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ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਤਰਜਮੇ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ فون ਕਰੋ: 01932 723553

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Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

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Be **SAFE** Stay **Alert** for **Falls** **Event** Preventing falls during your stay in hospital



Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01932 723553 or email pals@asph.nhs.uk. If you remain concerned, PALS can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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Version: 1

Published: June 2015

Review: June 2017

Falls and older people

The risk of falling increases with age, although not all people fall when they get older. Someone who has already had a fall is more likely to fall again in the future. Falling and the fear of falling can make older people lose confidence in going about their day to day activities, and may affect their independence. Although most falls don't result in serious injury, some cause broken bones, from which it may be difficult to recover.

Who should read this leaflet?

The leaflet aims to give advice on how to prevent falls during a hospital stay for all people aged 65 years and over.

It is also for people aged between 50 and 64 years who are judged at being at higher risk of falling because of an underlying condition.

Be **SAFE** with us

At Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals, we aim to help you to be **SAFE** during your stay in hospital.

When you are admitted to the ward, your falls risk factors will be identified. Working together with the nurses, doctors and therapists, we will support you and your family to keep you **SAFE** and minimise the likelihood of a fall.

A member of your healthcare team should talk with you about your risk of falling and how to avoid falls, and explain any tests and care you receive in detail. You should have the opportunity to ask any questions you have.

Checking balance and walking

If you have had a fall or you are at risk of having one, your balance and walking should be checked. This may involve one or more simple tests to see if your balance or walking could be improved.

'Falls risk assessment'

You should be offered a 'falls risk assessment' which aims to uncover anything that might make you more likely to fall and to see whether there are specific things that can be done to help you.

The assessment should be carried out by a healthcare professional with training and experience in helping people to avoid falls. The following page shows a checklist to support that assessment.

How your family and friends can help you while you are in hospital

- Report to staff any changes you feel may affect the patient's safety. Some medications may have side effects that produce weakness or dizziness. If you notice these symptoms, please notify the nurse.
- Before you leave the bay / room, you may have moved some items around the bed. We ask that you make sure the nurse call bell and bedside table is within reach of the patient (tissues / water glass etc.)
- Ask the patient to consider if their family or friend member should stay longer if they are at high risk of falling or they are confused. Speak to the nurse in charge about this.
- Report to a nurse if a patient becomes more disorientated or anxious before you leave so appropriate safety measures can be taken, such as sensor pads.
- Ask a nurse if you have any further questions about preventing falls.

- Sit for a moment and drink a glass of water before getting out of bed or a chair.
- Take your time, do one task at a time, look where you are going.
- Take your time and sit down to do a task such as washing or dressing.
- Ensure you are well balanced before you start walking. Use the walking aid prescribed for you.
- Wear your correct glasses and make sure they are clean and clear.
- If you wear a hearing aid, ensure it is working properly.
- Let staff know which side of the bed your normally get out.
- Wear non-slip footwear or non-slip socks or stockings.

Falls Risk Factors - Checklist

Risk Factor	Tick here if relevant
1. A change in your general health, cardiac event, infection or specific health conditions (arthritis, diabetes, stroke, Parkinson's Disease, dementia and neurological problems)	
2. Medications / surgery / anaesthetics which affect co-ordination, judgment and balance	
3. Your blood pressure drops too much when you stand up suddenly and causes dizziness	
4. Your unfamiliar environment may cause you to be disorientated	
5. Problems with balance or gait due to lack of exercise or muscle weakness	
6. Vision and hearing problems can cause difficulties in moving around	
7. Foot problems that cause pain or wearing unsafe footwear may cause you to trip	
8. Hurrying to the toilet may cause you to lose your balance	
9. Due to a previous experience, you have a fear of falling	
10. Equipment and your belongings around your bed space may be hazardous	

Our responsibilities to you

Having been assessed through the checklist on page 5, the healthcare professional will then carry out the following checks and give you advice to help you to reduce the chances of a fall:

- Testing your heart, blood pressure and eyesight.
- Checking to see whether you have problems with your memory and how well your nervous system is.
- Checking to see if you are at risk of osteoporosis (a condition in which bones become fragile and break easily).
- Checking to see whether you have problems with bladder control (urinary incontinence).
- Looking at the medications you are taking and seeing if any adjustments need to be made.
- Helping you to familiarise yourself with the ward e.g. knowing where the toilet, bathroom and nursing station are located. Ensuring your bed and chair are positioned well.
- You will be given instructions on how to use your nurse call bell, which will be placed near you for easy

reach. You may be provided with a sensor mat which makes a loud alarm to call for attention.

- You will be given instructions on how to use the switch for the bed light.
- We may use equipment on the ward as extra protection for you, such as bedrails, crash mats, ultra-low beds, non-slip mats etc.
- Ask us for assistance if you need to get up – **DO NOT** attempt get up on your own if you are having difficulties.

How you can help us and yourself

Here are a few tips to help you to reduce a chance of a fall:

- Let staff know if you have any pain, dizziness or fear of falling. Ask for assistance if you are having difficulties.
- Drink fluids regularly, but less in the evening to reduce the need to go to the toilet during the night.
- Take extra care when you use a commode or you are in the toilet – a nurse may stay with you.