

Challenges and opportunities for falls prevention across Europe: an online survey

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Abstract

Introduction

The delivery of effective and accessible falls prevention is challenging within current healthcare systems in Europe. Therefore, our aim was to explore the challenges and opportunities for sustainable implementation of falls prevention.

Methods

An online survey initiated by the European Geriatric Medicine Society Special Interest Group on Falls and Fractures. The survey comprised Likert scale and multiple-choice questions on education and knowledge, current practice and barriers and facilitators for falls prevention.

Results

A total of 1669 healthcare professionals participated from 34 European countries (mean age 46.8 years; 75% female). Only 26.9% believed their undergraduate education adequately prepared them for clinical practice in this area. A total of 75.8% of respondents reported opportunistically screening older adults for fall risk often or always during consultations. Gait and balance assessment was considered the most important and also most frequently performed component of the

multifactorial fall risk assessment. Top five barriers were staffing issues, a lack of time, older adults' noncompliance, workload related to falls prevention, and prioritizing other tasks. The top five most often selected were more time, easy-to-use guidelines, sufficient resources, increased education and training, and increased collaboration.

Conclusion

This survey highlights the need for improved undergraduate education in falls prevention. The identification of key barriers and facilitators provides a foundation for tailored implementation strategies to enhance the effectiveness of falls prevention strategies in Europe. Ensuring adequate resources for falls prevention is essential.