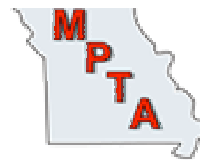


# ***ATTENTION: ALL THERAPISTS NEEDED!***



## **Fall Prevention Day**

Falls and balance problems are a significant health issue, especially among the elderly where falls are the leading cause of death due to injury.<sup>1</sup> Upto a third of people over age 65 fall each year.<sup>1</sup> Forty percent of elderly person admissions to the hospital are as a result of fall injuries with an average length of hospital stay at 11.6 days.<sup>1</sup> Half of these folks are discharged to nursing homes.<sup>2</sup> In an article published in Physical Therapy in April of this year, Shumway-Cook et al note that “falls represent a challenge to all health care professionals, but especially to physical therapists, who provide specialized expertise in several areas including screening (and) assessment of risk factors related to physical function (balance, gait, strength),...implementation of risk-reduction strategies including ... exercise programs....use of assistive devices, (and) patient education.”<sup>3</sup> The authors found that of 12,669 respondents to a Medicare Current Beneficiaries Survey in 2002, 22% had one or more falls in the prior year and 33% of the fallers were injured. 10% of this entire group had recurrent falls over the past year and 25% over the past three years. Only 50% of the fallers reported the fall to a health care provider; 74% of those who did report it said their health care provider attempted to determine the cause of the fall and 61% received education on ways to prevent falls.<sup>3</sup> “Strategies to reduce falls among both geriatric and neurologic populations have been identified as a high priority by the....APTA.”<sup>5</sup> The authors conclude that while “physical therapists are uniquely prepared to provide appropriate intervention” and that “these interventions should be provided routinely to (those at risk for falls)”, a significant number “fail to receive follow-up services related to the assessment and management of risk factors for falls.”<sup>3</sup>

In response to the APTA’s emphasis on fall prevention and Shumway-Cook et al and others’ research supporting the need for greater assessment and education regarding falls, the MPTA is coordinating a statewide fall prevention event. On **September 22, 2009**, in conjunction with the Show Me Falls Free Missouri State Coalition, the MPTA will help coordinate **Fall Prevention Day**. This will kick off PT Month. The event will include balance screens, fall risk assessment, and education.

Each District is asked to coordinate at least one public screening in their area during the day. Clinicians, students, and faculty are encouraged to participate in this event; **you do not need to be an MPTA member to participate!** The Missouri Student Special Interest Group (MSSIG) will coordinate student and faculty involvement and we ask the PTA and PT programs to help facilitate this activity. District Chairs and their committees will be asked to coordinate clinician involvement. For clinicians, this is a terrific opportunity for participation in a service activity and to support and provide publicity for the PT profession and the MPTA as well as for their local business.

We are open to multiple sites hosting the event across districts. We plan to hold screenings at public venues or businesses. Information on the screening and education tools to be shared will be provided by the MPTA. Additional information will be posted at [www.mopt.org/](http://www.mopt.org/) as it becomes available. Please contact one of the following **by August 21<sup>st</sup>**:

- Interested students and faculty:
  - MSSIG Chair: Adrienne Guthrie-Klein - [GuthrieAL@rockhurst.edu](mailto:GuthrieAL@rockhurst.edu)
  - MSSIG Vice Chair: Katy Pershing - [kppgyf@mizzou.edu](mailto:kppgyf@mizzou.edu)
- Interested clinicians:
  - MPTA PR Chair: Jeff Krug – [krugj@health.missouri.edu](mailto:krugj@health.missouri.edu)

**Please provide ALL of the following information and we will get you involved with your district or help you coordinate the event at a site in your area:**

- Name & address
- District
- Email AND Phone #
- Business/ school name and address
- Times available that day (from 9am to 9pm)

- Are you willing to coordinate the activity in your area/at your site?
- Where will you hold the event if you are coordinating it?

Visit [www.dhss.mo.gov/showmefallsfreemissouri/](http://www.dhss.mo.gov/showmefallsfreemissouri/) for more information on the Missouri Falls Free Coalition, including a draft of the Show Me Falls Free Missouri plan.

The Show Me Falls Free Missouri State Coalition is a voluntary coalition of state-level departments, associations and organizations including:

- AARP - Missouri Chapter
- Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
- Missouri Pharmacy Association
- Missouri Physical Therapy Association
- OASIS

The Coalition has met to discuss what Missouri can do to decrease the number of fall injuries and deaths, associated with falls amongst older adults in our communities. It is aligned with the National Falls Free Action Plan developed under the guidance of the National Coalition on Aging and various national partners.

References:

- 1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Inquiry Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online], 2003. National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (producer). Available at: [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars).
- 2 Sattin RW, Lambert Huber DA, DeVito CA et al. The Incidence of Fall Injury Events Among the Elderly in a Defined Population. *Am J Epidemiol.* 1990;131:1028-1037.
- 3 Shumway-Cook A, Ciol MA, Dudgeon BJ et al. Falls in the Medicare Population: Incidence, Associated Factors, and Impact on Health Care. *Physical Therapy.* 2009;89(4):324-332.