



**Falls
Awareness
Week
17th - 21st June
2013
Evaluation
Report**

Falls Awareness Week

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Introduction

Falls prevention and care is a key priority for Halton Borough Council and its partners. 1 in 3 people over 65 will have at least one fall per year, and in Halton, the rate of falls and hip fractures is significantly higher than the national average. Falls cost the NHS an estimated £900 million per year.

However many falls are preventable. Through a series of events held during national Falls Awareness Week in June 2013, a number of local organisations worked together to educate older people across Halton about the dangers, how to avoid falls and stay healthy.

This year's Falls Awareness Week focused on healthy feet and in partnership with a number of local organisations we offered help and advice to older people as well as a range of activities designed to raise awareness about what you can do to avoid a fall, such as looking after your feet, exercise, diet and much more.

The week began on the 17th June with an event at the Stobart Stadium for both local people and professionals, which saw the launch of Halton's Falls Strategy and included a dance workshop and tea dance and the 'Sloppy Slippers' slipper exchange.

Other events during the week included:

- Breakfast morning at Quarry Court, Widnes
- Tai Chi, Naughton Fields, Widnes
- Breakfast morning at Brunswick House, Runcorn
- Coffee afternoon at Queens Close Sheltered Scheme, Runcorn
- Gentle Dance / Dancercise at Naughton Fields, Widnes
- Ignite Your Life, The Brindley, Runcorn



- 76 local people attended the launch event
- 121 residents attended Ignite Your Life
- 40 people attended local healthy feet and slipper swap events
- over 100 people assessed during the week by falls awareness team and podiatry
- Halton Housing Trust's supported housing coordinators carried out 89 home visits and made 14 referrals

Launch Event

To begin Falls Awareness Week, an event was organised at the Select Stadium in Widnes on the 17th June. Following a presentation to raise awareness of falls and to launch the falls strategy, people from the local community enjoyed a roaring 20's themed dance workshop, led by local dance group CO3, and following a hearty hotpot lunch, a tea dance.

A marketplace showcasing the services of each partner organisation ran alongside the workshop.

Ill fitting slippers, or walking barefoot or in socks or tights indoors, can increase the risk of a fall. To raise awareness of this, the falls prevention team and podiatrists from Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust hosted a slipper swap, which was also extended to other events taking place around Halton over the course of the week.

Over 50 people were assessed at the event itself and received a new pair of slippers.

Comments from attendees included:

"We learnt about the different aspects of health"

"Loved the dancing the roaring 20's and that everyone joined in"

"Atmosphere and socialising"

Healthy Feet and Slipper Swap Events

These events were held at Queen's Close, Quarry Court and Brunswick House.

Organised by Halton Housing Trust and with support from Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust's Falls Prevention team and podiatry service the falls prevention team and podiatrist were on hand to give advice and exchange 'sloppy slippers' for those that attended as well as those unable to attend due to limited mobility.

The falls prevention team has since been asked to deliver talks to various groups and the profile of the team's service has been raised, leading to a slight increase in referral rates.

Forty people attended these three events, though over the course of the week, over 100 people were assessed and received slippers via the scheme.

40 attendees at three community events in Runcorn and Widnes



At Queen's Close, There was also advice for anyone who suffers from back or neck pain from NHS spinal physiotherapy service.

At Quarry Court, HHT and HBC staff also carried out three site visits to the housebound, giving out two pairs of slippers. One referral to the falls prevention team was submitted and one follow up home call from the podiatrist resulted from the day.

Since the Brunswick House event 3 HHT customers from nearby Churchill Mansions have also swapped slippers

Angela Deakin, scheme manager at Naughton Fields said "I would say the event was very relaxed. Although not planned, the customers reflected on times gone by and reflected with great fondness how Runcorn used to be, even down to the fact it used to be a holiday hot spot for local people. Many customers realised that their neighbours knew family members spanning back over decades."



Ignite Your Life Events

'Ignite your Life!' is a half-day community resilience event, organised by Wellbeing Enterprises. 121 people attended two events in Runcorn and Widnes.

The event aimed to provide people with the skills and knowledge to stay strong during difficult times and teach people tips to improve their wellbeing. The event has three elements for participants:

- To promote emotional literacy - identifying our feel good factors
- To spot the signs and symptoms of common health problems, and the ways in which people can improve wellbeing
- To empower people to use their skills and talents, and to work together to improve the wellbeing of the community as a whole.

"Brilliant event, everybody was happy and positive - putting money to good use. Very good how young staff engaged with audience."

Ignite Your Life! - 121 people attended;

- 71% of attendees were female and 19% male
- 81% of attendees were from the target audience of people aged 50+
- 42% of attendees have a disability, 50% had no disability and 8% didn't disclose
- 60% of attendees have retired, 18% are in work and 11% are unemployed



Other Activities

Halton Housing Trust made a number of visits to vulnerable customers and falls assessments were carried out, with some customers being referred to the Falls Prevention team for further assessment and advice.

In total 89 visits took place, carried out by HHT's Supported Housing Coordinators and neighbourhood teams and 14 referrals were made in total. Further visits are planned over the next couple of months, targeting 100 residents living within a mile radius of the sheltered schemes.

Feedback from both staff and customers of HHT suggested that falls prevention work should not be limited to just one week during the year, especially as there are a large number of customers living in their properties who may be vulnerable to falls.



Halton Housing Trust carried out 89 visits and made 14 referrals

With this in mind, HHT's Supported Housing Coordinators will be carrying out further visits to customers, who do not live on our sheltered schemes over the next few months.

Many customers were happy, and appreciated the opportunity to speak to the Falls Prevention officer and receive advice and guidance.

Many also commented on the opportunity to receive new slippers and exchange their footwear, which they didn't know could cause falls.

"Enjoyed all of it – relaxing and a great atmosphere"

"I went with somebody else as moral support, but ended up getting so much from it myself – you realise that there's not only yourself with problems."

"Enjoyed the great community spirit and the interactions – excellent day, very enjoyable."

Next Steps

In light of the positive feedback from these event, we will look at organising further multi-agency community events across Halton, to raise awareness of falls and educate older people on how to avoid falls and stay healthy.

Further activities are being planned around International Older People's Day (1st October 2013) and World Mental Health Day (10th October 2013), where the theme this year is older people.

For more information, please contact the Health and Wellbeing Service, tel: 0300 300 0103 or 0303 333 4300.

Partner Organisations



Bridgewater Community Healthcare 
NHS Trust

