

U.S. Fall Prevention Programs for Seniors

by
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Judy A. Stevens, Ph.D.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Among older adults, falls are a serious public health problem. In the United States, one of every three persons over age 65 falls each year (1,2) and two-thirds of those who fall do so again within six months (3). Among people age 65 and older, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths and serious injuries (4). About 9,600 older adults died in 1998 from fall-related injuries (4). Among seniors with osteoporosis, falls can cause devastating injuries such as hip fractures; 75%–80% of hip fractures are sustained by women (5). Half of all older adults hospitalized for hip fracture cannot return home or live independently after their injuries (5,6).

Among people age 65 and older, unintentional falls account for 87% of all fractures treated in emergency departments (7) and are the second leading cause of spinal cord and brain injuries (8). Falls also can have serious psychological consequences. Many older adults avoid activities because they fear falling, but limiting what they do actually increases their risk of falling (8).

The causes of falls can be divided into two categories, personal factors and environmental factors. Personal factors include muscle weakness, balance problems, limited vision, and taking certain medications such as tranquilizers or antidepressants (6,9,10). Environmental factors include home hazards such as clutter, loose rugs or other tripping hazards, poor lighting, especially on stairs, and not having stair railings or grab bars in the bathroom (11).

Audience

This document is intended for state and local health departments, State and Area Agencies on Aging, non-profit organizations, health maintenance organizations, community-level injury prevention programs, and others who work with seniors and are planning, implementing, or expanding fall prevention activities.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe fall prevention programs for U.S. seniors that research show are important components of effective programs: education, home assessment for environmental fall hazards, and access to home modification and/or repair services. These programs may provide models for agencies or organizations that want to develop fall prevention programs for older adults.

Methods of Locating Programs

Researchers made initial informal telephone and e-mail contacts to each of the fifty states and the District of Columbia. Information about one state was completed before starting another. We began with the broadest contacts such as the state and local health departments and the State and Area Agencies on Aging. Some of these organizations had programs within their own offices. Other initial contacts, depending on availability, included university gerontology and nursing departments, local chapters of the American Red Cross, and other information sources for seniors such as First Call for Help. Further contacts were made based on referrals from each of these initial contacts. Following this procedure, we identified specific community-based programs in each state.

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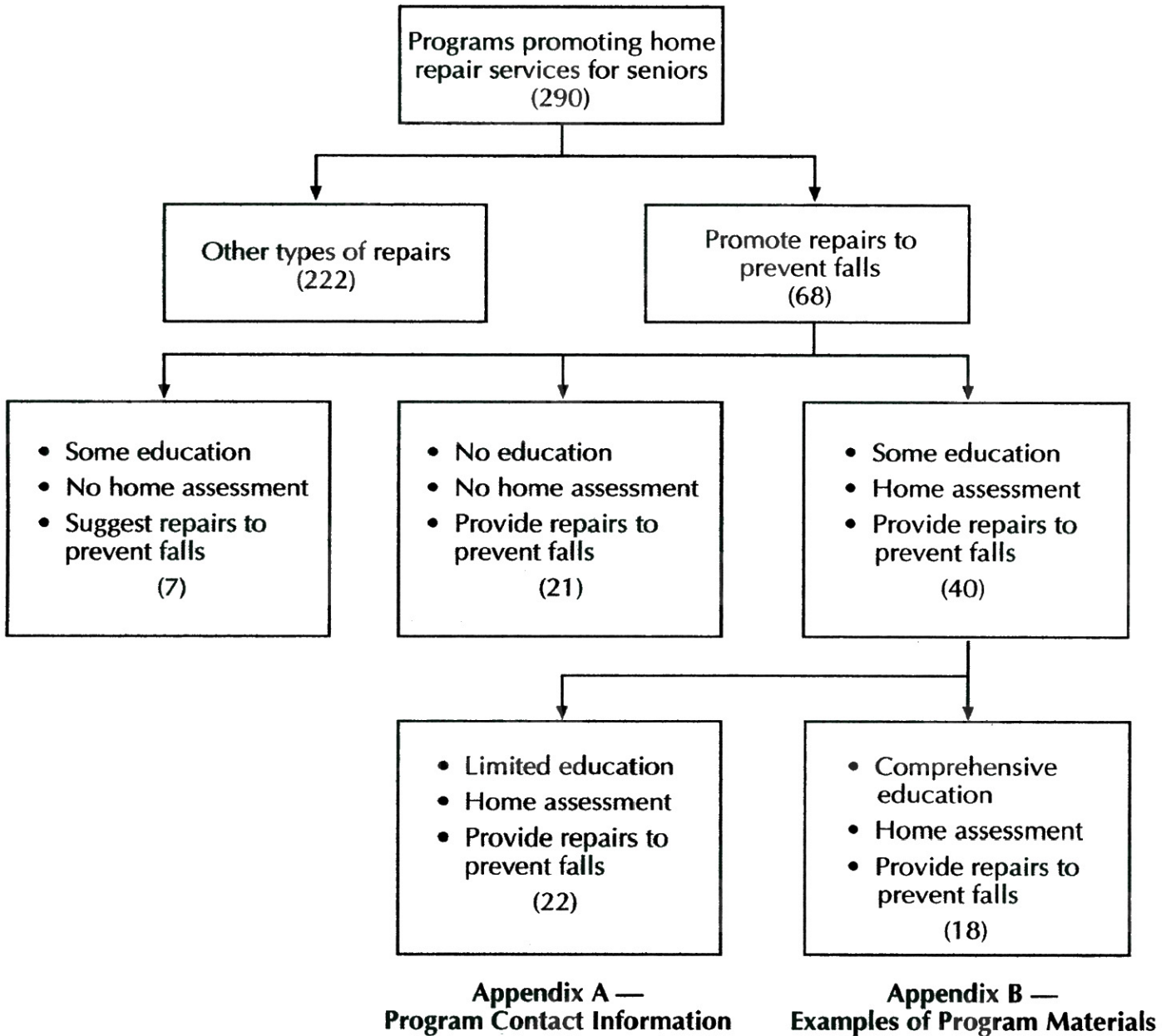
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Figure 1. Program Selection Process



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FALL PREVENTION PROJECT

Tucson, Arizona

Target Population	People age 60 years and older living in Pima County.
Start/Finish	1997/ongoing
Program	<p>The program is based on a pilot project conducted as a collaboration between Pima Council on Aging, University of Arizona College of Nursing, the Pima County Health Department/Public Health Nursing Division, the Northwest Fire District, and Rural Metro Fire Department.</p> <p>Service seeks to assess environmental, medical and behavioral risks for falls in the client's home in order to reduce health and safety hazards. Nurses and fire district personnel jointly conduct home visits.</p> <p>The fire prevention staff conducts a home safety assessment. Each client receives a <i>Safety Aids Bag</i> consisting of smoke alarms, nightlights, flashlights, batteries, counter mat, pot holders, timers, double-sided carpet tape, installation of grab bars, bathtub appliques, oven sticks, light bulbs, reflective tape, and a non-skid rug.</p> <p>Intervention consists of client education about home hazards, recommendations about home improvements, and appropriate referrals as needed.</p> <p>Where appropriate, assessment staff refers any need for adaptations to the home such as grab bars or railings to the Pima Council on Aging for information about publicly subsidized repair programs available to persons age 60 years or older.</p> <p>Immediately following the environmental assessment, the nurse (or student nurse) conducts a clinical assessment of risk for falls. Student nurses from the University of Arizona and Public Health Nurses from the Health Department work together to provide this assessment. The nurse assesses each client's medical, behavioral and social risks for falls, teaches prevention, and refers for appropriate follow-up. A packet of information about fall prevention and local community resources is reviewed and left with each participant.</p> <p>In addition to the home and nursing assessments, an exercise component is offered to high-risk seniors in Green Valley, AZ.</p>
Strengths	<p>One- to two-month follow-up assessments show that people are making changes to their homes as well as following through with nurse generated referrals.</p> <p>The seniors are very receptive to fire officials and nursing personnel entering their homes. This may be due to the fact that clients are referred to the program by someone they know, and participation is totally voluntary.</p>

In the pilot group from northwest Tucson, 20% complied with all referrals and recommendations, 68% with some, and 12% with none.

In the 6 months following the pilot project, of the 100 participants, 2 people fell but sustained no injuries, 2 called 911 for emergencies unrelated to falls, 1 was admitted to a skilled nursing facility, and 1 person died.

Weaknesses

The Pima Council on Aging provides assistance for some minor home repairs and adaptations. However, limited resources cause waiting lists for more extensive home repairs.

Funding limits the numbers of seniors who can be served. Although education is provided on the value of exercise, program funding precludes offering an exercise component to all program participants.

The program is limited by the local fire department's ability to participate.

Future Plans

Pima County Health Department is involving more public health nurses and is training additional nurses to use the screening tool.

University of Arizona College of Nursing has committed to provide student nurses to continue doing in-home client assessments as part of their curriculum.

Northwest Fire District is expanding to more outlying areas within its district. The Deputy Fire Marshal has recruited and will train two more rural fire district personnel who will bring the program to their communities.

Pima County Health Department is coordinating with the largest urban fire department, Tucson Fire Department, to begin screening seniors in the city of Tucson.

The program plans a Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign that will include educational posters, information packets, newspaper articles, PSA's, and presentations at senior clubs and organizations.

The program hopes to reach 150 additional residences in the Tucson area in 2001.

The program is seeking grant funding to sustain and expand current activities.

Materials

Educational materials:

- *The Perfect Fit: Creative Ideas for a Safe & Livable Home* (AARP)
- *Pep Up Your Life — A Fitness Book for Mid-Life and Older Persons* (AARP)
- *Identify Your Risk for Falls . . . A Self Assessment Checklist*
- Information page on medication safety in English and Spanish (information courtesy of Augustana Hospital, Chicago, Illinois).
- Fall prevention checklist, *Don't Let a Fall Get You Down*
- *Living with Osteoporosis* (National Osteoporosis Foundation)

- *Healthy Eating for a Healthy Life* (AARP)
- *Five Safety Tips for Older Adults*

Instruments:

- Predisposition For Falling Assessment Tool (Veterans Administration Medical Center, Gainesville, FL and The Posey Company, Arcadia, CA).
- Fall Prevention In-Home Assessment: Evaluation – Intervention – Follow-Up Form (Pima County Public Health Nurses).
- Determine Your Nutritional Health Assessment Form (AZ Department of Economic Security, Aging and Adult Administration).
- Home Safety Checklist (Northwest Fire District).

Funding

The pilot project used funds secured by the Pima County Health Department/Public Health Nursing from the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Primary Contact

Mary Ellen Beaurain
Pima Council on Aging
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Pilot Managers

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Nurse Manager
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Debbie Smith
Deputy Fire Marshal
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Partners

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6920 E. Broadway, Suite E
Tucson, AZ 85710

Northwest Fire District
1520 W. Orange Grove Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85704

University of Arizona College of Nursing
Pima Council on Aging

**VOLUNTEER INTERFAITH CAREGIVERS PROGRAM
AND SALT RIVER PROJECT
“Project Safe Home”
Phoenix, Arizona**

Target Population	Anyone 18 years of age or older who is homebound and/or disabled and lives in the cities of Phoenix, Glendale, and Scottsdale.
Start/Finish	1995/ongoing
Program	<p>Salt River Project (SRP), a public utility, works in partnership with the Volunteer Interfaith Caregivers Program (VICaP), a program of the Beatitudes Center for Developing Older Adult Resources (Center DOAR), an established home visitation program for homebound and disabled seniors.</p> <p>SRP donates financial support, in-kind services for administrative costs and funds for minor home safety repairs and replacements.</p> <p>An AVICaP volunteer reviews a home safety checklist with the client regarding such items as electrical outlets and extension cords, smoke alarms, lighting, grab bars, etc.</p> <p>The program recommends home repairs such as securing rugs, improving lighting, installing guard rails and grab bars, using nonskid rugs, and using shower chairs or bath benches.</p> <p>VICaP volunteers make needed repairs and replacements.</p>
Strengths	SRP and VICaP show strong collaboration in identifying needed repairs and administering them at little or no cost.
Weaknesses	The program covers only homebound and/or disabled adults over age 18. It does not include adults who can drive and are not homebound.
Future Plans	<p>The program will continue to expand as the number of clients requesting services increases.</p> <p>VICaP will continue to sell training manuals to other programs that may soon implement similar projects.</p>
Materials	<i>Project Safe Home Safety Check List</i> , a safety checklist that includes home and outdoor areas. It covers items such as smoke alarms, electrical outlets, extension cords, lighting, and grab bars.
Funding	Salt River Project covers an average of \$50 per client for repairs.
Primary Contact	Ava Stanford, Director Volunteer Interfaith Caregivers Program (VICaP) “Project Safe Home” 555 West Glendale Ave Phoenix, AZ 85021 Phone: (602) 285-0543 Fax: (602) 274-6793 e-mail: vicap@centerdoor.org

**COMMUNITY AND HOME INJURY
PREVENTION PROJECT FOR SENIORS**
San Francisco Department of Public Health
San Francisco, California

Target Population	People age 65 years and older living in San Francisco.
Start/Finish	1988/ongoing
Program	<p>The Community and Home Injury Prevention Project for Seniors (CHIPPS) was established to reduce the rate of unintentional injuries among senior San Francisco residents.</p> <p>The goals of the CHIPPS program are to create awareness that many injuries to older people can be prevented, develop simple ways to recognize and correct injury hazards, and provide resources and information to health professionals and the public.</p> <p>CHIPPS trains medical providers, home care providers, and caregivers about senior injury prevention.</p> <p>CHIPPS provides free personal medication counseling by a pharmacist through the Health Department, referral to community programs appropriate for seniors, and education programs conducted for seniors, service providers, and the community at large.</p> <p>CHIPPS offers home safety information and self-assessment guides, home safety equipment and home repair referrals, assistance in locating safety products and services, and free grab bars to low-income seniors.</p> <p>In collaboration with UCSF and funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH), CHIPPS provides home safety assessments and free home safety modifications to seniors who participate in sponsored educational presentations.</p>
Strengths	CHIPPS is comprehensive with an extensive educational component that includes training medical providers, home care providers, and caregivers about injury prevention.
Weaknesses	NIH funds a research project on senior attitudes toward home safety issues. It directly funds only 30 home safety modifications annually, while providing staffing support for 4 years. This program started 3/1/2000; additional funding for direct services is being sought.
Future Plans	Expand current program activities and partnerships; conduct additional home assessments; provide more in-home modifications and repair services.
Materials	Booklet, <i>Home Safety for Older San Franciscans</i> , adapted from the <i>Home Safe Home</i> brochure of the Johns Hopkins University Injury Prevention Research Center and the Baltimore County Department of Health Injury Prevention Program.

Booklet, *Reducing Your Risk of Falls — Using Medication Wisely*, in collaboration with SRx: Medication Education for Seniors.

Booklet, *Pedestrian Safety for Older San Franciscans*, adapted from a brochure produced by Florida Highway Patrol.

Information sheet, *Prevention of Falls*, provides practical suggestions to help prevent falls among older adults.

Home Safety Checklist, adapted from *Home Evaluation Checklist for the Elderly* by J. Pynoos, E. Cohen, C. Lucas, and L. Davis, UCLA/USC Long Term Care Gerontology Center.

Funding

Currently funded through a NIH grant, in partnership with UCSF, in addition to ongoing support from the San Francisco City and County General Funds.

Primary Contact

Michael Radetsky, CHIPPS Coordinator
San Francisco Department of Public Health
Community Health Education Section
101 Grove Street, Rm. 118
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-2924

Partners

Includes community council members representing agencies such as AARP, San Francisco Commission on the Aging, U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission, On Lok, Trauma Foundation, Institute for Health & Aging (UCSF), San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. Also working with local agencies such as Meals on Wheels to promote fall prevention activities.

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES OF LOS ANGELES Los Angeles, California

Target Population	<p>Renters and homeowners of any age with fixed or limited incomes. Income limits depend on the number of residents in the household (based on HUD income guidelines).</p> <p>Serves East, Central and West Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, the City of West Hollywood, the City of Burbank, Culver City, and Thousand Oaks.</p> <p>Referrals come from a network of service providers including hospitals, senior centers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and police departments. Clients also self-refer.</p>
Start/Finish	1977/ongoing
Program	<p>Home Secure is a non-sectarian program of the Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles.</p> <p>Offers free safety and fall prevention education and folders of community resource information.</p> <p>Offers community workshops on personal safety and fall prevention.</p> <p>Provides free home safety modifications such as grab bars for bathroom safety, hand-held showers, tub/shower chairs, deadbolts, entry locks, peepholes, window locks, and miscellaneous safety items such as night lights and bathtub safety strips.</p> <p>Coordinates installation of gas meter shut-off valves for earthquake and fire safety.</p>
Strengths	<p>Program directly provides repairs.</p> <p>Costs of the repairs are fully covered.</p> <p>Information about the Home Safety and Security Service is available in Cantonese, Korean, Armenian, Russian, and Spanish.</p> <p>Bilingual staff (Spanish and Russian.)</p>
Weaknesses	<p>The program does not conduct home assessments but relies on the client to already be aware of existing hazards or have outside sources conduct the assessment.</p>
Future Plans	<p>Expand the variety of durable medical equipment available.</p> <p>Implement a home assessment component when funding permits.</p>
Materials	<p>Safety and fall prevention educational materials and community resource information.</p> <p>Self Assessment Checklist, <i>Identifying Your Risk for Falls</i>, covers vision, hearing, medications, alcohol, getting out of bed/chair, exercise, and home hazards.</p>

Safety for Older Consumers: Home Safety Checklist by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Resource guide available in Spanish from the United Way of Greater Los Angeles.

Funding

City of Los Angeles Department of Aging, City of West Hollywood Department of Community Development, City of Burbank Community Development Department, City of Culver City Housing Department, Thousand Oaks Community Development Department, and private foundation grants.

Primary Contact

Leslie Friedman, Director
Home Secure Program
330 North Fairfax Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90036
(818) 762-5892
(323) 937-5855

**Partner
(Umbrella Agency)**

Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles
5700 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90036
(323) 761-8800

CITY OF NEW HAVEN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH New Haven, Connecticut

Target Population	New Haven residents age 65 years and older.
Start/Finish	1999/ongoing
Program	<p>The City of New Haven Department of Health subcontracts with the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central CT, Inc. to conduct a fall injury prevention program serving older adults.</p> <p>A home care nurse specialist conducts educational presentations to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) increase awareness of injury prevention and potential hazards and risks; 2) engage participants in a dynamic, practical learning process that promotes risk reduction behavior and environmental modifications; 3) identify residents 65 years and older who may benefit from home safety assessments. <p>The home care nurse performs home safety assessments to identify and correct home hazards by providing education and safety supplies.</p> <p>Safety supplies include bath mats, non-slip carpet backing, pot holders, night lights, medication containers, step stools, and smoke alarm batteries.</p> <p>The nurse conducts follow-ups in person or through telephone contact to determine if any falls have occurred since the home safety assessment and if any additional hazard corrections have been made.</p>
Strengths	<p>The home care nurse specialist has experience working with clients in their homes which helps reduce fears seniors might have about the home safety assessment.</p> <p>The home care nurse works with clients to improve safety conditions in their homes. Through the assessments and follow-up, the nurse supports clients as they practice new safety behaviors.</p>
Weaknesses	The program is not currently able to undertake repairs such as installing grab bars and railings.
Future Plans	<p>Continue an ongoing subcontract with the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central CT, Inc.</p> <p>Locate resources for installing of safety equipment such as grab bars, railings, etc.</p>
Materials	<p><i>Home Safety Checklist.</i></p> <p>A variety of fall prevention fact sheets.</p> <p>Fall injury prevention video, <i>Home Safe Home.</i></p>
Funding	Connecticut Department of Public Health Unintentional Injury Prevention Program through the federal Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.

Primary Contact Mary Ann Zavorskas, Health Education Assistant
City of New Haven Department of Health
54 Meadow Street
New Haven, CT 06519
(203) 946-8186

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATERBURY, INC. Waterbury, Connecticut

Target Population	Frail at-risk people age 60 years and older, regardless of income, who live in Waterbury, Cheshire, Naugatuck, Woodbury, Southbury, Middlebury, Thomaston, Prospect, Wolcott, Watertown, Beacon Falls, and Bethlehem.
Start/Finish	1993/1997
Program	<p>Program staff conducts free in-home safety assessments to identify environmental hazards including fall and fire hazards.</p> <p>New Opportunities for Waterbury, Inc. (NOW) offers home modifications to reduce safety hazards including installing bathroom grab bars and tub safety strips, removing slipping/tripping hazards, repairing or installing railings, installing night lights, relocating often used items to an accessible height, rearranging furniture, installing smoke alarms, replacing smoke alarm batteries, installing locks and peepholes, and lowering hot water temperature to 100 degrees.</p> <p>Program staff is available to help with modifications.</p> <p>NOW requests a voluntary contribution based on a sliding scale (\$4-\$9) for the cost of labor to perform these services.</p> <p>An emergency fund is available to help clients who cannot afford the full cost of materials and/or equipment installed in their home.</p>
Strengths	<p>Program directly helped with repairs.</p> <p>No cost to clients, other than a voluntary contribution, for services rendered.</p>
Weaknesses	Funding has been discontinued and the program is no longer in full operation. The educational component continues; however, repairs are no longer provided.
Future Plans	Continue the educational component of the program, including oral presentations at local senior centers.
Materials	<i>Injury Prevention/Home Safety Checklist</i> covers hand rails, step stools, small rugs, bathtub/shower surfaces, condition of walkers and canes, footwear, lighting, electrical cord placement, smoke alarms, water temperature, and emergency telephone numbers.
Funding	<p>Discontinued. Previously funded by an Older Americans Act Title III grant from the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging, Inc.</p> <p>The Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging, Inc. elected to discontinue funds for the home safety component of the Chore Program in 1998.</p>

Primary Contact

Mary Kate Gill, Director
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Elderly Services
Home Safety Assessment Program
232 North Elm Street
Waterbury, CT 06702
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**VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION
COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE, INC.**
**in Cooperation with East Shore Health District
Guilford/Branford, Connecticut**

Target Population	<p>Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Community Healthcare patients age 60 years and older who live in Branford, North Branford, and East Haven.</p> <p>Frail, at-risk elders regardless of income.</p>
Start/Finish	<p>1996/ongoing</p>
Program	<p>VNA Community Healthcare, Inc. provides home safety visits and works with the older adults and/or their caregivers to correct injury hazards.</p> <p>A registered nurse performs a complete safety assessment in the client's home.</p> <p>The assessment and interventions address slipping/tripping hazards, walking path obstacles, inadequate lighting, inadequate support in the bathroom, fire hazards, and medication safety.</p> <p>Based on the assessment, VNA recommends environmental modifications and offers free safety equipment.</p> <p>VNA provides education and safety supplies such as bath mats, non-slip carpet backing, night lights, and medication boxes as needed.</p> <p>Safety modifications and/or equipment to reduce home hazards (limit 1–2 safety items per individual) include installing bathroom grab bars, tub safety strips, bath mats, removing slipping/tripping hazards, repairing or installing railings, installing night lights and light bulbs, raised toilet seats, and medication containers.</p> <p>The VNA arranges with a local contractor to provide low cost repairs and safety installations for clients who cannot afford them.</p> <p>VNA staff follow up with clients in person or by telephone to determine if any falls have occurred and if safety changes have been made or maintained.</p>
Strengths	<p>Assessment and interventions are thorough and include free safety equipment as well as educational materials.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>There is a limit of 1–2 safety repairs and/or installations per client. However, the program does assist in locating low cost services for additional repairs for seniors who cannot afford the modifications.</p>
Future Plans	<p>Continue present operation.</p>

- Materials** Handouts provided include *Preventing Falls and Fractures* and *Safe Use of Medicines by Older People* Age Pages published by the National Institute on Aging (NIA); articles on calcium, osteoporosis, and walking as exercise by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons; and pamphlets on fall and fire safety.
Home Interiors Safety Checklist.
- Funding** Connecticut Department of Public Health Injury Prevention Program through the Preventive Health & Health Services Block Grant.
- Primary Contact** Kathy Hand, RN, Supervisor of Ancillary Services
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**VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION OF
SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT, INC.**
**in Cooperation with the Milford Health Department and
the City of New Haven Health Department
Milford/New Haven, Connecticut**

Target Population	New Haven and Milford residents age 65 years and older.
Start/Finish	1998/ongoing
Program	<p>Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) staff provides training to non-clinical staff who educate seniors about specific symptoms and illnesses, such as Parkinson's disease and peripheral neuropathy, that place older people at risk for injuries.</p> <p>Facilitates exercise classes designed to increase balance, flexibility, and strength to prevent falls and injuries, including bone fractures due to osteoporosis.</p> <p>Provides home safety visits to assess environmental risk factors.</p> <p>Works with seniors and/or their caregivers to increase awareness about injury prevention and hazard correction.</p> <p>Provides education and safety supplies such as bath mats, non-slip carpet backing, night lights, and medication boxes as needed to correct identified hazards.</p> <p>Staff follows up with clients in person or by telephone to determine if they have fallen and have made or maintained safety changes.</p>
Strengths	<p>VNA follows up to see if changes have been made or maintained.</p> <p>Minor safety supplies are provided free of charge.</p>
Weaknesses	Program does not include repairs such as grab bar installation although it does help seniors locate available resources.
Future Plans	Identify more efficiently those who are most at risk and develop methods for reaching those seniors.
Materials	<p>Educational pamphlets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Unintentional Injury Prevention</i>• <i>Older Adult Fire Safety</i>• <i>Don't Worry Home Accident Prevention</i>• <i>Senior Good Journal</i> <p>A safety checklist is available to seniors who attend seminars or presentations conducted by registered nurses.</p>
Funding	Connecticut Department of Public Health through the Preventive Health & Health Services Block Grant.

Primary Contact Ellen Rubin, RN, MSN, Program Coordinator
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2051 Bridgeport Avenue
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54 Meadow Street
New Haven, CT 06519

SOUTHEAST IDAHO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS Pocatello, Idaho

Target Population	People age 60 years and older in the counties of Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida and Power.
Start/Finish	1998/ongoing
Program	<p>Offers public presentations in senior centers, complexes for the aging, and housing complexes for the disabled.</p> <p>Participates in all health fairs.</p> <p>Conducts medication reviews.</p> <p>Offers an exercise library for homebound seniors and groups.</p> <p>Conducts home assessments for fall hazards for homebound, disabled, and ambulatory seniors.</p> <p>Makes suggestions for repairs which are then provided by Easter Seals, S.E. Idaho In-Home Services, LIFE, local churches, landlords, and family members.</p>
Strengths	Offers a diverse range of services in addition to home safety, including public presentations and medication reviews.
Weaknesses	Program does not directly provide repairs; however, clients are referred to specific service providers.
Future Plans	<p>Promote injury prevention services to 400 clients.</p> <p>Develop a partnership with Senior Health Insurance Benefit Advisors to include senior health insurance information to the homebound.</p> <p>Continue all health promotion services listed above.</p>
Materials	<p>Booklet, <i>About Accident Prevention and Older People</i>, distributed by the Idaho Power Company, describes the leading types of injuries among seniors and how to prevent them. Includes information on falls, fires and burns, medications, driving and traffic safety, and general safety tips.</p> <p>Booklet, <i>Safety and Comfort in Your Home — Tips for Staying Independent</i> goes through each room of the house and identifies hazards for falls, fires, break-ins, and other threats to independent living.</p>
Funding	Receives federal funds from SICOG/AAA, United Way funds, and program donations from clients.
Primary Contact	<p>Judy Robinson Southeast Idaho Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging 214 East Center, Box 6079 Pocatello, ID 83205-6079 (208) 233-4032 (ext. 17)</p>

Partners

Easter Seals, LIFE, Idaho Power Company, Southeast Idaho In-Home Services, AARP, Southeast Idaho Community Action Agency/RSVP, and Super Save Drug.

GREEN RIVER AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Home Safety Program

Owensboro, Kentucky

Target Population	People age 60 years and older living in the Green River Area Development District (Counties of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster)
Start/Finish	1997/ongoing
Program	<p>Program provides seniors materials to do a home assessment.</p> <p>If the senior needs help in conducting the assessment, a trained “Senior Connection” member is available to assist.</p> <p>Makes recommendations such as removing loose rugs, installing grab bars, toilet rails, etc. A “Senior Connection” member assists with repairs needed to correct hazards.</p> <p>There is no financial requirement although it is helpful if the senior can contribute toward any materials needed.</p>
Strengths	<p>Provides comprehensive assessment of home hazards.</p> <p>Offers free labor and assistance in locating resources and obtaining materials needed to correct hazards.</p> <p>No financial requirement.</p>
Future Plans	Continue current operation pending funding support.
Materials	<p>A trainer provides and uses a <i>Home Safety/Crime Prevention Script</i> in educational forums to familiarize seniors with the <i>Home Safety Assessment</i>.</p> <p>Booklet, <i>Home Safe Home</i>, contains tips for reducing hazards in various areas of the home.</p> <p><i>Home Safety Assessment</i>, provided by “Senior Connections”, examines the kitchen, bathroom, living room, bedroom, storage areas, entrance, back and side doors, windows, and home overall.</p>
Funding	<p>Green River Area Development District Area Agency on Aging.</p> <p>“Senior Connections” is funded by the Corporation for National Service through the Kentucky Commission on Community Service, Volunteerism, and local partners (County Fiscal Courts, hospices, Green River Housing Corporation, and others.)</p>

Primary Contact Andrea Sieloff, RSM
AmeriCorps Project Director
Green River Area Development District
3860 U.S. Hwy 60 West
Owensboro, KY 42301-0200
(270) 926-4433
(800) 928-9094

Partners Green River Area Development District Area Agency on Aging and
“Senior Connections” AmeriCorps.

SOUTHEAST SENIOR HOUSING INITIATIVE Baltimore, Maryland

Target Population People age 55 years and older living in the Baltimore metropolitan area.

Start/Finish 1989/ongoing

Program Southeast Senior Housing Initiative (SESHI) offers a variety of programs to assist older residents with home modifications so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes and neighborhoods.

In 1991, SESH I set up a model home to demonstrate ways in which row houses can be adapted to fit the needs of senior residents. It was in operation for 2 years and demonstrated devices such as grab bars in the bathroom and modifications such as door lever handles and chair lifts.

SESHI's Portable Display on Independent Living is a simulated housing environment showcasing home modification ideas that can make homes safer, more comfortable, and more accessible. It includes a booklet that identifies possible hazards in each room of the house.

SESHI works with the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing to provide home safety and fall prevention assessments. The program offers home accessibility and safety assessments, assistance with finding a reputable, licensed contractor, and financial counseling.

An independent living specialist helps clients choose products and designs that fit their individual preferences, functional levels, and financial situations.

Bannor Neighborhoods Community Corporation provides home adaptations and modifications. Adaptations most frequently requested include installing grab bars, stair lifts, and handrails, and constructing access ramps.

Seniors can secure low interest loans for capital home improvements via the Maryland Home Repair Fund. The program is also building a pool of funds to assist low-income seniors with home modifications.

Strengths

Provides the "People's Emergency Fund" to offer support to individuals and families whose well-being and/or ability to remain in their homes is compromised by an emergency requiring immediate, short-term assistance.

Provides extensive education to improve safety awareness among seniors.

Conducts periodic revisits and re-evaluations.

Program data collection and outcome evaluation is conducted by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Center on Aging and Health.

Weaknesses

SESHI offers few repair services. However, it does provide information about available resources and assists in locating contractors.

Future Plans

Continue to promote awareness of necessary modifications.

Materials

A variety of home modification manuals, product and supplier catalogues, guides to financing, and checklists for doing home evaluations.

A \$10 manual on home modifications, *Aging in Place: Row House Adaptations to Meet the Needs of Older Residents of Southeast Baltimore*.

Video, *Staying Home: Ways for Older Americans to Make Their Homes Fit Their Needs* (1994), a \$25 instructive video tape that includes a narrated tour of some accessible homes owned by Baltimore's older residents.

SESHI also provides oral and slide presentations, and home retrofit demonstrations.

Funding

Four years of funding will be provided by a grant from the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation's Local Initiatives Funding Partners Program. Local funding partners include the France Merrick, the Abell, and the Erickson Foundations. The program is expected to become self-sustaining through payment for services under the Maryland Home and Community-Based Services Waiver for Older Adults.

Primary Contact

Beverly Litsinger, Director
Southeast Senior Housing Initiative
10 S. Wolfe Street
Baltimore, MD 21231
(410) 327-6193

Partners

Citibank of Maryland, Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, Church Hospital, Eastern Savings Bank, Hopkins Federal Savings, and other local corporations and businesses.

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY

Home Injury Prevention Program Manchester, New Hampshire

Target Population	People age 62 and older, statewide, usually identified through assisted housing complexes, Section 8 housing, and community "drop-in" centers.
Start/Finish	1995/1997 (No longer in operation due to the loss of a 2-year grant.)
Program	<p>The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) administers assistance to over 3,500 units occupied by the state's elderly population. It is still using the inspection and educational literature created during the 2-year program.</p> <p>Housing management representatives use safety checklists and pamphlets to do assessments and make seniors aware of hazards. There is no requirement to make the recommended changes.</p> <p>The program does not directly provide home repairs but has agreements with hardware stores and pharmacies for seniors to receive discounts on any materials needed such as color strips, night lights, grab bars, toilet seats, pill organizers, fluorescent paint, anti-slip strips, hand-held showers, and remote medic-alert systems.</p>
Strengths	<p>The program's connections with local pharmacies and hardware stores are useful in locating materials.</p> <p>The program uses various educational pieces from agencies such as AARP and the National Fire Protection Association.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>The program does not provide home repairs but does offer suggestions and resources to locate the materials needed.</p> <p>The Home Injury Prevention Program (HIP) targets mainly seniors in assisted living facilities or Section 8 housing and not community dwelling, independent seniors.</p>
Future Plans	The program will not necessarily resume, as originally designed, even if funding becomes available. The inspection and educational materials are still used.
Materials	<p>Home safety booklet, <i>The Perfect Fit: Creative Ideas For a Safe and Livable Home</i>, distributed by AARP.</p> <p><i>Prevention of Falls</i> by the Department of Rehabilitation Services, UCSF, and reprinted by CHIPPS, focuses on getting out of bed, going from sitting to standing, negotiating stairs and hills, getting up from the floor, and using assistive devices.</p> <p>Information sheet, <i>Accident Prevention</i> Age Page published by the National Institute on Aging.</p>

NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY

Home Injury Prevention Program Manchester, New Hampshire

Target Population	People age 62 and older, statewide, usually identified through assisted housing complexes, Section 8 housing, and community "drop-in" centers.
Start/Finish	1995/1997 (No longer in operation due to the loss of a 2-year grant.) The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) administers assistance to over 3,500 units occupied by the state's elderly population. It is still using the inspection and educational literature created during the 2-year program.
Program	Housing management representatives use safety checklists and pamphlets to do assessments and make seniors aware of hazards. There is no requirement to make the recommended changes. The program does not directly provide home repairs but has agreements with hardware stores and pharmacies for seniors to receive discounts on any materials needed such as color strips, night lights, grab bars, toilet seats, pill organizers, fluorescent paint, anti-slip strips, hand-held showers, and remote medic-alert systems.
Strengths	The program's connections with local pharmacies and hardware stores are useful in locating materials. The program uses various educational pieces from agencies such as AARP and the National Fire Protection Association.
Weaknesses	The program does not provide home repairs but does offer suggestions and resources to locate the materials needed. The Home Injury Prevention Program (HIP) targets mainly seniors in assisted living facilities or Section 8 housing and not community dwelling, independent seniors.
Future Plans	The program will not necessarily resume, as originally designed, even if funding becomes available. The inspection and educational materials are still used.
Materials	Home safety booklet, <i>The Perfect Fit: Creative Ideas For a Safe and Livable Home</i> , distributed by AARP. <i>Prevention of Falls</i> by the Department of Rehabilitation Services, UCSF, and reprinted by CHIPPS, focuses on getting out of bed, going from sitting to standing, negotiating stairs and hills, getting up from the floor, and using assistive devices. Information sheet, <i>Accident Prevention Age Page</i> published by the National Institute on Aging.

PROACTION SENIOR WELLNESS PROGRAM

Bath, New York

Target Population	People age 60 years and older, regardless of income, living in Steuben County.
Start/Finish	1994/ongoing
Program	<p>Encourages seniors to become more knowledgeable and participate in both positive health promotion and injury prevention practices.</p> <p>“Safety in the Home” injury control program includes individual safety surveys and educational programs about injury prevention and preventing falls and fractures in the home.</p> <p>During special community events, medication management services provide screening of medicines and education to prevent incorrect medication use and adverse drug effects.</p> <p>Senior Wellness Program also provides information and presentations about mental health services, exercise and physical fitness, nutrition, osteoporosis, and stress management.</p> <p>Offers repairs such as grab bar installation.</p> <p>No cost to the senior. A 10% donation is asked of those who can afford it to help cover the cost of materials. No senior is ever turned away.</p>
Strengths	<p>Program directly provides repairs.</p> <p>Includes all eligible residents regardless of financial status.</p>
Future Plans	<p>Senior Wellness goals include:</p> <p>Complete 30 health and safety presentations for senior centers and senior citizen clubs.</p> <p>Conduct 48 In-Home Safety Surveys for seniors.</p> <p>Provide outreach services including needs assessment and referral services for 48 seniors.</p> <p>Conduct 2 medically related community events such as a Brown-Bag Medicine Review and a Health Fair.</p> <p>Coordinate exercise groups in the community, senior centers, clubs, etc. (250 sessions).</p> <p>Provide 10 press releases on health topics of concern for seniors.</p> <p>Furnish 12 radio PSAs or talk show appearances.</p> <p>Establish 3 walking clubs for seniors.</p>

- Materials** Home safety survey and checklist that include questions on lighting, phone, stairs, and the exterior.
Liability waiver.
- Funding** Steuben County Office for the Aging and New York State Office on Aging with additional funding from United Way.
- Primary Contact** Carol Roote, Nutrition & Senior Wellness Director
Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc.
117 East Steuben Street
Suite 11
Bath, NY 14810
(607) 776-2125 (ext. 317)
- Additional Contact** Valorie Zyla, Wellness Coordinator
(607) 776-2125 (ext. 315)

UMBRELLA OF THE CAPITAL DISTRICT Schenectady, New York

Target Population	<p>People age 55 and over and persons of any age living with disabilities.</p> <p>Currently serves more than 400 homeowners living in Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, and Saratoga counties.</p>
Start/Finish	1995/ongoing
Program	<p>Umbrella is a nonprofit agency. Its goal is to help seniors and persons with disabilities live independently and comfortably in their own homes.</p> <p>Membership in Umbrella costs between \$100 and \$250 per year depending on the size of the home and the annual income of the homeowner. If someone is unable to afford the membership fee or the hourly rate for service, Umbrella may subsidize memberships using funds raised through the gifts and grants of concerned corporations, generous individuals in the community, and socially conscious foundations.</p> <p>Offers high quality home maintenance to improve the home environment and prevent injuries. Umbrella strongly supports the "Aging at Home" philosophy and encourages reducing the risk of falls and subsequent injuries by improving the home environment and eliminating step stools, scatter rugs, improperly placed electrical extension cords, etc.</p> <p>Workforce consists mainly of seniors. More than 100 retirees provide service.</p> <p>Umbrella's handypersons are trained to identify potential safety hazards in the home and eliminate them.</p> <p>Every Umbrella member receives an annual, 17-point, home inspection report at no charge. The report identifies and ranks needed safety improvements.</p> <p>Modifications can include removing items stored on basement stairs, using higher wattage bulbs, and installing grab bars in the bathroom.</p> <p>Labor is \$8/hour for light carpentry and repair. Time and material charges are paid directly to the handyperson by the homeowner. Discounts on parts or materials are passed on to the homeowner to keep homeowner costs as low as possible.</p> <p>All work is backed by a 1-year labor guarantee.</p>
Strengths	<p>The staff is composed mainly of retirees who are trained to recognize home hazards.</p> <p>This program has a strong emphasis on prevention and correcting hazards to prevent injuries.</p> <p>The program directly provides repairs.</p>

Weaknesses	This program, for the most part, is not free of charge. A senior must be a paying member of the program to receive services.
Future Plans	Expand current services to include 3 additional counties. Extend services to very low income seniors through a grant from the United Way.
Materials	A 17–point home inspection report is conducted each year for every Umbrella member.
Funding	Homeowner pays labor and material charges. Donations and grants are received from corporations, individuals, and foundations.
Primary Contact	Elaine Santore and Ron Byrne, Directors Umbrella of the Capital District 1374 Parkwood Blvd. Schenectady, NY 12308 (518) 346–5249 www.theumbrella.org

**OFFICE OF GERIATRICS AND GERONTOLOGY,
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
"Home Sweet Home...Home Safe Home"
Columbus, Ohio**

Target Population	People age 60 years and older in central Ohio (Franklin and surrounding counties).
Start/Finish	1996/ongoing
Program	<p>Program provides seniors written materials about how to live more safely (including fall prevention).</p> <p>Physicians are available to conduct geriatric assessments concerning medications and risks for falls.</p> <p>Information and resource referrals are free. Medical assessments may be covered by insurance providers.</p> <p>Seniors must independently seek repair services to correct identified hazards. However, the program does offer advice about where to buy adaptive equipment, redesigning bathrooms, and much more.</p> <p>In certain areas of the city, reference lists are available to help locate materials and labor.</p>
Strengths	Educational information encompasses more than home safety.
Weaknesses	Program does not include repair services although it does help with locating resources.
Future Plans	Continue present operation.
Materials	<p>Written materials from the Office of Geriatrics and Gerontology to educate seniors about living safely, including tips for barrier free design throughout the house.</p> <p><i>Adaptive Help and Safety Tips for Failing Vision.</i></p> <p>Information sheet, <i>Is Your Home Hazardous to Your Health?</i>, a quiz to "injury proof" the home.</p> <p><i>Preventing Falls and Fractures and Accident Prevention</i> Age Pages, published by the National Institute on Aging.</p> <p>Booklet, <i>Do Able Renewable Home</i> from AARP.</p> <p><i>The Perfect Fit: Creative Ideas for a Safe and Livable Home</i> from AARP.</p> <p>Booklet from AARP, <i>Make Your House a Home for a Lifetime</i>, presents ideas for independent living.</p> <p><i>Home Safety Checklist</i> from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.</p>

Funding	A program of the Office of Geriatrics and Gerontology, funding comes from overall office budget and traditional healthcare funding such as Medicare and Medicaid, depending on services provided.
Primary Contact	Linda Mauger, Program Manager “Home Sweet Home...Home Safe Home” Office of Geriatrics and Gerontology Ohio State University Health Sciences Center S2042 Davis Medical Research Center 480 West Ninth Avenue Columbus, OH 43210 (614) 293-4815

FALL INJURY PREVENTION COALITION York, Pennsylvania

Target Population	People age 60 years and older, regardless of income, living in the counties of York, Franklin, and Adams.
Start/Finish	Fall 1996/ongoing.
Program	<p>A multifaceted approach covers public awareness and education, exercise, home safety, and clinical assessment.</p> <p>Separate work groups address two intervention areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Home Safety Work Group distributes a home safety checklist at local health fairs and through the Area Agency on Aging in York, Franklin, and Adams counties. • The Exercise Work Group surveys the community and seniors to identify exercise resources and to better understand both the barriers and the motivators to exercise. <p>Public awareness and education has included 15 educational presentations reaching more than 600 older adults, 3 health fair displays (home safety hazards and bathroom safety), local cable TV shows, partnerships with local electric companies for a “Light up for Fall” safety campaign, and a partnership with a local shoe store to conduct a “Fall Foot Festival” where podiatrists evaluated foot problems and made recommendations about better footwear.</p> <p>Local senior center uses senior volunteers, AmeriCorps volunteers, and/or Youth Build volunteers to target safety issues in the homes of minority residents in the City of York.</p> <p>Modifications include repairing stairwell railings and installing grab bars in the shower and/or tub area.</p>
Strengths	<p>Stresses home safety and other areas such as exercise and medication safety.</p> <p>Offers various educational materials and handouts for seniors. Because of the coalition’s extensive array of members, many educational opportunities such as local health fairs, home visiting agencies, and speakers are available to present this information to seniors.</p> <p>Program directly provides some repairs.</p>
Weaknesses	The program could provide more staff to follow up on safety recommendations.
Future Plans	The program is currently developing criteria for screening and selecting homes and working on procedures to implement a more extensive home repair program. This will involve establishing partnerships with local builders and contractors and developing an evaluation process. Implementation depends on funding.

- Materials** Educational handouts include information about fall risk factors, the benefits of exercise and *Countdown to Fitness* to help seniors get started; bathroom safety and steps to take to reduce chances of falling; a diagram of a house with four rooms with instructions to identify fall hazards; and advice on selecting properly fitting shoes.
- A home safety checklist includes the overall home, specific rooms, and outdoor areas. It also includes guidelines for selecting a contractor if repairs are needed. The checklist was prepared by the Fall Injury Prevention Coalition and adapted from *A Housing Safety Checklist* by Sarah D. Kirby, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. It is available in English and Spanish.
- Funding** York Health System Hospital Auxiliary and contributions from partners.
- Primary Contact** Barbara Kovacs, M.P.A., Assistant Director
York City Bureau of Health
1 Marketway West
York, PA 17401-1231
(717) 854-7724
- Partners** York Health System
Community Health Improvement Department
1001 S. George St.
York, PA 17405
(717) 851-3222
- Adams County Area Agency on Aging, Chambersburg Hospital, Crispus Attucks Association, Franklin County Area Agency on Aging, Hanover Healthcare Plus, HEALTHSOUTH, Rehabilitation Hospital of York, Manor Care Health Services, Memorial Health Systems, Penn State Cooperative Extension, VNA of York County, York City Bureau of Health, York County Area Agency on Aging, York Health System, and York Housing Authority.

SOUTHEASTERN UTAH DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT Price, Utah

Target Population	People age 60 years and older (95% of clients) or younger patients with lifelong disabling conditions living in Carbon, Emery, Grand, and San Juan counties who need equipment.
Start/Finish	1994/ongoing
Program	<p>Addresses safety issues for each patient admitted as well as for the family, in conjunction with local home health agencies.</p> <p>Works in conjunction with the Area Agency on Aging/Alternative program.</p> <p>The local health department conducts initial training and educational programs.</p> <p>An RN, LPN, OT, or family member conducts the home safety survey.</p> <p>Supplies provided include grab bars, shower chairs, transfer benches, commodes, toilet seat risers (2", 4", 5", or 6"), walkers, canes, medicine lock boxes, and smoke alarms.</p>
Strengths	<p>There is no cost to the client for labor or most materials.</p> <p>Occupational therapists report seeing more rapid improvement following injury and surgery among those seniors who have received equipment. Clients are achieving greater independence, are able to stay in their own homes longer, and are postponing the need to relocate to nursing homes.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>The program no longer employs a handyman. A family member or other resource must provide the necessary installations.</p> <p>Recent funding has restricted the program's ability to purchase some new equipment. The program is currently operating with supplies from in-stock inventory.</p>
Future Plans	Continue current operation. Depending on program funding, the client may be asked to pay \$5 to \$10 towards each piece of equipment.
Materials	<p>Checklist, <i>Assessment of Falls</i>.</p> <p>Home safety checklist and survey, <i>Fall Prevention for the Elderly — An Information Packet for Fall Monitor Volunteers</i>, prepared by the Utah Department of Health.</p> <p>Presentations about fall awareness that include overheads highlighting causes of falls, the extent of the problem, fall prevention, attitudes, and the proper way to fall. Also emphasizes physical risk factors, medications, and environmental risk factors (lighting, stairs, obstructions, floors, and clothing).</p> <p>Video, <i>Head Over Heels</i>, from Terra Nova Films, Inc.</p>

Additional patient and/or family education includes a handout, *Senior Health — Preventing Falls*, from Krames Communications; a booklet, *About Patient Safety in the Home*, from Channing Bete Co.; a booklet, *Safety and Comfort in Your Home — Tips for Staying Independent*, from Krames Communications (large print, easy to read and follow).

Liability waiver.

Funding

Utah Health Department through the Preventive Health & Health Services Block Grant.

Primary Contact

Georgina Novak, Community Health Educator
Southeastern Utah District Health Department
28 South 100 East
P.O. Box 800
Price, UT 84501
(435) 637-3671

YORK COUNTY FIRE & LIFE SAFETY York County, Virginia

Target Population	<p>Targets seniors and younger people with disabilities or those at risk for falls. However, any York County resident can schedule a home screening. There is no age requirement for service to seniors.</p> <p>Any patient assisted by a York County medic will receive recommendations if there is identified need, regardless of the jurisdiction in which the patient lives.</p>
Start/Finish	1995/ongoing
Program	<p>York County Department of Fire & Life Safety began the Fall Prevention Program to increase awareness and promote fall prevention modifications.</p> <p>Local hospitals and nursing homes arrange presentations for area senior groups and for caregivers.</p> <p>Recognizes that simple home modifications or referral to a physical or occupational therapist can reduce fall risk.</p> <p>By observing the scene of a fall, medics potentially can minimize the chance of reoccurrence. While assisting a patient, a medic may recognize a hazard that places the patient at risk for falls.</p> <p>If the patient is not being transported, a fall prevention evaluation may be performed at that time. If the fall occurs late at night or at a time when the system resources are low, the home screening may be scheduled for a more appropriate time</p> <p>The program offers minor home modifications. Larger repairs, including grab bars, are provided through referrals. Seniors are given a list of recommended sources.</p>
Strengths	<p>Follow-ups are conducted in conjunction with the person's doctor, including recommendations for physical therapy.</p> <p>Conducts a 2-week follow-up to assess whether the person has initiated any recommendations from the original assessment.</p>
Weaknesses	Repairs are not provided directly. However, seniors are provided a list of recommended repair sources.
Future Plans	Continue present operation. Broadcast "Fall Safety Tips" on a local cable channel.
Materials	<p>Fall Prevention Start-Up Kits are available to program personnel. These include a ten minute training video, a copy of the recommendation form, an example of a resource list, and a list of implementation guidelines.</p> <p>Recommendation form, list identifying resources to accomplish recommendations, brochures and handouts.</p>

Funding

On duty personnel provide this “value added service” so personnel costs are negligible. Administrative costs are minimal and funded through the Department’s general operating budget.

Primary Contact

Carrie Christ, PT, NREMT-P
York County Fire & Life Safety
P.O. Box 532
Yorktown, VA 23690
(757) 890-3600