

NIHR School for Public Health Research

Public Health Practice Evaluation Scheme

Addressing the challenges faced by 'front line' practitioners

What is needed to implement and evaluate falls prevention most effectively? Learning from pilot projects in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Introduction

A framework of complex interventions to reduce falls and fall-related admissions has been developed by a multi-agency working group across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough to form an integrated evidence-based Falls Prevention Programme. Current services, funded by a raft of health and care partners involved, deliver within and towards these approaches. However, there is no systematic overview of effectiveness, nor of quality and join-up with and between services.

Moreover, there is a lack of detailed understanding of the elements essential for translating this framework, which spans different approaches for varying needs across the population, into tangible improvements at operational level. There is a need for robust intelligence to inform the implementation and evaluation of this programme in the context of real world delivery with variability in structures and resource constraints across a diverse County.

Findings from this would be informative for similar initiatives in place across the UK.

Aims

This 9-month 'mini-PHPES' project aims to identify and understand **what is needed to a) implement and b) evaluate local falls prevention activity most effectively**

The evaluation's particular focus will be

- to use **opportunities offered by new service innovations** to explore questions pertinent to implementation and evaluation of the wider falls prevention programme at the point of implementation roll-out of specific service developments
- to **understand from multiple perspectives the enablers and barriers** for a) implementing and b) evaluating falls prevention
- to maximise opportunities offered by current and impending IT re-configurations to **understand how information systems can best provide data needed** within and between different sectors and agencies for both a) implementation and b) evaluation of falls prevention activity

Methods

Three work packages employ complementary methods to maximise learning from the assessment of implementation roll-out with multi-agency involvement.

Work Package 1 Understanding fall prevention service implementation in practice:

an observational study of new services developing in real time

- case studies:
 - i) a pilot project embedding a dedicated falls lead in one neighbourhood team
 - ii) falls specialist health trainers

Work Package 2 Understanding enablers and barriers for falls prevention programmes:

a qualitative study exploring multiple perspectives from practitioners across services, older people and older people's families or friends

Work Package 3 Understanding data for falls prevention programmes:

action research with information managers and data users developing a county-wide "Falls Dashboard" to enhance delivery and evaluation of fall prevention

Implications

There is a need for robust intelligence to inform the implementation and evaluation of falls prevention programmes in the context of real world delivery with variability in structures and resource constraints in differing settings. Findings from this evaluation in progress across a diverse county will be informative for other initiatives elsewhere.

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