

Title of Intervention: The Harstad Injury Prevention Study

Intervention Strategies: Provider Education, Individual Education, Supportive Relationships, Group Education, Environments and Policies, Campaigns and Promotions

Purpose of the Intervention: To prevent fractures resulting from falls

Population: Adults aged 65 years and older

Setting: Six municipalities in the Norwegian city of Harstad (population 22,500); home-based, community-based, health care facility-based

Partners: Hospitals, public and private organizations, press outlets, community organizations

Intervention Description:

- **Provider Education:** Home nurses, nurses-aids and other health professionals attended a course about detecting and remedying home hazards. They learned about local and national information relevant to falls and fractures prevention in the elderly. To promote the use of safety items and the perception of their usefulness, "victim stories" from the local coalition were used when educating health workers.
- **Individual Education:** A special health station was established where older adults could come for routine health consultations. Home safety education was carried out by public health nurses.
- **Supportive Relationships:** High-risk older adults living in their own homes were visited by the local public health service. The aim of the visits was to promote environmental safety, a healthy diet and lifestyle and the reduction of isolation and inactivity.
- **Group Education:** Physical exercise for elderly people was provided in weekly "work out" sessions in community gyms.
- **Environments and Policies:** To fix detected home hazards, the injury prevention group established a service whereby pensioners skilled in manual work could be summoned to improve the physical environment in a participant's home. The cost of this work was a third of market price and paid for by the participant. Safety items like anti-slide material and grab bars for stairs and bathrooms were made available at the city pensioners' center. Boot "spiking" was done by a garage as a low-cost service to senior citizens to prevent falls on icy pavements (done in the same way tires are spiked). A delivery of sand to homes for gritting driveways, stairs and yards was arranged.
- **Campaign and Promotions:** Media outlets were used to promote the falls prevention program. The availability and use of the safety boots was promoted through local media and the injury prevention network.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- **Staff/Volunteers:** Home visitors, nurses, instructors, skilled workers
- **Training:** Not mentioned
- **Technology:** Not mentioned
- **Space:** Rooms for health stations, provider education sessions
- **Budget:** Not mentioned
- **Intervention:** Education materials, boot spikes, sand, anti-slide material, grab bars
- **Evaluation:** Medical records

Evaluation:

- **Design:** Quasi-experimental
- **Methods and Measures:** Hospital records were reviewed for falls data.

Outcomes:

- **Short Term Impact:** Not measured

- Long Term Impact: The intervention group had a significant reduction in fractures, while the control group saw an increase in fractures. Females aged 80 and below still living in their own homes were the only group to have a significant reduction in falls, other groups decreased but not significantly. Men aged 80 years and below saw the greatest decrease in fractures in traffic areas during winter. The fracture rate increased in nursing homes.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Not mentioned

Citation(s):

Ytterstad B. The Harstad injury prevention study: community based prevention of fall-fractures in the elderly evaluated by means of a hospital based injury recording system in Norway. *J Epidemiol Community Health*. Oct 1996;50(5):551-558.

Ytterstad B, Wasmuth HH. The Harstad Injury Prevention Study: evaluation of hospital-based injury recording and community-based intervention for traffic injury prevention. *Accid Anal Prev*. Feb 1995;27(1):111-123.

Ytterstad B. The Harstad injury prevention study: hospital-based injury recording used for outcome evaluation of community-based prevention of bicyclist and pedestrian injury. *Scand J Prim Health Care*. Jun 1995;13(2):141-149.