW, 4th Floor • Washington, DC 20036 • 202-479-1200
www.ncoa.org • www.facebook.com/NCOAging • www.twitter.com/NCOAging
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Social Media

In 2014, NCOA stepped up social media efforts to build excitement around FPAD:

- On Facebook, NCOA shared 4 posts leading up to Falls Prevention Awareness Day, which reached a total of 16,204 people and received high levels of engagement, with 931 likes, comments, and shares.
- NCOA created the hashtag “#FPAD14” to facilitate the conversation on social media outlets. A total of 147 people used the hashtag to send 338 tweets.
- NCOA served as a panelist on a Twitter chat on Falls Prevention Awareness Day. A total of 255 people participated in the chat and 826 tweets were sent, reaching 866,014 people. Here’s a snapshot of what people were talking about:



Participating National and Federal Partners

In 2014, NCOA concentrated on state and local activities; hence, only the key national partners in advocacy or education and awareness activities were highly visible.

The Administration on Community Living

The Administration on Community Living/Administration on Aging devoted a [webpage](#) to announcing Falls Prevention Awareness Day and included it in their weekly electronic newsletters.

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

AOTA strongly encouraged members to become actively engaged in Falls Prevention Awareness Day 2014. Helpful resources were developed, including tip sheets, fact sheets, and a [Toolkit](#) with PowerPoint presentations on the AOTA website on the [Falls Prevention page](#) of the Productive Aging section.



For background information on the growing importance of occupational therapists' role in this area of practice, the May/June 2012 issue of the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* focused on [productive aging](#), and the March/April 2012 issue focused on [falls prevention](#). The AOTA/CDC Falls Prevention Project shows how AOTA is growing its collaboration with other groups to help decrease falls. Activities in 2014 included:

- American Occupational Therapy Association Alerts to members.
- Posted information about Falls Prevention Awareness Day on three member forums on OT Connections.
- Letters were directed from the president of the American Occupational Therapy Association to state chapter presidents and Program Directors August 1st requesting chapters/members and students enrolled in entry level; Occupational Therapy Programs become actively engaged in Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities.
- Published OT/PT collaboration article in OT Practice magazine in late September (as well as APTA's GeriNotes).
- The online OT Practice Pulse went out to all members on August 26; [view the web version](#).

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

APTA promoted Falls Prevention Awareness Day in *PT in Motion*, which reached all members and targeted therapists specializing in geriatric care.



- WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2014 

Help Bring Attention to Falls Prevention Awareness Day

- Thinking about fall? Think about falls—or more precisely, how to prevent them.

September 23 is the first day of autumn, which also happens to be national Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD), and APTA is encouraging its members to spread the word on the importance of reducing fall risk and the important role that physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs) can play in the effort.

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is once again providing [extensive online resources to promote the day](#), which was recognized through events held in 47 states last year. The site includes links to a FPAD toolkit, a webinar, media resources, and a list of suggested activities.

APTA also offers a wealth of resources on balance and falls, most of them accessible via the association's [Balance and Falls webpage](#). Offerings range from consumer-focused information including a [video](#), a [PT's guide to falls](#), handouts on [falls prevention](#) and [physical therapy and the balance system](#) (members-only .pdfs), to PT- and PTA-focused information on [how to develop community events on balance, falls, and exercise](#).

In addition to planning and consumer-related resources, members can also access several continuing education courses related to falls at the Balance and Falls page, and the PTNow evidence-based practice resource includes a [clinical practice guideline on falls and fall injuries](#) in the older adult and a [clinical summary on falls risk](#) in community-dwelling elderly people.

Doing something special in recognition of Falls Prevention Awareness Day? E-mail [Anita Bemis-Dougherty](#) to share what you're doing, or take photos of your falls awareness events and share them on Twitter by including the [@APTAtweets](#) handle.

The American Physical Therapy Association also promoted online [education on exercise prescriptions for balance and falls prevention](#) and other resources for physical therapists on balance and falls prevention; how to develop [consumer events on balance, falls, and exercise](#); and information on evidence-based falls programs. Members can also access an APTA [pocket guide on falls risk reduction](#), as well as take part in an [online community](#) where members can share information about falls prevention.

The American Physical Therapy Association and the American Occupational Therapy Association Presidents jointly wrote to members and academic programs to encourage therapist and student participation in the 2014 Falls Prevention Awareness Day.

[Online PT Products Free](#) promoted the 2014 Falls Prevention Awareness Day webinar.

Other Partners

The National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) shared NCOA's 6 Steps infographic on their social media page on Sept. 23 and added it to their Pinterest page.

Go4Life on Twitter

On the first day of fall, **Go4Life** participated in the Falls Prevention Twitter chat sponsored by our partners the [American Occupational Therapy Association](#) and the [Administration on Aging](#). It was a great discussion full of information on how to prevent falls in older adults. We were able to share **Go4Life** resources and tips on how exercise and falls prevention go hand in hand.

Prevent Blindness, the nation's oldest non-profit eye health and safety organization, joined the NCOA in proclaiming September 23, 2014 as [National Falls Prevention Awareness Day](#). Ohio, Georgia, and Texas affiliates partnered with their respective state coalitions to further awareness.

National Association for Continenence [Caregiver Blog](#) celebrated Falls Prevention Awareness Day by offering strategies for preventing falls.

While the Y of the USA did not directly promote Falls Prevention Awareness Day, local affiliates across the country partnered with their respective coalition members.

Celeste Carlucci, Founder of FallStopMOVESTRONG.com and member of the NYC Coalition, penned an article for the Huffington Post [Move Strong: 10 Tips to Reduce Your Risk of Falls](#).

International Efforts

Disabled World invited the American Occupational Therapy Association to publish an article with tips for reducing fall risk at home and in the community. The resulting [Falls Prevention Awareness Day - First Day of Fall \(Sept. 23, 2014\)](#) reached an international audience.

6 Steps to Prevent Falls infographic was featured on a [website](#) for a school in Portugal. Translation was under the supervision of **Nilza Nogueira, RN PhD, ESEP** – Escola Superior de Enfermagem do Porto, Rua Dr. António Bernardino de Almeida.

Looking Toward 2015

In 2015, the 8th National Falls Prevention Awareness Day will be observed on September 23. We will be targeting all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and will be engaging more of our national and federal partners. Contact your [state leads](#) to learn how you can be involved. If your state is currently not active, write to us at fallsfree@ncoa.org.