

Fracture Liaison Service –Role in Falls and Fragility Fracture Prevention

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Frail Elderly are clearly at high risk of falls and osteoporosis and hence also fragility fractures. Elderly over 80 years of age have 50% chance of falling in the next 1 year. People aged >75 years have the highest fall related injury death rate and highest fall related hospitalisation rate. Fracture incidence is increasing, not only because of an ageing population but also because an increasing number of **frail older people**, at particular risk of fracture, are living longer.

There is strong evidence that osteoporosis can be treated, falls can be prevented and well organised fracture liaison services can decrease the risk of fracture

440,000 Indians suffer from hip fractures annually while osteoporosis patients number 26 million now that is projected to increase to 36 million by 2013. For every man, three women suffer hip fractures every year in India. By 2020, India is estimated to record 600,000 hip fractures annually — a number that is expected to increase to a million in 2050. Experts say urgent measures are, therefore, required to arrest this steady increase of fractures due to bad bone health. There is urgent need for a fracture registry.

A Fracture Liaison Service (FLS) is a system to ensure fracture risk assessment, and treatment where appropriate, is delivered to all patients with fragility fractures

FLS is usually comprised of a dedicated case worker, often a clinical nurse specialist, who works to pre-agreed protocols to case-find and assess

fracture patients. An FLS is usually based in hospital and requires support from a medically qualified practitioner.

The common component of all successful Fracture Liaison Services (FLS) is appointment of personnel dedicated to delivering secondary preventive care.

FLS has been shown to consistently outperform other service configurations

The ageing population is placing ever greater pressure on health care systems to deliver increased capacity and productivity within constrained resources. Crucially, against this backdrop, FLS have been shown to be highly cost-effective as well as clinically effective systems of care. Health economic evaluations from Australia, Canada, the UK, and the United States have consistently reported favourable findings

The structure, setting up and evolution of the fracture liaison services at Counties Manukau Health will be described in the talk.

Take Home message

1. Fragility fractures and falls are common problems faced by frail elderly.
2. There is strong evidence that osteoporosis can be treated, falls can be prevented
3. Well organised fracture liaison services can decrease the risk of fracture and are very cost effective.