



Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care
a core program of PMHCC, Inc.

Falls: Considerations for Risk Management

The following **key words/issues** may prompt risk management questions regarding falls.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Seizure disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsteady gait |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recent hospitalization | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of ambulatory device (cane, crutches, etc) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Previous fall | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in mental/medical status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fracture | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in hearing/vision |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in medication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orthotics (ex. braces, MAFOs) | <input type="checkbox"/> Improperly fitted attire/shoes |

When there is concern regarding an incident involving falls, the following **questions** may be useful.

- Does the agency have a policy/procedure regarding falls?
- Does the agency have a nurse and how is he/she involved?
- Was a fall risk assessment done?

- How often is the environment checked for safety hazards?
- Are the staff trained/educated about environmental hazards indoors/outdoors?
- Are staff trained/educated regarding general risk factors for falls?
- Were staff, involved in the incident, trained/educated regarding the individual's diagnosis/falls?
- Has everyone been educated regarding the care plan and any changes to it?

- Has the individual seen the PCP?
- Has an evaluation (by a physical therapist/occupational therapist) been recommended?
- When is the evaluation scheduled?
- Does the person have a prescribed orthotic (ex. braces, MAFOs) were they being used?
- When was the last vision/hearing test?
- Was there a change from previous results?

- Has there been a change in the person's medical condition?
- Has there been a recent discharge from the hospital/rehabilitation unit?
- Has there been a weight loss?
- Has there been a medication change? Are medication levels in range?
- Has there been a change in mental status?
- Has the person had a previous fall?

Note: This list is not all inclusive. Other questions may be necessary depending on the circumstances of the incident.

Suggestions for **corrective action**:

- General education regarding falls
- Person-specific training for staff regarding individual's risk factors, diagnoses, preventions, care plans
- Discussion with PCP for possible evaluation or re-evaluation for falls

