Saskatoon Health Region defines a “fall” as:
“An unexpected event that results in a person coming to rest on the ground or floor or lower level with or without injury.” (Lamb 2005)

This includes:
- An unwitnessed fall where the person is unable to explain the event and there is evidence to support a fall occurred;
- Where a person is eased to the floor by a staff or family member.

Working Together to Prevent Falls and Related Injuries Strategy

There may be additional definitions in various tools that you may need to adhere to in your assessments.

All patients, residents and clients have risks for falls. The goal is to reduce them. Everyone should be involved in learning about and preventing falls.

Ask these three questions before leaving the care setting:
- Do you need to use the toilet?
- Do you have any pain or discomfort?
- Do you need anything before I leave?

Asking these three simple questions will:
- Reduce the risk of falls
- Decrease call bell use
- Increase client satisfaction

There are 5 main components to Fall Prevention and Injury Reduction in Saskatoon Health Region.

1. Universal Falls Prevention (S.A. F. E) (Applies to all clients, patients and residents)

   Safe environment
   - Bottom bed rails down when appropriate
   - Clear pathways of clutter
   - Brakes “on”
   - Lighting appropriate

   Assist with mobility
   - Mobilize two - three times per day
   - Regular toileting
   - TLR documentation
   - Mobility aides within reach
   - Reinforcement of safe transferring behaviours

   Falls risk reduction
   - Call bell and personal items within reach
   - Bed lowered to appropriate height
   - Proper footwear available and in use
   - Safe and regular toileting
   - Frequent room checks

2. Multifactorial Risk Assessment

   - Assess all clients on admission and/or move in, on a regular schedule, and following change of status and following a fall

3. Communication and Education About Fall Risk

   - Communicate the results of the fall risk assessment to the client and family, and healthcare team
   - Educate all staff on fall prevention/injury reduction strategies and on specific fall risk factors
   - Educate all clients who have been assessed at high risk for a fall and fall-related injury and their family regarding fall risk status.

4. Client Level

   - Create an individualized care plan based on identified risk factors.
   - Develop policies for fall prevention/injury reduction management, that includes: families and/or the organization role responsibilities for fall risk assessment
   - Develop an approach for regular safety checks
   - Investigate falls, near falls (includes unwitnessed) to determine contributing factors

5. Organizational Level

   - Implement individualized interventions targeted to the client-specific risk factors.
   - Modify the environment and provide personal protective devices eg. Hip Protectors, Fall Mats, Alarms

Fall Prevention/Injury Reduction Intervention Model

Adapted from Safer Healthcare Now! June 2013
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