

**Falls Prevention Task Force  
Meeting Minutes**

March 11, 2009 7:30 – 9 AM  
Fitchburg Senior Center

**Participants:** Charlene Avery, Amy Hirata, Burlie Williams, Kim Kristensen, Ruth Meyer, Adrienne Laravuso, Sandy Miskelly, Amy Schumacher, Jean O'Leary, Mary Jean Eisenga, Mara Eisch, Rand Bernatovich, Janie Riebe, Andy Kosseff, Mary Stamstad, Pam Bracey, Cheryl Wittke

**Welcome and Introductions:** Mara Eisch, nursing doctoral candidate and Adrienne Laravuso representing parish nurse network joined as new task force members.

**Stepping On:**

*Need more participants for March Stepping On Class:* Two people are signed up for March course at St. Mary's – need 4 to make it go. Registration deadline (and decision on whether to cancel) is this Friday, March 13. Contact Carmel Tesmer (258-6645) right away, please, if you know of someone who might be interested in attending. Brochure is attached.

*How can we promote Stepping On classes?* Janie Riebe explained experience with Living with Chronic Conditions program (also self-efficacy model). Lessons learned:

- Spend time promoting to clinicians – they have biggest sway with older adults
- Give short presentations at places where older adults gather – Ellyn Kroupa agreed to do this. Need to develop talking points and a list of gigs.
- Recruit peers/past program participants to make the pitch. Those who've completed the courses are best promoters.

*Ideas for venues/places to find out about large gatherings:*

- Active Aging Conference coming up – who's conducting "get up and go" screening there?
- Triad – RSVP: hold regular meetings/safety briefings. Mary Stamstad will look into whether we can make presentations at them.
- SAIL is holding an event April 29<sup>th</sup>
- West Madison Senior Coalition holds membership meetings/programs every month
- Contact Madison Senior Center about presenting before lunch is served
- Contact Chamber of Commerce or check website to see if they have a master calendar
- Meal sites
- Claire at Caregiver's group
- Health Fairs

*Insights:*

- Courses need to be offered where people are – eg. senior housing, at a senior center close to home (West Madison, Romnes, Madison Senior Center). People who need it most will be hardest to reach.
- Before pitches are made, need to have transportation resources available to share with potential participants, as lack of transportation is a barrier. RSVP program can provide rides in communities other than Madison – Cheryl will contact Jean Kunder to find out how to link.
- Make wellness the focus of Stepping On, both because "falls prevention" might scare people off and because Stepping On is larger than falls prevention

*Report from those who attended February Stepping On class (Charlene, Krista, Ruth, Kim).*

- Kim plans to hold classes at Independent Living apartments (Segoe, McKee, Olympic Village)
- Ruth has spoken with three parish nurses and planning is underway to offer Stepping On at these churches
- Charlene's open for a match
- Meriter (Krista, Amy, Charlene) are working internally to see if Meriter would offer classes (Stepping On and No Falls)

**No Falls: Report from Jean O'Leary - Great class, good participation Feb 11<sup>th</sup>.**

- *Equipment:* MSCR MAD Youth group will make rocker boards this summer (yeah!) and our friend Ed Newman at Oakwood West wood shop is cranking out about 12 a month. If folks need rocker boards, borrow from Oakwood West or hang in there and we'll have a supply for you eventually.
- *Promotion:* Same issues as Stepping On – would be helpful to have No Falls alumni make pitches to prospective participants. Ask Ellyn/other volunteers to promote No Falls in addition to Stepping On.
- *Consistency in program delivery:* Cheryl will create an “application form” and we ask that everyone who offers the class uses it and shares with Task Force so we have participant information for follow-up/evaluation.
- *Home Safety Checks:* Since No Falls + home safety checks and vision screenings = 39% falls risk reduction we want to provide info on how to schedule home safety assessment to course participants. Mary Stamstad from RSVP noted that Task Force's work has increased demand while volunteer pool is down. Cheryl will create a handout for No Falls trainings that lists home safety check options.
- *Scholarships:* different organizations have their own means to provide them – Task Force will look around for funding as well.
- *Consistency in registration fees:* Task Force is seeking agreement with all organizations that offer No Falls courses that are open to the public to set the cost at \$30 (\$2/class). Cheryl will develop a draft policy and send it to the group for comment.

**Courses planned:**

- Fitchburg Senior Center: May is Older Americans Month – focus is on wellness, strength and balance. They'll launch No Falls class
- MSCR – No Falls course to be offered in the fall in addition to Balancing Act
- Waunakee Senior Center – offering No Falls and Stepping On in partnership with Karen Neff, private OT/fitness instructor who attended both trainings and Jacqui Ziegler trained in No Falls. They're working out scheduling and logistics.
- St. Ann's in Stoughton: Amy Evans, St. Mary's PT who attended training has talked with parish nurse and is planning on offering this class there.

**PLEASE LET CHERYL KNOW COURSE DETAILS WHEN YOU PLAN TO HOLD A CLASS (NO FALLS AND STEPPING ON) SO WE CAN KEEP A CONSISTENT UP-TO-DATE LIST AT UNITED WAY 2-1-1 AND SAFE COMMUNITIES WEBSITE**

**Meeting on evaluation and next steps: report - Sandy Miskelly:**

A small group of us from the falls task force held a meeting yesterday to plan for some uniform outcome measurement for home health patients who are participating in the OTAGO falls prevention program. Present: Cheryl Wittke, Terri Shea, Sandy Miskelly, Kathy Welnick, Joyce Pohl, Mary Jean Eisenga, and Jane Bernatovich

We had a great discussion re: which tools and tests might best show patient progress and allow us to evaluate our interventions. We also talked about appropriate handoffs from home health to outpatient therapy.

We agreed to do pre- and post- testing of patients using these 4 measures:

- Chair stand
- 4 position balance test
- Timed get up and go
- Dynamic gait index

We at UW Home Health and Home Health United plan to collect the pre and post test data from 3/1/09-8/31/09 and then meet again in Sept 09 to share our findings. \*\*\*Dottie and Nancy, we'd love to get Meriter HH involved! Give me a call and we can meet with you to bring you into the loop,

or do a phone conference to update you on this initiative so your therapists can participate. Great PI project!\*\*\*

For handoffs to outpt PT, we agreed that Home Health United will have the PT write something up in the home to send to outpatient therapy with the patient. UW Home Health will fax the med sheet and dc summary to the outpatient therapy site. In both cases, a call will also be made to the outpt therapist if the pt has an extremely complex situation or a story to tell.

**At today's Task Force meeting, pushed back start date for data collection to May and run through September 31; meet in October 09 to share findings. Contact Sandy Miskelly for more information.**

**NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:**

**Wednesday, May 13  
7:30 - 9 AM  
Fitchburg Senior Center**

**AGENDA: Revisit home safety and EMS links (plan for EMS to refer people they assist after a fall to case managers); wrap up taxonomy; check in on course offerings; possible report from Mara on data collection/evaluation project plans**