



Procedure

To effectively identify clients who are at risk of falling, and put into place appropriate measures to minimise the risk of clients, volunteers, visitors, staff, and others of sustaining a falls injury. To enhance and maintain the overall safety and wellbeing of all.

Procedure Applies To

Management, Staff, Volunteers, Visitors and Contractors

Purpose and Scope

To minimize the likelihood of falls that result in injuries. To provide a safe environment for all within, near and around Upper Murray Health & Community Services.

Procedure Standards

Measures taken to control risks vary according to different sites within the agency.

Individual activities need to be assessed and individual prevention and management plans need to be put into place to reduce the risk of falls.

That all necessary precautions and safety measure will be implemented to help prevent falls.

For Residents and patients in acute:

Falls Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT)

- Ensure all nursing and PCA staff are trained in the use of the FRAT tool.
- Using the FRAT tool, determine the falls risk level ie. LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH
- Document the falls risk assessment on the FRAT tool and Patient/Resident Care plan (refer to form no. MR/090 FRAT TOOL, UMHCS Forms Register)
- When applying nursing interventions for falls risk High or Moderate, target potential causes and consider the clients condition at the time of assessment.
- Implement a falls prevention program based on this assessment.
- Initiate appropriate interventions.
- Individualize a care plan based on their level of assessment.
- Inform all members of staff, and document any changes to
- falls risk level, on FRAT tool and care plan.
- Reduce or eliminate falls hazards immediately
- Initiate interventions based on the level of risk assessed for each individual.

Risk Interventions Strategies

Low.

- Educate to use dominant side of their bodies.
- Create a safe room, clear all clutter from the room, table, chair and floors.
- Place telephone and personal items on the dominant side within easy reach.
- Place bell call within easy reach.
- Position furniture, equipment and assistive devices on the dominant side.
- Place all electrical cords, excess furniture and unnecessary equipment out of the way.
- Maintain bed in the low position unless otherwise indicated.
- Lock all lockable wheels.
- Encourage the use of non-slip footwear.
- Provide adequate lighting for ambulant clients.



Medium

Low interventions plus,

- Assess bowel and bladder elimination needs, provide care plan to address frequency, urgency and incontinence. By establishing an individualised toileting plan.
- Communicate risk level to all nursing staff and explain to client if appropriate.
- Reorientate confused clients if possible.
- Encourage the use of mobility aids at all times.

High.

Low and Medium interventions plus,

- Remain with the client when toileting
- Consider bed alarms
- If practical move the client closer to the nurse's station, to maintain supervision.
- Consider Physiotherapist intervention.
- In extreme cases an observer maybe needed(Extra staff or a family member)

Post Fall Response Process

- Assess for injury.
- Determine level of injury, before moving client if particle.
- Observations. As per flow chart.
- Communicate event to NUM or Nurse in charge of shift and family, MO if required.
- Complete incident report via the Victorian Health Incident Management System VHIMS, accessed via computer desk top at UMHCS Team Web site.
- Investigate the most likely cause of the fall, environment, medication, equipment, other factors
- Document event, actions taken and recommendations within the progress notes.
- Review falls risk level and care plan requirements
- Consider if any technology could be used to prevent further falls. (Bed, chair and other alarms.
- Ensure all documentation is completed and forward to NUM or Nurse in charge of shift.
- Communicate all falls events to the next change of shift.

Training

- Ensure all employees are provided with ongoing training in prevention of falls.

Discharge Planning

- Suggest MO/Physio consult for discharged clients.
- Communicate falls risk at home to home help an MO.
- If client live alone, follow up with OT, Physio, and family, re home improvements.
- On going education for client and their families. This is important to maintain an ongoing understanding of fall potential.

Building entrances and exits

- Ensure all entrances and exits are well lite and well signed.
- All entrances and exits have a suitable non slip area. (Water absorbing mats.)
- Ensure appropriate footwear is worn at all times

External stairs, parking areas and pathways

- Ensure that all areas are well lit, and that parking areas, walk ways and stairs are well defined.
- Ensure all roads and parking areas are pothole free and well maintained.
- Provide hand rails and non slip treads, mark the leading edge on all stairs ways.
- Discourage the use of short cuts.



- Maintain all surfaces in a good and user friendly condition.
- Ensure appropriate footwear is worn at all times

Hallways and internal stairs

- Ensure adequate lighting.
- Apply non slip coating or treads to all stairs.
- Mark leading edges of the stairs.
- Provide hand rails.
- Take measure to control the flow of traffic if required. As well as the flow of people in and out of the facility.
- Ensure appropriate footwear is worn at all times.

Rooms and work areas

- Provide adequate storage for client's bags.
- Avoid cables and equipment lines trailing through the rooms and hallways.
- Do not store equipment or materials below tables and chairs or beds.
- Provide suitable storage for all equipment and tools or goods.
- Keep cleaning and bulk liquids in secure areas.
- Keep areas around all machine and equipment clear of clutter.
- Use non slip flooring in wet areas.
- Provide adequate signage for all staff only areas.
- Clean all spillages immediately.
- Display all appropriate signage for wet floors and areas.
- Ensure appropriate footwear is worn at all times

Kitchens

- Ensure good ventilation to all work and cooking areas.
- Clean all spillages immediately.
- Ensure bin areas are kept clean.
- Ensure suitable signage for all kitchen areas.
- Ensure appropriate footwear is worn at all times.

Offices

- Ensure all cables are covered and not trailing across the floors.
- Provide adequate storage for all work areas and adequate file space.
- Avoid storing work and materials on the floors.
- Ensure all areas around the photocopiers, computers and printers are kept clean.
- Provide secure storage areas for all staff bags.

Events

- Ensure all cabling and electronic equipment is safely routed and protected from damage and is not impeding a walk way or is not out in the weather.
- Ensure that there is sufficient lighting to aid in the safe passage of people.
- Anticipate weather and change location if required.
- Ensure adequate management of events to ensure smooth running.

Special Needs Groups

- Some special arrangements may need to be made for clients, staff, visitors, contractors and others with disabilities.



Lighting

- Adequate lighting is an important factor in preventing falls.
- Replace any broken or dull lights.
- Signage should be used for any lighting changes.

Footwear

- Ensure all employees adhere to the agencies shoe policy.
- Ensure that appropriate footwear is worn at all times by Residents and Clients.

Documentation of all falls within the UMH&CS is imperative to maintain an accurate and up to date database on all falls occurring within the agency.

An accurate data base provides valuable information for analysis and ongoing improvement for all strategies and management for the prevention of falls

Key Aligned Documents

- FRAT tool, form no. MR/090 located on the UMHCS Forms Register.
- Flow Chart – falls prevention, form no. MR/062, located on UMHCS Forms Register
- UMHCS Incident Form available via the VHIMS link on the UMHCS Team Web site.

Key Legislation, Acts & Standards

References

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Keywords

Fall

A fall is an event, which results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or floor or other lower level.

(World Health Organization)