

30 March 2017

## **April falls!..... falls prevention**

### **Falls are a serious cause of patient harm**

In Wairarapa, almost 250 people over 50 years old are hospitalised each year after suffering a fall. It has been estimated that one third of people aged over 65, and half of people over 80 years, suffer at least one fall per year.

#### **You can avoid falls by:**

- Improving your balance and strength with exercise that is right for you
- Asking your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for a review of your medicines
- Having annual eye check ups and updating your glasses
- Keeping a careful eye out for frosty paths and steps during the winter season
- Wearing sensible, non-slip footwear

#### **Make a safer home for yourself:**

- Identify any potential trip hazards throughout your home – check cords, carpets, and rugs
- Clear obstacles from hallways
- Make sure furniture is easier to get into and out of
- Place grip rails in bathrooms and stairways
- Check that lighting is adequate
- Keep items used regularly within easy reach

#### **Ask, assess, act!**

Is the older person in your care, or who you care about, at risk of falling?

**Ask** how they are doing, how mobile are they, how their coordination is holding up.

**Assess** their physical strength and activity, vision and cognition, home safety and medicines.

**Act** by referring to a specialist or helping safeguard their home and lifestyle.

ACC can provide more information on keeping you and your home safe. Call 0800 101 996 or visit [www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz)

For more information:

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