



THE CASE FOR ACTION ON FALL PREVENTION IN CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA HAS THE LARGEST SENIOR POPULATION OF ANY STATE IN THE USA

- In 2002 there were over 3.8 million Californians age 65 and over.
- Californians over age 85 are the fastest growing segment of the state population.

RISK OF FALLING INCREASES DRAMATICALLY WITH AGE

- The rate among Californians over age 85 is 57 times higher than Californians aged 20-55 years.

COSTS

- The estimated total cost of fall injuries per year in California is more than \$3.5 billion.
- The average estimated medical cost of a senior fall-related hospitalization in California is \$30,000.

FALL RELATED INJURIES AND HOSPITALIZATIONS

- Approximately one-third of older Californians fall each year, with many of the 1.3 million suffering serious injury, particularly hip fractures and head injuries.
- Fall related injuries lead to an estimated 213,000 visits to the emergency room and more than 60,000 hospitalizations.
- More than 40% of those hospitalized for hip fractures never return home or live independently again, and 25% usually die within one year.
- There are ten hospitalizations caused by falls for every hospitalization of a senior Californian caused by a traffic accident.

PROVEN FALL PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Appropriate risk assessment and follow up by healthcare practitioners.
- Exercise and strength and flexibility training.
- Environmental modifications, such as removing clutter and installing grab bars.

The Fall Prevention Center of Excellence is generously supported by the Archstone Foundation. The Center Program Office is located at the University of Southern California Andrus Gerontology Center. Other members of the consortium are: the Center for Successful Aging at California State University, Fullerton; the Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center at the Veterans Administration Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System; the University of California, Los Angeles; and the State of California Department of Health Services.

For more information, contact the Program Office at (213)740-1364, email info@stopfalls.org or visit www.stopfalls.org