

Stepping On – Community program to maximise independence and reduce the risks of older people falling

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BACKGROUND/AIMS & METHODS:

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- ❖ 1 in 4 people 65+ years fall each year
- ❖ People living with HIV can exhibit aged related signs & symptoms 12 -14 years before the general population
- ❖ Many falls are preventable
- ❖ Aim of Stepping On: To reduce the risk of falling by enabling participants to make behavioural & environmental changes

❖ The standard SO program was implemented for people living with HIV in City of Sydney Council area.

❖ Validated objective measurements were used on week 1 & 7 to test leg strength & balance + participant evaluation survey.

❖ Challenge: Recruitment

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RESULTS:

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- ❖ 12 people registered, average of 6 participants each week
- ❖ 67% ↑ falls prevention knowledge
 - 80% ↑ confidence to take action to prevent falls
 - 100% ↑ confidence to move safely in the community
- ❖ Participants reported changes - falls prevention behaviours
 - remain living independently in their community
- ❖ All participants attended at least 5 / 7 sessions showed improvements in leg strength &/or balance
- ❖ Targeted recruitment - i.e. Men living with HIV - participants feel supported & able to discuss falls risk factors in a safe environment e.g. medication and falls

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CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS:

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- **Main Finding:** Most participants improved leg strength &/or balance & reported changes to their falls prevention behaviours
- **Implication-** Providing falls prevention programs for people living with HIV maintains independence
- **Recommendation:** Continue delivering the SO falls prevention program specifically for people living with HIV
- Should other aged related interventions be offered to people living with HIV earlier than the general population?

Task: Just take a moment to check your balance by using the tandem stand 20 second test.

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