

## 4 Prevention of Falls

### Key Facts:

A range of Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) help assist in reducing falls including occupational therapists. These services include specific exercise programmes and safety awareness around the home. There have been reported success rates of over a 50% reduction of subsequent falls for those receiving these types of interventions. The cost of fractures following a fall in the elderly is significantly high and is borne by both health and social care. Key objectives for developing falls prevention services include: early intervention to restore independence, and preventing frailty, promoting bone health and reducing accidents; all of which involve AHPs.

Occupational therapists' interventions include:

- Strength and balance training
- Health and safety checks
- Provision of equipment and adaptations
- Practise in getting up from the floor and group training sessions

### Cost Benefit

- A fall at home that leads to a hip fracture costs the state £28,665 on average (726 million a year in total). This is 4.5 times the average cost of a major housing adaptation and over 100 times the cost of fitting hand and grab rails to prevent falls. (Heywood et al 2007)
- The provision of a home safety programme and exercise programme delivered by occupational therapists was found to reduce falls significantly (Campbell AJ et al, 2005)
- A community based occupational therapy based falls prevention service cut the number of falls among older people by half. This evidence was published in the BMJ and article on this can be found at: [www.bit.ly/bmDGly](http://www.bit.ly/bmDGly)

### References

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