

Communiqué to NE LHIN Hospital Chiefs of Staff Partnership Helping Older Adults Live Independently and Avoid Hospitalization

November 2015



Across the region, communities are working together on a 'made-in-the-North' drive to prevent falls in older adults. The NE LHIN is funding a prevention effort in collaboration with all five Public Health Units as well as community partners.

We're using **Stay on Your Feet (SOYF)**, a best-practice falls prevention strategy, to help reduce the rate and severity of falls among adults aged 65-plus.

We are also funding more than 250 exercise classes that are free to older adults.

Raising the awareness of how to prevent falls is a first step in helping many of your patients to stay healthy and live independently. If you have a patient who would benefit from participating in an exercise class or a Stand Up class, direct them to our website for more information or have them give us a call.

SOYF is an evidence-informed fall prevention strategy endorsed by the NE LHIN's Regional Falls Prevention Steering Committee.

We are evaluating this best practice as we adapt it to the realities of Northern Ontario.

SOYF efforts are helping care providers identify if an older adult is at high risk for falls, and identify actions to reduce the risk.

SOYF involves primary care providers, hospitals, pharmacists, optometrists, long-term care, retirement homes, public health units, osteoporosis experts, municipal leaders, recreation and physical activity leaders, emergency response, family and friends. Efforts are being made with Family Health Teams to develop a risk assessment tool for their electronic medical record.

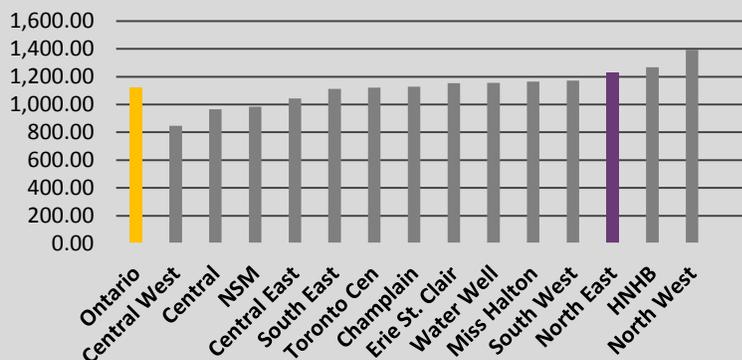
The NE LHIN funds two types of classes to which you can direct your older patients to participate in – more than 2,100 Northerners are already participating:

- **Exercise Classes** – free to older adults, two hours per week. Locations in communities across the region are found on the NE LHIN website [here](#).
- **Stand UP! Classes** – free to older adults who qualify based on an assessment done by the class facilitator. Participants commit to attend 12 weeks of class, 2.5 hours per week. Pre- and post-assessments help participants see their improvement over time. Local health units organize classes in each district – [contact info](#).

Facts about Falls

- Falls and related injuries are a leading cause of ED visits and hospitalizations for older adults.
- Falls are the main reason older adults lose their independence. Over one-third of seniors hospitalized for a fall are discharged to LTC.
- 50% of falls that result in hospitalization occur in the home.
- Falls are the direct cause of 95% of all hip fractures – leading to death in 20% of cases.
- Most falls are preventable and falling is not a normal part of aging.
- [A fall risk self-assessment checklist](#) – “*Staying Independent*” – is being launched across the Northeast this month, as part of a regional awareness campaign for Fall Prevention Month.

Fall related hospital admissions from ED, 65+ living in community, by LHIN, Ontario 2013 (Rate per 100,000 population)



For more information

Please contact Wendy Carew, Regional Coordinator of Stay on Your Feet, NE LHIN, at wendy.carew@lhins.on.ca or 705-840-1610.