

Setting the Fall Prevention Policy Agenda

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What are Policy Interventions?



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

- Influence systems development, organizational change, social norms, and individual behavior to promote improvements in the health and safety of a population.
- Policy change/intervention facilitates behavior change across the population or before the population is even given a choice in how to act.

Levels of Policy

Legislative

- **Local:** Ordinances requiring working smoke alarms be included in all residences
- **State:** Legislation requiring student athletes to be removed from play if suspected of having a concussion
- **Federal:** Legislation setting national requirements for maximum BAC levels acceptable among persons operating a motor vehicle

Regulatory

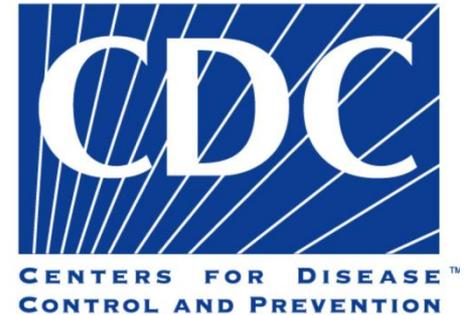
- **State:** Standards regarding main drain covers and starting blocks in swimming pools
- **Federal:** Rules governing manufacturing of automobiles to meet safety standards

Organizational

- **Business, industry, or corporations:** Health insurance company reimbursement policies
- **Professional associations or accrediting organizations:** CEU requirements to demonstrate competencies in public health or injury prevention

Fall Prevention Policy Interventions: Where to Begin?

- Evidence-based interventions exist to reduce falls among older adults.



AGS

THE AMERICAN GERIATRICS SOCIETY
Geriatrics Health Professionals.
Leading change. Improving care for older adults.



Statewide Recognition of the Burden of Falls Among Older Adults

Policy Options

- Enact legislation that codifies the Ohio Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition.
- Adoption of an official Falls Prevention Awareness Week by the Ohio General Assembly.



Improve Home Safety and Accessibility



Policy Options

- Enact a “Livable Homes” Tax Credit to provide a refundable tax credit to older Ohioans who modify their homes to improve safety/accessibility.
- Reduce and expedite home modification costs for seniors through the building permit process.
- Promote state and local policies that incorporate visitability and universal design features for unsubsidized single-family construction.

Reimbursement for Fall Prevention Interventions

Policy Options

- **Medicare:** Reimbursement of screening and evidence-based interventions.

- **Medicaid:** Reimbursement of screening and evidence-based interventions.
 - I. Medicaid Health Home Program
 - II. PASSPORT Medicaid waiver program



Fall Prevention Interventions Among Health Care Professionals/Facilities



Policy Options

- Educate and **train health care professionals** on evidence based practice guidelines for fall risk assessments and management:
 - I. **Schools**
 - II. CEUs provided by **professional health care associations** and **regulatory boards**.

- Adopt policies requiring patient fall prevention screening protocols within **health care facilities**.

- Promote policy interventions that permit **first responders** to conduct assessments of environmental hazards and educating residents and family members on mitigating fall risk.

Fall Prevention Policies into Older American Act/State Senior Community Services Funded Activities

Policy Options

- Encourage the Ohio Department of Aging to include the integration of Fall Prevention policies by recipients of Older American Act (OAA) Title III-D funding:
 - I. Integration of falls prevention education into service provider contracts and make falls prevention education a requirement for all RFPs.
 - II. Encouraging Ohio's Area Agencies on Aging to adopt fall prevention as part of their mission



Fall Prevention Policies in Community Planning Initiatives



Policy Options

- Advocate for the incorporation fall prevention policies in regional and local planning documents including but not limited to:
 - I. Housing
 - II. Parks/Recreation
 - III. Transportation
 - IV. Community Safety
 - V. Street/Sidewalk Repair
 - VI. Emergency/Disaster

Increased Funding for Fall Prevention Programming

Policy Options

- While securing state level funding for such interventions may be difficult in the current budget environment, there are methods for securing public funds through:
 - I. Income Tax Check Offs
 - II. Direct Contributions
 - III. Increased Penalties



Data Reporting Relating to the Burden of Falls

Policy Options

- Encourage EMS providers to report non-transport fall incidents.
- Improve E-coding rates for all injuries with a particular focus on falls among older adults.
- Update the ODH Nursing Home administrative rules to share federally required falls data with the Department.



Questions

Before I close, are there any questions?



Summary



- Policy change happens at all levels.
 - State/Federal level change is difficult.

- Evidence-based interventions exist.

- Policy change takes time.
 - Consider the individuals and organizations impacted by any proposed change.

Thank You!

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