

Preventing falls at the Community Intermediate Care Centre (CICC)

Introduction

This leaflet provides information for CICC patients about how to reduce the risk of falls during a stay on the ward. If you have had falls before, either at home or in hospital, please tell the ward staff and give as much information as possible; also let them know if you are worried about falling.

Reasons why people may fall during their stay on the ward

Some people may fall due to strength or balance problems; if they are recovering from illness or have experienced weight loss, had surgery or a recent fracture; have reduced vision or problems with their feet; are taking certain medications; have confusion or low blood pressure. Not everyone will experience all of these difficulties.

Considerations to prevent having a fall

It is not always possible to prevent falls, but our ward staff will assess your needs to decide what additional support you need. Equipment may help eg bed wedges, to reduce the risk of rolling out of bed. These must be fitted by staff and you must follow the instructions. If appropriate, a falls alarm will be fitted on your bed and chair.

Support to prevent having a fall

- You will be shown how to use the call bell and staff will ensure it is within easy reach.
- It is important to get out of bed, so if you require assistance use your call bell and staff will respond as soon as they are able. Please remember that staff may be helping other patients so please wait for them.
- If you wear glasses, staff will support you to help keep your glasses clean and to check your hearing aids are working. Inform staff if you are having difficulty seeing or hearing.

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- Wear your hearing aids and the correct glasses for walking.
 - Therapists will carry out an assessment on your mobility and other activities to promote your recovery and maintain your independence. They will provide you with advice, which may change as part of your rehabilitation programme.
 - Staff will always assist if you need help to stand or walk - use your call bell and wait for assistance.
 - Use the walking aid you have been given and follow the advice from staff to help you move safely around on the ward, and how to sit and stand.
 - Never lean on furniture as it often has wheels.
 - Wear non-slip socks or slippers, and well-fitting shoes; if you do not have suitable footwear, please ask a member of staff.
 - Take care when getting up from the chair or bed and avoid moving too quickly. It is helpful to sit on the edge of the bed for a few moments before standing; get up slowly and make sure you feel steady before walking. If you are on an air mattress this may affect your balance.
 - If you feel dizzy at any time, stop, sit down and let staff know; avoid changing position or moving too quickly.
 - Drink fluids regularly and eat well; it is normally advised to drink at least eight drinks a day eg water, tea, coffee or fruit juice.
 - Tell staff if you have unexpected weight loss or are concerned about how much to drink, eg because you struggle getting to the toilet.
 - Be cautious with hazards, such as cords or cables that might cause you to slip or trip.
 - Familiarise yourself with your bedside area and consider which side of the bed you usually get in and out of.
 - Avoid stretching or over-reaching by ensuring that personal items are within reach whilst you are in bed or on the chair.
 - Take care in the bathroom and ask for help or assistance if you need it.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns about falls or falls prevention, please ask a member of the ward team.

If you would like this information in another format or language, please contact the Your Experience Team on freephone 0800 694 5530. Alternatively you can email wcnt.yourexperience@nhs.net

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