

**Year End Report 2019: Finding Our Balance:**  
***Washington State Action Plan for Older Adult Falls Prevention***



A photograph of five diverse older adults (three men and two women) smiling and posing together outdoors in a park-like setting. They are dressed in casual athletic wear.

**FINDING OUR  
BALANCE**

Washington State Action Plan for  
Older Adult Falls Prevention  
2018

Winner of the  
2019  
Notable Documents Award  
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## **Introduction**

**Finding Our Balance: Washington State Action Plan for Older Adult Falls Prevention** was published in September 2018 by the Washington State Department of Health, Injury and Violence Prevention Section. The Department of Health (DOH) developed this five-year plan in close collaboration with a diverse advisory group, made up largely of members of the Washington State Falls Prevention Coalition. The advisory group included participants from academia, elder care, healthcare, first responder agencies and many others sectors. Development of the plan was supported by funding from the Washington Department of Social and Health Services Aging and Long Term Support Administration (ALTS). The plan consists of six strategy areas and contains 48 goals designed to reduce falls and fall-related injuries among older adults. The plan also contains eight desired outcomes, based on epidemiological falls data from Washington State. Desired outcomes are not reported in this document, as they are intended to be measured over a longer amount of time. The goals and outcomes in **Finding Our Balance** will be measured from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

The six strategy areas of the plan are:

- Strategy Area 1: Strong and Effective Community Partnerships
- Strategy Area 2: Public Awareness and Education
- Strategy Area 3: Prevention Across the Continuum of Care
- Strategy Area 4: Expanded Reach and Access to Evidence-Based Programs and Community Screenings
- Strategy Area 5: Effective Interventions for High-Risk and Underserved Older Adults
- Strategy Area 6: Improved Safety in Homes and Communities

DOH convened a wide and hardworking workgroup membership to implement **Finding Our Balance**, and wishes to thank them for contributing their time, effort and ideas to reaching the year one implementation goals. In 2019, 51 workgroup members participated on 22 conference calls and project team meetings. The three workgroups are:

- Partnership, Safety and Awareness (Goal areas 1, 2 & 6)
  - Project Team: Senior Housing
- Care Continuum and High Risk (Goal areas 3 & 5)
- Evidence-Based Programs and Community Screening (Goal area 4)

This Year End Report summarizes progress made towards goals and desired outcomes between January 1<sup>st</sup>-December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. It also presents information on collaborations and resources used to meet plan goals. Finally, it outlines future directions for implementation of the plan and achievement of goals.

## **STRATEGY AREA 1:** **Strong and Effective Community Partnerships**

*“Effective and sustainable partnerships are key to connecting older adults with local falls prevention programs and services”* (Finding Our Balance, 2018). This strategy area focuses on building falls prevention resources through community collaboration. Goals under this strategy area include development and strengthening of partnerships. An excellent example of community partnerships are Washington’s seven Local and Regional Falls Prevention Coalitions. These Coalitions bring together local organizations and falls prevention partners to share information, develop outreach materials, organize events and provide presentations for the community. During 2019, approximately 125 people from over 100 organizations actively participated in Local and Regional Falls Prevention Coalitions in Washington State. The following chart summarizes the achievements of these groups in 2019.

Coalition Name	Host Organization(s)	Major Activities in 2019
Benton and Franklin Counties Falls Prevention Coalition	Benton-Franklin Health District	Coalition was established in 2018. Broad membership enabled increase in collaboration between emergency medical services and social services providers, to connect older adults who call 9-1-1 for falls to services in their community.
Eastern Washington Falls Prevention Coalition	Spokane Regional Health District	Coalition worked on their strategic plan items, including conducting a survey of healthcare provider's attitudes about falls prevention.
King County Falls Prevention Coalition	Collaboratively hosted; leadership in 2019 provided by Kline Galland Home Health and Highline Medical Center	Coalition was established in 2018. They completed and distributed falls prevention resource lists specific to regions of King County.  Coalition participated in two fall prevention events in September, 2019. Have included guest speakers at their meetings, and members of the coalition have increased collaboration between their organizations.
Kittitas County Falls Prevention Coalition	Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Kittitas County	Coalition re-formed in 2019.
Lewis-Mason-Thurston Falls Prevention Coalition	Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging	Provided falls risk screenings at a Senior Health event in Olympia in September. Began rotation of meetings between their three counties.

Pierce County Falls Prevention Coalition	Collaboratively hosted; leadership in 2019 provided by CHI Franciscan, Mid-County Community Center and space provided by Pierce County Aging and Disability Services	Reached 2,431 people with outreach activities in 2019. This included many presentations, a large Falls Prevention Awareness Day event in September and participation in other events throughout the year.  Established the Coalition as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
Snohomish County Falls Prevention Coalition	Right At Home Snohomish County	Coalition was re-formed in 2019, and developed objectives and goals as a group.

### **Goal Progress Profile: Goal 1-A**

To expand on the success of our Local and Regional Falls Prevention Coalitions, DOH and the Partnership, Safety and Awareness Workgroup collaborated with an intern from Pacific Lutheran University to meet Goal 1-A:

“Convene a workgroup of community organizations, agencies and subject matter experts to review best practices and develop the Community Falls Prevention Toolkit. Include emergency medical services, area agencies on aging, health homes, and pharmacy.”



In the spring and summer of 2019, the Partnership, Safety and Awareness Workgroup reviewed national and state level resources, and created a plan for development of the toolkit. In the fall of 2019, a Falls Prevention Intern from Pacific Lutheran University worked on toolkit contents, interviewed leads from Local and Regional Falls Prevention Coalitions in Washington and created a report.

The next step is for the Partnership, Safety and Awareness Workgroup to review the report from the intern, ensure contents are accurate and finalize the toolkit. This timeline has been extended from December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

## **Goal Status Report for Strategy Area 1: Strong and Effective Community Partnerships**

Goal	Goal Text	Year Due (Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> )	Status and Next Steps	Resources
1-A	Convene a workgroup of community organizations, agencies and subject matter experts to review best practices and develop the Community Falls Prevention Toolkit. Include emergency medical services, area agencies on aging, health homes, and pharmacy.	2019	Completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of existing tools</li><li>• Outline of toolkit</li><li>• Intern's report</li></ul> Next steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review Report</li><li>• Finalize contents</li></ul>	Time investment by DOH staff, workgroup members, and Pacific Lutheran University Intern.
1-B	Implement Community Falls Prevention Toolkit in 10 geographically diverse communities; publicly recognize participating communities.	2020	Not yet started; must complete Goal 1-A first.	N/A
1-C	Develop partnerships with 10 community service social organizations.	2022	Not yet started.	N/A
1-D	Develop partnerships with four payer partners to advance system based changes that prioritize falls prevention and build sustainable partnerships with community based organizations. Include health systems, Accountable Care Organizations, Accountable Communities of Health, Health Care Authority, and Medicare Advantage plans.	2023	New or expanded partnerships in 2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amerigroup Medicare Advantage</li><li>• Kaiser Medicare Advantage Eastern WA</li><li>• Signal Health Medicare Advantage</li></ul>	Time investment by staff at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DOH</li><li>• Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern WA</li><li>• Southeast Washington Aging and Long Term Care</li><li>• Sound Generations</li></ul>

## **STRATEGY AREA 2:** **Public Awareness and Education**

*“There is a critical need to raise awareness that falls are not a normal part of aging, and that most falls are preventable. Providing better information and promoting personal responsibility to older adults for falls prevention reduces the stigma around falling that many older adults experience”* (Finding Our Balance, 2018). Strategy Area 2 focuses on increasing knowledge about falls prevention in older adults and the larger community. Goals in this area encompass electronic and interpersonal information sharing to raise the profile of falls prevention across the state. National efforts aligned with our statewide work in 2019, as evidenced by the <http://www.homemods.org> site, created by the University of Southern California’s Falls Prevention Center of Excellence.

### **Goal Progress Profile: Goal 2-A**

In the spring of 2019, the Partnership, Safety and Awareness Workgroup looked at several existing informational websites to determine their viability to meet Goal 2-A “Expand existing statewide website to include home safety resources and updated information on evidence-based programs; provide outreach to health care providers about statewide website.”

The websites considered included:

- Homemods (<http://www.homemods.org>) a national provider directory and repository of home modification information.
- Living Well (<http://livingwell.doh.wa.gov>) a statewide website for evidence-based programs in Washington.
- Community Living Connections (<http://www.waclc.org>) a statewide resource directory for aging and disability services in Washington, managed by ALTSA.

As a result of the Workgroup’s review of these sites, DOH took the following actions:

- For Homemods, a partnership with University of Southern California was established to improve Washington’s presence on this website.
- For Living Well, updates were made to improve information on falls prevention programs, including the addition of Otago, correction of links to programs and streamlining of falls prevention information.
- For Community Living Connections, a referral page for health care providers was created on the site to facilitate referrals to falls prevention programs and resources. This was funded by a grant from the Administration on Community Living. Additionally, DOH developed new partnerships with staff at ALTSA to include falls prevention programs in the CLC website resource library.

## **Goal Status Report for Strategy Area 2: Public Awareness and Education**

Goal	Goal Text	Year Due (Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> )	Status and Next Steps	Resources
2-A	Expand existing statewide website to include home safety resources and updated information on evidence-based programs; provide outreach to health care providers about statewide website.	2019	<p>Expanded and/or updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living Well</li> <li>• Community Living Connections</li> </ul> <p>New partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homemods</li> <li>• Community Living Connections</li> </ul>	<p>Time investment by Workgroup Members, and by staff at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOH</li> <li>• ALTSA</li> <li>• USC</li> </ul> <p>Technical assistance on web updates was provided by DOH website staff.</p> <p>Grant funds from Administration on Community Living (grant deliverable) supported the CLC referral page development.</p>
2-B	Develop a live educational seminar for older adults on how to safely stop a fall, minimize injury when falling, and get up after a fall. Provide the seminar in 5 geographically diverse communities.	2019	A workshop meeting this goal was developed in the fall/winter of 2019 by a member of the Pierce County Falls Prevention Coalition. It was scheduled to be piloted in early 2020, but was delayed due to COVID-19	Time investment by Workgroup Members and workshop developer.
2-C	Partner with Aging and Long Term Support Administration and Area Agencies on Aging to educate family caregivers	2020	Workgroup members decided to collaborate with ALTSA and Washington area agencies on aging for this	N/A

	on falls prevention programs and interventions.		goal, but have not started working on it yet.	
2-D	Develop and disseminate a statewide falls prevention media and volunteer campaign, with a focus on positive messaging; include materials adaptable to local needs.	2023	Workgroup members decided that goal 2-A must be completed first.	N/A
2-E	Recruit public figure(s) to champion falls prevention in the media.	2022	Workgroup members brainstormed ideas, determined that we must have a specific ask before approaching potential partners, and are holding on this goal for now.	N/A
2-F	Explore opportunities to join with broad-based and diverse local and state-wide healthy aging partnerships.	2023	Progress made: • Wenatchee falls prevention partners have assisted with the creation of a regional Healthy Aging Coalition.	Time investment by Wenatchee falls prevention partners.



## **STRATEGY AREA 3:** **Prevention Across the Continuum of Care**

*"Medical and health care professionals have a unique and powerful role in helping to prevent falls and fall-related injuries. Their expertise and daily interaction with older adults allows them to help their patients take action to lower their falls risk."* The Continuum of Care Strategy Area includes goals regarding many levels of settings and healthcare professions, from preventative services to prevent a fall to post-hospital care. Partnerships within the healthcare system are vital to the success of falls prevention efforts. Helping providers to improve their understanding of falls, and how to prevent them, is key to getting this information to older adults.



### **Goal Progress Profile: Goals 3-D, E, H & I**

In late 2018 and early 2019, the Care Continuum and High Risk Workgroup grouped goals 3-D, E, H & I. These goals cover a broad range of educational goals for specific provider types. Instead of creating a new curriculum for each type of provider, the workgroup members decided to examine currently available trainings and see if these would assist in meeting these goals. Two workgroup members from Pacific Lutheran University and Washington State University-Vancouver School of Nursing compiled a list of existing curricula and categorized them by different qualities such as cost, time, and source of information. In the summer of 2019, a workgroup member from the University of Washington School of Nursing volunteered one of her students to evaluate the existing and newly identified curricula. This evaluation began in winter 2020 and was completed in May 2020. The next steps for these goals are to have the Care Continuum and High Risk Workgroup select the recommended curricula to promote to different provider types.

### **Goal Status Report for Strategy Area 3: Prevention Across the Continuum of Care**

Goal	Goal Text	Year Due (Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> )	Status and Next Steps	Resources
3-A	Convene a cross-sector workgroup of skilled nursing staff, organizational leadership, and subject matter experts to review best practices and develop the Skilled Nursing Facility Falls Prevention Toolkit.	2020	<p>Workgroup discussed, and funding will likely be needed. Possible mechanisms include Civil Money Penalty Funds.</p> <p>Existing toolkit from AHRQ is helpful starting place but is long and difficult to use. Next step would be to form a Project Group for this goal.</p>	N/A
3-B	Provide continuing education (CEU) training and technical assistance for implementation of the Skilled Nursing Facility Falls Prevention Toolkit in 10 geographically diverse facilities and publicly recognize participating facilities.	2021	Not yet started, must complete goal 3-A first.	N/A
3-C	Present continuing education on falls prevention at 3 statewide provider conferences.	2022	<p>Goal met. Conferences presented include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Washington Health Care Association (February, 2019)</li> <li>• Washington Home Care Coalition (July, 2019)</li> <li>• Northwest Regional Primary Care Association (October, 2019)</li> </ul>	<p>Time investment by DOH staff and Coalition members.</p> <p>DOH use of funding from Older American Act through interagency agreement with DSHS (grant deliverable).</p>
3-D	Provide education on falls prevention screening and intervention to 200 care	2021	Goals D, E, H and I are grouped.	<p>Time investment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff at DOH</li> </ul>

	coordinators and community health workers.		<p>Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of existing curriculums</li> </ul> <p>In progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of curricula by UW Nursing students</li> <li>• Next steps: Review student's feedback and recommendations</li> </ul> <p>Specific to goal 3-D, DOH completed training of 60 care coordinators in 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty at :</li> <li>• Pacific Lutheran University</li> <li>• Washington State University - Vancouver School of Nursing</li> <li>• University of Washington School of Nursing, Joanne Montgomery Endowed Professorship</li> <li>• Students at University of Washington School of Nursing</li> </ul>
3-E	Create approved continuing education training course on falls prevention for Washington emergency medical services providers; train 200 providers from geographically diverse communities.	2021	Goals D, E, H and I are grouped. See Goal 3-D for details.	See Goal 3-D for details.
3-F	Partner with subject matter experts and continuing education providers to develop a live and recorded online training for primary care providers in the CDC's Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries (STEADI) Toolkit and evidence-based falls	2021	Workgroup discussed using existing resources from University of Washington Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Center. Next step would be to form a Project Group for this goal	N/A

	prevention programs. Include culturally and linguistically appropriate falls prevention education for multiple patient populations.			
3-G	Partner with the Washington State Pharmacy Association and community pharmacies to train 100 pharmacists from geographically diverse communities in the STEADI Program.	2021	<p>Workgroup discussed doing a pilot project with a pharmacy, using technology solutions to identify high-risk meds and possible collaboration with Walgreens and CDC STEADI.</p> <p>New or increased collaborations in 2019 with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Washington School of Pharmacy</li> <li>• CDC STEADI Researchers</li> <li>• Walgreens</li> </ul> <p>Next steps: identify and apply for funding for pilot project. A project group was being formed, but has been put on hold due to COVID-19.</p>	Time investment by DOH staff and workgroup members.
3-H 3-H cont	<p>Partner with Aging and Long Term Support Administration, continuing education providers, home care agencies, and subject matter experts to develop an online and live falls prevention module for professional caregivers and train 200 caregivers using the module. Include culturally and linguistically appropriate falls prevention education for</p>	2021	<p>Goals D, E, H and I are grouped. See Goal 3-D for details.</p>	See Goal 3-D for details.

	multiple care receiver populations.			
3-I	Partner with subject matter experts to develop online and live CEU-approved falls prevention modules for healthcare professionals, train 200 healthcare professionals using the module. Include culturally and linguistically appropriate falls prevention education for multiple care receiver populations. Priority professions will include: nursing, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy and medical assistants.	2022	Goals D, E, H and I are grouped. See Goal 3-D for details.	See Goal 3-D for details.
3-J	Develop live and web-based training on post-discharge falls prevention for acute health care facility discharge planning staff, train 50 staff from three geographically diverse communities. Develop live and web-based training on post-discharge falls prevention for acute health care facility discharge planning staff, train 50 staff from three geographically diverse communities.	2023	Workgroup discussed and decided to hold on this goal, as it is lower priority than the others in this Strategy Area.	N/A
3-K	Establish falls prevention referral systems in 15 emergency departments, in 3 geographically diverse communities; publicly recognize participating E.Ds.	2023	Workgroup explored potential models that could be expanded. Existing possible model projects in WA include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clallam County Fall Prevention Project</li> </ul>	Time investment from workgroup members.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aero Methow Consistent Care Program (Okanagan County)</li> <li>• Paramedicine Projects in Clark, Pierce and Benton counties</li> </ul>	
3-L	Explore opportunities to obtain additional data on falls-related data from emergency medical services, emergency departments and acute care.	2023	<p>DOH falls prevention staff met with staff from Rapid Health Information NetwOrk (RHINO), which gathers emergency department and primary care data, in early 2019.</p> <p>DOH falls prevention and injury epidemiology staff worked with Snohomish County Emergency Medical Services on analysis and presentation of EMS falls data. This work was presented at the Gerontological Society of America Conference in November 2019.</p> <p>Next steps are to follow up on potential for data from this source.</p>	<p>Time investment from staff at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOH Injury and Violence Prevention, IVP Epidemiologists and RHINO</li> <li>• Snohomish County Emergency Medical Services data and program staff</li> </ul> <p>DOH use of funding from Older American Act through interagency agreement with DSHS (grant deliverable)</p>

## **STRATEGY AREA 4:**

### **Expanded Reach and Access to Evidence-Based Programs and Community Screenings**

*"Importantly, evidence-based programs and community falls risk screenings help to reduce falls by educating and empowering older adults to know about and take responsibility for their falls risks"* (Finding Our Balance, 2018). This strategy area focuses on providing older adults in our communities with the resources to identify their falls risk and take action to reduce those risks. Washington State has a large variety of evidence-based falls prevention programs, and the number of available programs has increased from eight to nine since the [Finding Our Balance](#) report was published. There have also been significant expansions of programs into underserved areas of the state, thanks to funding from the Administration on Community Living. Most programs are represented in the Evidence-Based Programs and Community Screening Workgroup. A brief update on each program in the state follows:

Name of Program	Major Accomplishments in 2019	Next Steps
A Matter of Balance	Held first Matter of Balance Master Trainer Statewide Meeting in June 2019.  New Master Trainers began classes in Mason and Chelan counties.	Classes to begin in Kittitas and Yakima Counties in 2020.
EnhanceFitness	Expansion of classes into new counties: Benton, Walla Walla, Whatcom and Yakima.	New classes planned for Southeastern and Eastern WA in 2020.
FallsTalk	Conducting NIH-funded research on program effectiveness with people with dementia and their caregivers.  Expanding program reach through Parish nursing in Snohomish County.	Research will continue in 2020.
FallScape	Expanding through Parish nursing in Snohomish County.	Expansion to continue in 2020.
Otago Exercise Program	Trained forty-one Physical Therapists and PTAs in the program.  Received patient information forms from eight agencies and clinics who are providing Otago to patients.  Held four Washington Otago Network conference calls (quarterly) with clinicians from across the state participating.	Increase the number of clinics and agencies providing patient information forms.

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL)	Held trainings for the first time in Lewis and Kitsap Counties.	Strengthen instructor network with continuing education.
Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention	<p>Welcomed a new Master Trainer for Oregon and Washington, who presented at the July 2019 State Falls Prevention Coalition Meeting.</p> <p>Program was selected by Wisdom Warriors Program to be cultural tailored for Indigenous older adults.</p>	<p>Training with Tribes and Wisdom Warriors Program scheduled for February 2020.</p> <p>Training in Seattle scheduled for March 2020.</p> <p>Additional training planned for Central/Eastern WA in late 2020.</p>
Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance	<p>Held training 5 Instructor Training Workshops including one in Spokane for the first time.</p> <p>Expansion of Classes into 5 new counties including 4 in Eastern Washington.</p> <p>Conducted video conference Enhanced training for Eastern Washington Instructors</p> <p>Certified a second Master Trainer for Washington State.</p> <p>Introduced 43 Physical Therapists from across Washington to program during presentation at PTWA conference</p>	<p>Expand Instructor training workshop to Central WA in 2020.</p> <p>Expand web based continuing education</p> <p>Plan to certify 1-2 Master Trainers in 2020.</p> <p>Work with greater Seattle YMCA to update YMCA Moving For Better Balance.</p>
YMCA: Moving for Better Balance	YMCA-specific TJQ:MBB program, no general updates.	Expand to new YMCAs.

There have also been strong efforts to increase screening at health fairs and other settings. Regional and Local Falls Prevention Coalitions have contributed significantly to screening during Falls Prevention Awareness Day events and the State Falls Prevention Coalition is engaged in a project to increase screening at other times of the year.

### **Goal Progress Profile: Goal 4-H**

In 2019, Washington evidence-based falls prevention program leads, as part of the Evidence Based Program and Community Screening Workgroup, contributed efforts to increase access to their programs in underserved and rural areas of the state. This work led to significant progress on Goal 4-H “Provide 10 evidence-based program instructor trainings annually in rural and/or underserved areas.” DOH assisted with funding trainings through an Administration on Community Living grant, and an interagency agreement with DSHS. Through combined efforts, nine trainings were held in counties that are rural or underserved. These trainings were for: A Matter of Balance (2), EnhanceFitness (2), SAIL (3), and Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance (1). Next steps are to increase trainings and classes in underserved counties, including those in Southeast Washington, and to increase the diversity of program offerings in counties. No one program will work for everyone, and offering multiple programs is key to engaging a wider range of older adults in falls prevention.



**Goal Status Report for Strategy Area 4: Expanded Reach and Access to Evidence-Based Programs and Community Screenings**

Goal	Goal Text	Year Due (Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> )	Status and Next Steps	Resources
4-A	Provide educational outreach to clinicians and support Washington Otago Network to add 25 clinicians actively using the Otago Exercise Program with patients.	2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trained forty-one Physical Therapists and PTAs in the program.</li> <li>Added eight new clinicians actively using the program (as demonstrated by returning Patient Information Forms).</li> </ul>	Time investment by DOH staff, and staff at agencies and clinics implementing Otago.  Administration on Community Living funds for training costs (grant deliverable).
4-B	Partner with evidence-based programs, senior centers, area agencies on aging, activity professionals and senior housing to promote implementation of evidence-based falls prevention programs in these settings.	2021	<p>The workgroup agreed on 25% target increase from 2019 to 2021 for this goal.</p> <p>Measurement for this goal in 2019 was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Centers: approximately 108 sites</li> <li>Area Agencies on Aging: 3 new partnerships</li> <li>Activity Professionals: 5 new partnerships with assisted living</li> <li>Senior Housing: approximately 98 sites</li> </ul> <p>Next steps are to expand partnership with activity professionals in assisted living and senior housing to increase access in these settings.</p>	Time investment by staff at DOH, staff and volunteers at evidence-based program lead organizations, staff at host site organizations.  DOH and partner organization use of Administration on Community Living funds for training costs (grant deliverable).  DOH use of Older American Act funds for trainings through interagency agreement with

				DSHS (grant deliverable).
4-C	Partner with evidence-based programs to develop an insurance billing toolkit for falls prevention program reimbursement.	2022	<p>Workgroup discussed this. ACL grant has deliverables related to insurance partnerships. DOH is pursuing partnership with HCA around coverage for dual-eligible Medicaid enrollees.</p> <p>Next steps are to continue conversations with payer partners.</p>	Time investment by staff at DOH and EBP leads.
4-D	Develop a network of health care professionals to champion evidence-based falls prevention programs within their professions.	2022	<p>Washington Otago Network is working towards this goal.</p> <p>The Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Centers at UW and in Yakima are working towards this.</p> <p>Eastern WA Falls Prevention Coalition did a survey to ask providers how EBPs can better relate to them. Survey results have not yet been shared due to COVID-19 impacting staff time at SRHD.</p> <p>PT-REFER Toolkit was expanded by the University of Washington Health Promotion Research Center (UW-HPRC) and Sound Generations to be available for community organizations with EnhanceFitness classes looking to build referral relationships with physical therapy clinics.</p>	<p>Time investment by staff at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOH</li> <li>• Clinics and agencies with Otago trained clinicians</li> <li>• GWECs</li> <li>• Spokane Regional Health District</li> <li>• Sound Generations</li> <li>• UW-HPRC</li> <li>• ALTCEW</li> <li>• CHAS</li> </ul>

			In Spokane, healthcare staff at CHAS (Community Health Association of Spokane) is a good advocate for Matter of Balance program at Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern WA.	
4-E	Train 200 community members on falls risk screening tools.	2022	State Falls Prevention Coalition plans to discussed efforts to expand screening beyond Falls Prevention Awareness Day at January 2020 meeting. Actions have been put on hold due to COVID-19.	N/A
4-F	Partner with evidence-based programs to create and strengthen instructor network and conduct fidelity improvement activities.	2023	<p>A Matter of Balance's had their first Master Trainer Statewide Meeting in June 2019.</p> <p>EnhanceFitness is producing updated implementation guides and working with UW-HPRC on fidelity and sustainability.</p> <p>SAIL updated their exercise guide with corrected techniques, and plans to implement 'lunch and learns' for instructors in Western WA in 2020 (ongoing in Central WA).</p> <p>Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance held a no-cost Enhanced Training for current instructors in 2019.</p>	<p>Time investment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOH staff</li> <li>• Matter of Balance Master Trainers</li> <li>• Sound Generations staff</li> <li>• UW-HPRC staff</li> <li>• SAIL Master Trainers</li> <li>• Tai Ji Quan Master Trainers</li> </ul> <p>DOH use of Administration on Community Living funds for MOB MT Meeting (grant deliverable).</p> <p>DOH use of Older American Act funds for fidelity</p>

				activities through interagency agreement with DSHS (grant deliverable).
4-G	Provide 500 classes or workshops annually for evidence-based programs; include classes/workshops on state-wide web resource.	2023	Workgroup agreed to start measuring this goal in year 3.	N/A
4-H	Provide 10 evidence-based program instructor trainings annually in rural and/or underserved areas.	2023	Held 9 trainings in rural and/or underserved areas in 2019.  Next steps are to increase diversity of class offerings in rural/underserved counties.	<p>Time investment by Master Trainers for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Matter of Balance</li> <li>• EnhanceFitness</li> <li>• SAIL</li> <li>• Tai Ji Quan</li> </ul> <p>Space and staff time invested by training host sites.</p> <p>DOH use of Administration on Community Living funds (grant deliverable).</p> <p>DOH use of Older American Act funds through interagency agreement with DSHS (grant deliverable).</p>

## **STRATEGY AREA 5:** **Effective Interventions for High-Risk** **and Underserved Older Adults**

*“Placing closer focus on high-risk and underserved older adults moves Washington’s falls prevention work toward health equity, and affirms that all older adults are valuable members of our communities”* (Finding Our Balance, 2018). During the development of the plan, members of the advisory group called out the need for a more intentional focus on health equity and underserved populations. This strategy area covers diverse sub-populations of older adults who have been traditionally underserved by falls prevention programs. Increasing access to interventions through new and strengthened partnerships is key to achievement of these goals. The Care Continuum and High Risk Workgroup researched and discussed goal prioritization and current progress during 2019.

### **Goal Progress Profile: Goal 5-E**



In 2018, the Washington State Department of Health received a three-year Administration on Community Living Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Grant. The Wisdom Warriors Program, housed at Northwest Regional Council, is a major partner on this grant. Wisdom Warriors delivers Chronic Disease Self-Management to Indigenous communities. One of DOH's grant deliverables is to culturally tailor a falls prevention program for Indigenous older adults. This deliverable is aligned with Goal 5-E: “Develop partnerships with Tribal Nations and Tribal Organizations, as requested, to develop and disseminate culturally appropriate falls prevention materials and programs for Tribal Elders.”

In the spring of 2019, staff at the Wisdom Warriors Program reached out to tribal partners and falls prevention program leads to assess interest and learn about barriers and opportunities for program tailoring. In June of 2019, the Wisdom Warriors Conference, hosted by the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, provided an opportunity for attendees to learn about falls prevention programs. In the fall of 2019, the Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention Program was chosen to be culturally tailored. A training for tribes in this program occurred in February 2020 and was hosted by the Suquamish Tribe.

**Goal Status Report for Strategy Area 5: Effective Interventions for High-Risk and Underserved Older Adults**

Goal	Goal Text	Year Due (Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> )	Status and Next Steps	Resources
5-A	Partner with Aging and Long Term Support Administration, Memory Care Assisted Living Facilities (MCAL) and subject matter experts to review best practices and develop a staff education tool on falls prevention for MCAL. Include dementia and falls, environmental safety modifications, chronic conditions and falls, resident-specific interventions and MCAL-specific interventions.	Originally 2019, now moved to 2023	Workgroup members moved the due date for this goal to 2023, as the University of Washington's Harborview Injury Prevention Research Center (HIPRC) included work that will meet this goal in their federal grant from the CDC. The work on this goal is scheduled to start in 2021.	Federal funding from the CDC to HIPRC.  Time investment from researchers and staff at HIPRC.
5-B	Provide technical assistance with implementation of staff education tool on falls prevention for MCAL in 10 geographically diverse facilities; publicly recognize participating facilities	Originally 2021, now moved to 2023	Workgroup members moved the due date for this goal to 2023, as goal 5-A must be completed first.	N/A
5-C	Partner with Aging and Long Term Support Administration, and the Adult Family Home Council to review best practices and develop a staff education tool on falls prevention for Adult Family Homes (AFH). Include dementia and falls, environmental safety modifications, chronic	2020	Not yet started. Next step would be to form a project group for this goal.	N/A

	conditions and falls, resident-specific interventions and AFH-specific interventions.			
5-D	Provide technical assistance with implementation of staff education tool on falls prevention for AFH in 15 geographically diverse homes; publicly recognize participating facilities.	2021	Not yet started, must complete goal 5-C first.	N/A
5-E	Develop partnerships with Tribal Nations and Tribal Organizations, as requested, to develop and disseminate culturally appropriate falls prevention materials and programs for Tribal Elders.	2022	Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention, training occurred in February 2020. Implementation has been delayed due to COVID-19.	<p>Time investment by staff at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff at Northwest Regional Council, Wisdom Warriors Program</li> <li>• Staff and volunteers at tribes and tribal organizations</li> <li>• DOH staff</li> <li>• Falls Prevention Program Leads</li> </ul> <p>NWRC use of Older Americans Act funds and Administration on Community Living funds (grant deliverable).</p>

5-F	Partner with community-based organizations that serve communities with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) to provide evidence-based falls prevention interventions and programming.	2023	Two bilingual Spanish/English EnhanceFitness classes began in Southeast WA.  Next step is partnership development with Seamar, which was recommended by the workgroup.	Time investment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff and contractors at Southeast Washington Aging and Long Term Care</li><li>• Staff at Sound Generations</li></ul>
5-G	Develop partnerships within the VA health system to bring falls prevention screening and interventions to older adults who are veterans.	2023	Not yet started.	N/A
5-H	Explore the benefits and drawbacks of mandating falls prevention programs in assisted living facilities through legislation.	2023	DOH staff actively participated in a workgroup on ALF quality measures starting in late 2018. No decisions have been made yet about inclusion of falls in final measures.	Time investment by staff at DOH and ALTSA.
5-I	Explore the benefits and drawbacks of mandating non-identifying information reporting of falls in SNF and ALF settings through legislation and/or rule making.	2023	Same as goal 5-H	Same as goal 5-H.
5-J	Partner with researchers and other stakeholders to evaluate and raise awareness of an evidence-informed and evidence-based falls prevention program for individuals with cognitive decline.	2023	Research is ongoing in Washington in two studies on falls prevention in people living with dementia:  Brookside Research and Development is conducting NIH-funded research on	Time investment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff at Brookside R&amp;D</li><li>• PhD Candidate and Faculty Advisors at</li></ul>

			<p>program effectiveness of a modification of FallsTalk with people with dementia and their caregivers.</p> <p>Research is being conducted by a University of Washington School of Social Work Doctoral Student is on attitudes and knowledge about falls prevention of family caregivers of people with dementia.</p>	<p>University of Washington</p> <p>Funding from National Institute on Aging to Brookside Research and Development.</p>
5-K	Partner with evidence-based programs, community organizations, researchers and other stakeholders to educate providers and community members on the impact of substance use disorder on falls risk in older adults.	2023	University of Washington received a CDC grant to study falls prevention and de-prescribing of opioids and benzodiazepines in older adults. Research is ongoing.	<p>Time investment by researchers at University of Washington.</p> <p>Research funding from the CDC to University of Washington.</p>
5-L	Partner with clinicians, area agencies on aging and other stakeholders develop and implement strategies that improve access to falls prevention interventions and programs, including personal alert systems, for adults age 85+ and people living with long-term disabilities and chronic health conditions.	2023	Workgroup members recommended increased involvement from emergency medical services professionals for this goal, as they have frequent interactions with people who are homebound. In response, DOH created an EMS Falls Prevention Coordinating Group. Activities for this group in 2019 included a meeting, a survey on group interests and a webinar on Community Paramedicine.	<p>Time investment by staff at DOH and EMS agencies.</p>

## **STRATEGY AREA 6:** **Improving Safety in Homes and Communities**

*“Despite many excellent home safety interventions and efforts in the state, there is a lack of coordination and consistency between programs and gaps exist where there are no programs or resources available”* (Finding Our Balance, 2018). This strategy area focuses on the important issue of safety modifications, within homes –including private homes and senior apartments – and in the larger community. Partnership, Safety and Awareness Workgroup Members focused on increasing knowledge about home safety interventions, and access to resources for modification. Goals in this section cover issues of awareness through educating older adults, and issues of disparity in access through regulation and resource allocation. Home safety has a long history as a falls prevention priority area, and while progress has been made there is still significant work to do in so that all older adults can have safer homes and communities. Workgroup members created a project team, engaged in collaboration with national and local partners, and created new outreach tools for home safety. An additional online resource for home safety was developed in WA in 2019 by the Senior Falls Prevention Initiative. This is located online at [www.seniorsafetyscore.org](http://www.seniorsafetyscore.org).

### **Goal Progress Profile: Goal 6-A**

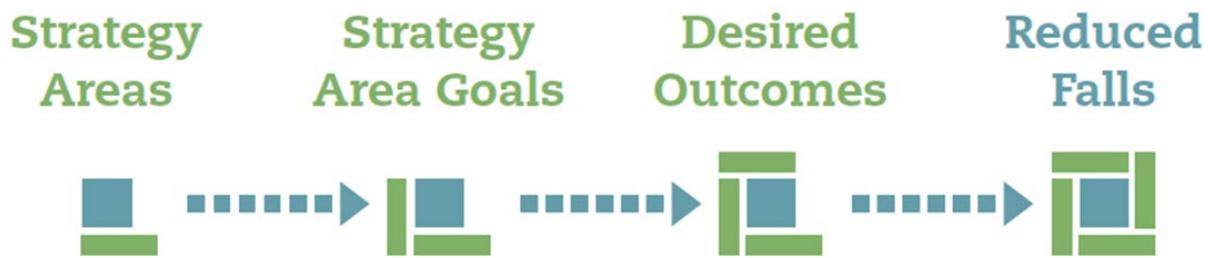


In the spring of 2019, the Partnership, Safety and Awareness Workgroup created a project team for Goal 6-A: “Convene a workgroup of senior housing, independent and assisted living staff and residents, and other subject matter experts to review best practices and develop a Falls Prevention Toolkit for Senior Living Communities. Include sustainable strategies for home safety modifications in senior housing communities.” This project team included members from the senior housing industry, the Eastern WA Falls Prevention Coalition and Occupational Therapists with expertise in home modification. During the summer and fall of 2019, the workgroup met to review and update a toolkit that was developed by SHAG Senior Housing. This toolkit was used in presentations at senior living communities, and updated with home safety checklists specific to senior apartments. The project team members plan to continue testing and adapting the toolkit in 2020, and look towards wider distribution after that.

## **Goal Status Report for Strategy Area 6: Improved Safety in Homes and Communities**

Goal	Goal Text	Year Due (Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> )	Status and Next Steps	Resources
6-A	Convene a workgroup of senior housing, independent and assisted living staff and residents, and other subject matter experts to review best practices and develop a Falls Prevention Toolkit for Senior Living Communities. Include sustainable strategies for home safety modifications in senior housing communities.	2021	A project team was formed, and updated an existing toolkit from SHAG. The toolkit is being tested and adapted prior to wider dissemination.	Time investment by staff at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SHAG</li><li>• Spokane Regional Health District</li><li>• University of Puget Sound School of Occupational Therapy</li><li>• Adaptive Living, LLC</li></ul>
6-B	Provide technical assistance with implementation of Falls Prevention Toolkit for Senior Living Communities in 10 geographically diverse Senior Living Facilities/Communities.	2022	Not yet started, must complete goal 6-A first.	N/A
6-C	Explore the inclusion of home safety modifications into the building code required for approval of senior housing units.	2023	Students in a policy class at the University of Washington Masters in Public Health Program conducted a review of existing regulations and made recommendations for how to move forward on this goal.  Workgroup members are reaching out to partners in the building industry to gauge interest in this initiative.	Time investment by DOH staff, and by students and faculty at University of Washington School of Public Health.
6-D	Explore collaboration with statewide community safety	2023	Not yet started.	N/A

	initiatives to decrease falls in outdoor spaces.			
6-E	Develop an online resource of home safety modification resources and educate older adults, elder care providers and clinicians about the resource.	2020	Workgroup members decided to accomplish this goal through partnership with Homemods.org. and University of Southern California	Time investment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workgroup members</li><li>• DOH staff</li><li>• USC staff</li></ul>
6-F	Identify areas of geographic disparity for access to home safety modifications and develop a plan for increasing access across the state.	2021	Not yet started, must complete goal 6-E first.	N/A



## Health Equity Achievements in 2019:

“Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.”

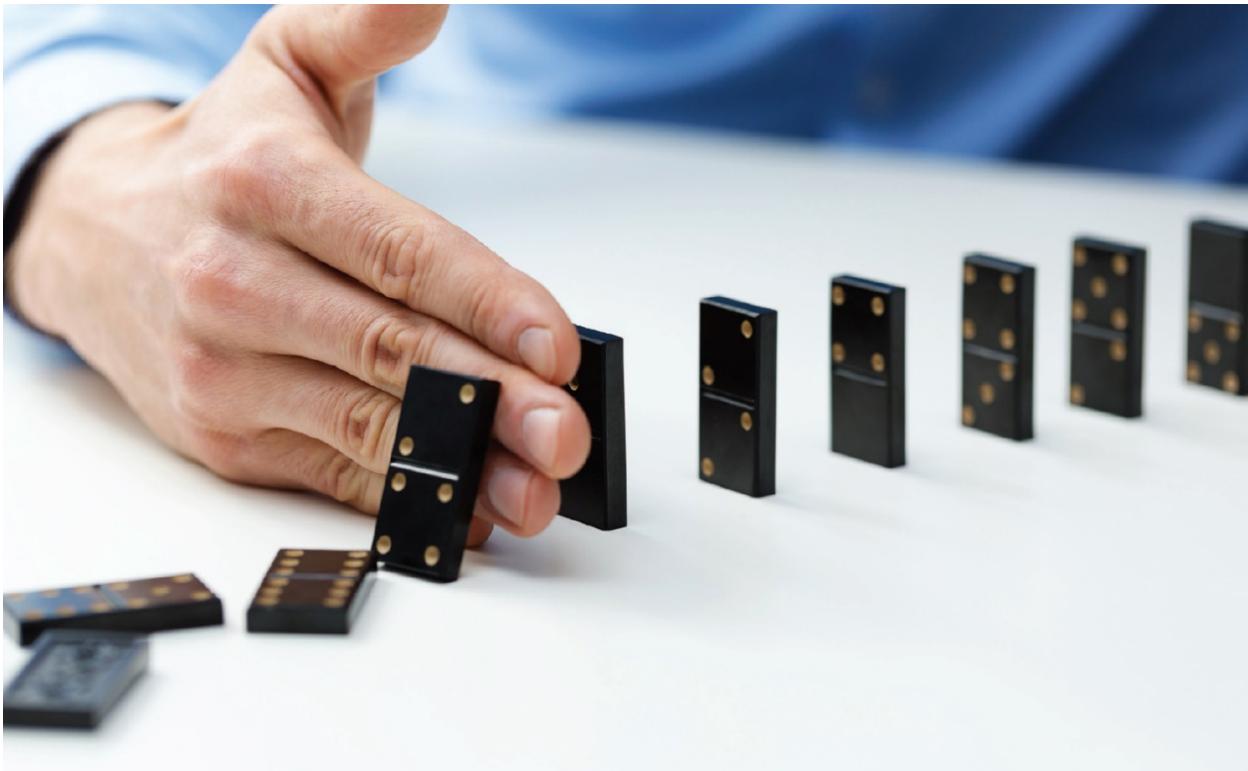
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Washington State Falls Prevention Coalition actively increased their efforts to reach underserved and high-risk older adults with falls prevention interventions in 2019. As falls prevention partners embraced the mission of health equity to identify and address disparities in falls risk and falls prevention, innovative new partnerships and projects were established. These were made possible through leadership from within Washington and support from our funding partners. Here is a short list of health equity accomplishments by falls prevention partners during 2019.

Summary of accomplishment	Lead Organization(s)	Funding Sources
Nine trainings of evidence-based falls prevention program were conducted in rural and underserved areas (Goal 4-H)	Evidence Based Falls Prevention Program Leads for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Matter of Balance</li><li>• EnhanceFitness</li><li>• SAIL (Stay Active &amp; Independent for Life)</li><li>• Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance</li></ul>	Administration on Community Living Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Grant  Older American Act Title III-B and III-D funds
Eight physical therapy clinics and home health agencies are now providing the Otago Exercise Program to older adults who are frail and/or homebound (Goals 4-A and 5-L).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DOH</li><li>• Washington Otago Network</li></ul>	Administration on Community Living Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Grant
Tribal Nations are engaged in Tai Chi project with Wisdom Warriors (Goal 5-E).	Wisdom Warriors Program at Northwest Regional Council	Administration on Community Living Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Grant
Evidence-based falls prevention program classes were added in three counties that previously had no classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Southeast Washington Aging and Long Term Care</li><li>• Sound Generations</li></ul>	Administration on Community Living Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Grant
Bilingual Spanish and English EnhanceFitness classes were established in Southeast WA	Southeast Washington Aging and Long Term Care	Administration on Community Living Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Grant
Research on falls prevention for people with dementia is ongoing in WA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• University of Washington</li><li>• Brookside Research and Development</li></ul>	National Institutes on Aging funding to Brookside Research and Development

## **Conclusion**

2019 was a year of great accomplishment for falls prevention partners in Washington State. Through diverse collaborations and strong efforts from many organizations and individuals, we made significant progress towards 42% of the goals in Finding Our Balance during the first full year of implementation. New challenges face us as we move into 2020, including the completion of the Community Falls Prevention Toolkit, work to educate family caregivers and increased collaboration with homemods.org. DOH wishes to thank all of the workgroup members who have contributed so much of their time and energy to meeting the goals of the action plan. We would also like to thank the funding organizations that are making much of this work possible. In 2020, COVID-19 has posed a significant challenge as we move towards the accomplishment of these goal. Moving forward, we will continue working to reduce falls and improve the lives of older adults in our state.



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