

## Patient information

### Advice to Reduce Patient Falls

Trust Wide

**Being in a hospital can change your risk factors around falling putting you at a greater risk of falling over and potentially coming to harm. Therefore, it is important that you take the time to review this leaflet.**

**As a patient you can help us to reduce the risk of falling:**

- Be honest with the nurses when you feel worried about moving around, if you have fallen in the last year or have a history of falls.
- Use the nurse call bell to ask for assistance to move around the ward, in particular if you need to go to the toilet.
- If you feel dizzy - stop, sit down and let the ward staff know.
- Bring in your own prescribed medication in original packaging if applicable.
- Be careful when standing up or getting out of bed. Sit at the side of the bed for a few minutes before you get up, get up slowly and make sure you feel steady before walking.
- Be familiar with your bedside environment. Pay close attention to any tubing, such as oxygen, catheters etc. that may interfere with walking.
- If possible ask a relative or friend to bring in firm fitting footwear with support around the heel and across the toes.
- Use your walking aid when you are moving around if applicable. Do not use hospital furniture, e.g. bed tables, to help you stand up as this furniture is often on wheels.
- Take care in the bathroom and toilet; ask for help if you need assistance.
- It is important to stay as active as safely possible when in hospital. If you are deemed safe to do so by ward staff. Getting dressed in your own clothes and sitting out regularly for meals can help improve your wellbeing and reduce your risk of falling.
- Do simple exercises before getting up from your bed or chair, point your toes and release a few times, tighten the muscles in your calves and then release them, move your legs up and down if you can, to get the circulation going.
- Tell the nurse of any spills or wet areas on the floor so they may be cleaned up quickly.
- Listen to the advice given to you by the therapy, nursing and medical team.

- Make sure your glasses are clean and used as prescribed; ask for help if you have trouble with your vision.
- Wear your hearing aids if you need them, asking for new batteries if needed.
- Remember to keep your personal items within easy reach.
- Remember the hospital is not as familiar to you as your home and your risks might change whilst in hospital. Potentially putting you at greater risk of falling.

**If you are a relative, carer or a friend you can help the patients and the staff by:**

- Sharing any information you may have on previous falls the patient has had.
- Inform staff if the patient has any vision or hearing impairment.
- Share information if the patient is feeling dizzy, confused or not their normal selves.
- When you visit, please put your chair away before leaving.
- Place the nurse call bell near the patient as you leave.
- When you visit, please inform the ward staff that you are leaving before leaving the patient unattended.
- If possible, bring in well-fitting clothing and supportive footwear for the patient to wear.
- If possible, bring in any walking aids, which may have been used at home, as well as items such as glasses/ spectacles/dentures and prescribed medication.
- Remember to inform the nursing staff of any concerns you have.

**What can be done to support you on the ward:**

- Call bell should always be left in reach.
- Use of the bed controls should be explained if indicated.
- You should have your medication reviewed and changed if appropriate.
- You should have your lying and standing blood pressure measured at least once during your hospital stay if appropriate.
- Tests should be made to check for dementia or delirium (confusion).
- Walking aids should be in easy reach.
- Safe footwear should be worn.
- Bedside environments should be clear from clutter and hazards.
- It is important to remember that some risks for falls are modifiable and it may be possible to prevent some falls.

## **What can be done when you leave hospital**

- Speak to your GP if you are worried about your balance or have had a fall.
- If you've had a fall, you might be able to refer yourself directly to services that can help you without seeing a GP.

## **You can find out if there are any Falls Prevention services in your area by:**

- Asking the reception staff at your GP surgery
- Check GP surgery website
- Contact your local integrated care board (ICB)
- Search online for NHS services near you that can help after a fall

## **Feedback:**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future. Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Further Information**

- **Falls - NHS**
- **Age UK: preventing falls**
- **Age UK advice line: 0800 678 1602, 8am to 7pm every day**
- **Social care and support guide**
- **Liverpool City Council Adult Access number: 0151 459 2606**

**The measures detailed in this leaflet are designed to try and protect the patient from falling and injury. We cannot restrain the patient as this would be against the law.**

**Some patients will still fall even if we have tried to do all of the things mentioned in this leaflet. Being in hospital does not mean we can prevent all falls but we want to work in partnership with you to reduce inpatient falls.**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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