

CHSSN
Community Health Education Program (CHEP)
Impact Report – Fall Prevention
November 3, 2008

Importance of fitness and exercise. Importance of building core strength in addition to general muscles. Avoid fear of falls. Everyone can fall—no one is immune. Precaution is prevention. To remove the clutter in the house and to be careful with scattered rugs. Nordic walking. --Participants, Fall Prevention videoconferencing session

Statistically, 25 - 30% of all people greater than age 60 experience one or more falls each year. More than 90% of 250,000 hip fractures result from a fall - the underlying cause of death for 80+ year olds. The good news is everyone who identifies and acts on risk factors can decrease or eliminate them. Risk factors include medications, impaired balance and vision, urge incontinence - all topics scheduled to be addressed by CHEP videoconferences in 2008-2009.

In 2008 the CSSS La Pommeraie (Monteregie) made available in English the PIED/Stand-up exercise program (developed by the Montreal Department of Public Health) to seniors in their communities of Bedford (March) and Sutton (September). The overwhelming success of this program prompted the Townshippers' Association to host an interactive videoconference on the topic of "Fall Prevention" to share their experience and encourage their network partners to request this valuable resource from their local CSSS across the province.

On Tuesday, November 3, 2008, one host community—Townshippers' Association, joined by CAMI, MCDC, Neighbours Association, OHSSN and Vision Gaspé Perce Now—participated via videoconferencing to “ask an expert” on their chosen topic of fall prevention. Thanks to the outstanding promotion of the Community Coordinators, and the practical and clear presentation by Dr. Nancy Mayo, McGill Researcher, 60 participants are now informed.

New knowledge and greater awareness about the ways in which falls can be prevented by observing simple measures was gained. Practical tips for avoiding falls by modifying one's surroundings, and staying fit through exercise and walking, were outlined.

Immediate Results

- 60 people gained new knowledge about preventing falls.
- Jacinthe Lussier, Kinesiologist, Agente de promotion des saines habitudes de vie, who teaches "Stand up" for CSSS La Pommeraie, participated locally from Massey Vanier High School.
- Six communities with 8 sites throughout the province attended with 60 participants asking questions and receiving expert answers.
- Several new contacts were made with CSSS across the province by CHEP coordinators.
- The participating communities are now in touch with their local CSSS with access to its PIED/Stand Up Programme.

Other Outcomes

- OHSSN made several important contacts with their local public partners, including two CSSS contacts and one at their local Agence, with lots of potential for future partnerships both with the community and the public partners.
- The session DVD is now available for communities' use in their follow-up activities (churches, curling clubs, service clubs, seniors' groups and seniors' residences).

Formal follow-up activities available for this topic are: 1) Participants could now enroll with their local CSSS to attend the Stand Up programme, aimed at improving balance through exercise to avoid falls, and 2) Communities can now use the session DVD.

Significant Statistics

- Participants: Townshippers' had 13 participants, CAMI had 9 participants, Neighbours had 14 participants, OHSSN had 5 participants and Vision Gaspé had 2 participants.
- The age range of participants was 16 to 82 years.
- The host community had their local CSSS representative at the session.
- Participants' evaluations (91% rate of return) overwhelmingly reveal that the presentation was extremely helpful, interesting, and met their expectations.
- All communities intend to use the session DVD for follow-up activities.

Participating communities report having made formal requests to their CSSS for the PIED/Stand Up program. Several are committed to starting this program in September 2009.