

Falls Screening

In a chart review of 180 primary care patients in DH's internal medicine ambulatory-care practice, 85% of patients ≥ 65 were screened for fall risk and 38% screened positive.¹ ONLY 22% of those who screened positive had falls risk noted in the provider record. In the ED, only 18% of patients ≥ 65 were screened, but 80% of those screened positive¹.

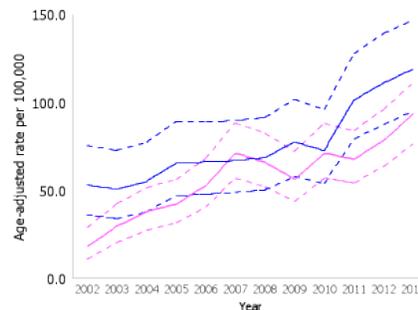
HOW ARE FALLS OCCURRING?

New Hampshire EMS has begun to track trends regarding when and how falls occur in our region.

- 55% of all calls received in 2014 for patients aged ≥ 65 involved a "Fall Victim" and 83% listed "Fall" as the mechanism of injury⁶.
- 57% of fall victims were female, and 43% were male.⁶
- 8% of falls patients aged ≥ 65 sustained a head injury, 7% injured a lower extremity and 3% injured an upper extremity⁶.
- 64% of calls for patients aged ≥ 65 were to a home⁶, and for 88% of these calls, falls were the mechanism of injury⁶.

HOW DO FALLS AFFECT OUR REGION?

- New Hampshire's population is one of the oldest in the nation, and by 2030 it will have the second largest proportion of people aged ≥ 85 .¹
- Fall related deaths are significantly higher in the Lebanon hospital service area than in the rest of the state.²
- However, the rate of Emergency Department (ED) visits for falls related injuries was the lowest of the state in the Lebanon hospital service area.²
- Women's rates of fall related injuries and death exceed men's in all age categories, with rates of injury and death increasing sharply with age for both genders.²



At left: Falls related death rates have more than doubled in NH in the past decade.

SUCCESSSES

1 of 3 authorized TJQMBB Master Trainers in the country is available to train new instructors at community locations in the Upper Valley.¹

The MOB drop-out rate decreased by 40%¹ following the decision to make pre-program phone calls to verify it was a good fit for participants' needs.

CHALLENGES

There is no reliable chain of referral between the ED, PCPs and programs for patients who screen positive for falls risk.

There is currently only 1 TJQMBB program in the Upper Valley, at DHMC, and MOB classes are also only available in the Lebanon area.¹

MOB relies on Lay Leaders to run the class, and has had difficulties retaining

IN THE UPPER VALLEY

Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance

This program reduced fall risk in 15% of participants across New Hampshire², and 96% of participants believe the program will help them avoid future falls². The program's founder has shown TJQMBB has the potential to reduce falls by 55%.⁵

Matter of Balance (MOB)

MOB aims to increase activity and reduce fear of falling among older adults, and is offered at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Aging Resource Center¹ and the Lebanon Senior Center.

Inside the Costs of Falls

- In 2005-2009, a typical ED visit for a fall related injury cost \$1,959 per patient and for an inpatient stay, the cost per patient was \$25,047. ⁵
- In 2009, inpatient hospitalizations due to falls cost a total of \$81.7 million dollars.⁵
- In 2012, 30% of people who were seen in the ED for a fall suffered another fall injury that returned them to the hospital, an increase from 25% in 2009.⁴

