

Why is this important?

The associated mortality and morbidity from a fall is high. This includes psychological and physiological stress as well as physical injury, threatening functional independence and resulting in reduced health related quality of life. This needs assessment aimed to provide an overview of the epidemiology of falls in Lewisham and nationally, review the evidence and current service provision and make recommendations for effective management of falls and quality care services.

Key Facts and Figures

In Lewisham **9.4%** of the population are

aged **65+**



In 2017 6% of Lewisham ambulance service calls were to those aged 65+ who had fallen and

73% were taken to hospital

30% aged 65+ and 50% aged 80+ will

fall at least **once a year**

There are over 400 risk factors for falling, including age, muscle weakness, drug therapy, balance deficit, cognitive and visual impairment, the environment and depression

In 2017-18, 160 hip fractures cost Lewisham Borough approximately

£1 million

In 2018 there was a 15% reduction in the number of people aged 65+ who presented to the London Ambulance Service with a fall



What is happening nationally?

2018 NICE impact report on falls and fragility fractures focused on the uptake and impact of the NHS Right Care Pathway - *Falls and Fragility Fractures 2017* The pathway provides recommendations and resources for health departments

NHS Long Term Plan 2019 - *Falls*

The plan recognized that “a 50% improvement in the delivery of evidence-based care could deliver £100 million in savings”.

Age UK launched the 'Stop Falling: Start Saving Lives and Money' campaign calling for improved access to falls prevention services and special exercise programmes

What is happening locally?

The Community Falls Service is therapist led and consists of physiotherapists, occupational therapists and therapy assistant practitioners/postural stability instructors. The service supports the provision of an integrated falls pathway for people aged 65+ to reduce the incidence of falls and falls related injuries. Referrals are mainly from A&E or General Practitioners

Telecare/Linkline has 4,500 users throughout Lewisham and offers 24h reassurance and practical advice in emergency situations.

Lewisham Healthcare NHS Trust has a Falls Awareness Day once a year, highlighting the importance of falls prevention.

Hospital admissions for injuries due to falls in persons aged 65+. Lewisham compared with its similar CCGs, London and England, 2017-18



Source: www.phoutcomes.info

What needs to be done?

Continue to promote the local falls service to increase and maintain general practitioners' awareness of both the Quality Outcomes Framework requirements and the benefits of referral. Provide support to resident care providers to ensure they keep falls registers, record falls and are able to prompt general practitioners to refer to the falls service.

Ensure that existing falls services can meet the needs of the ageing BME population and improve ethnic monitoring of all falls services in support of this.