

# Introduction

Approximately one in every three people aged over 65 years will fall each year, and the rate of falls and fall-related injuries increases with age.<sup>1</sup> Falls are a major reason older people lose their independence, and one of the main reasons for hospital admissions among this age group.

However, falling is not an inevitable part of ageing, and even though having a fall increases the likelihood of further falls,<sup>1</sup> falling again is not inevitable either. Systematic reviews have found that multi-factorial assessment and interventions reduce the rate of falls in older people living in the community.<sup>2</sup> Many interventions that help prevent falls and reduce harm from injury related to falls are part of overall good care of the older person.

The resources contained within this toolkit are intended to help you screen, assess and support older patients in preventing falls and maintaining their independence. The tools can be used to identify and address an older person's modifiable risk factors for falling, allowing positive steps to be put in place to increase their strength and mobility, and reduce the likelihood of falling.

This toolkit has been developed by bpac<sup>nz</sup> in partnership with the Health Quality & Safety Commission, with input from Nelson Bays Primary Health. It is an adaption of falls prevention resources from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries (STEADI).

This resource has been designed to be used in conjunction with resources from the Accident Compensation Corporation



The booklet "Standing up to falls: Your guide to preventing falls and protecting your independence (ACC2383)", provides useful patient information, such as information on safe footwear and how to get up after a fall.



Home safety checklist (ACC 5218).



Advice on prescribed vitamin D supplementation (ACC6774).

Clinician resources from the Health Quality & Safety Commission's national programme



"Reducing harm from falls" and national patient safety campaign, "Open for better care".



Those especially related to screening for falls risk, risk assessment and care planning are Ask, assess, act resources, and Topics 2, 3 and 5 in 10 Topics in reducing harm from falls

1. Ambrose AF, Paul G, Hausdorff JM. Risk factors for falls among older adults: A review of the literature. *Maturitas* 2013;75(1):51– 61.  
 2. Gillespie LD, Robertson MC, Gillespie WJ et al. 2012. Interventions for preventing falls in older people living in the community. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* (9):CD007146.