



## Case Study Briefing Note

Activity	<b>North Somerset Falls Prevention initiative</b>
Audit Period	May 2013 – October 2014
Description	<p>A joint Falls Prevention Initiative has been entered into by Avon Fire &amp; Rescue Service and North Somerset Community Partnership (NSCP).</p> <p>Whilst falling is not an inevitable result of ageing, the risk of falling does increase as people get older. Through our routine Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs), AF&amp;RS comes into contact with a large number of people in the over-65 age group.</p> <p>The North Somerset Falls Prevention Initiative enables us to make use of our routine HFSVs and identify people who have fallen or who we feel are at risk of falling, so that they can be provided with appropriate interventions from the Falls Prevention Team.</p> <p>Although most falls don't cause serious injury, a fall can cause fractures, leading to hospital admissions. It is estimated that around;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30% of independent living people over 65 will fall each year</li><li>• 10-20% of these falls result in a serious injury like a deep laceration or a broken bone, including hip fractures, with;</li><li>• 25% of hip fracture patients require long term residential care following fracture, and that</li><li>• 24% of hip fracture patients die within 12 months of injury</li></ul> <p>Even without injury, unexplained falls worry people and they may restrict their activity to minimise risk. This reduces quality of life, and hastens functional decline, making future injurious falls more likely. North Somerset Community Partnership (NSCP) are commissioned to provide community based healthcare services in the North Somerset area, including a Falls Prevention Service.</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To make use of the access that AF&amp;RS has to the over-65 age group as part of their routine HFSV activity.</li><li>• To identify people who have fallen and/or who are at risk of falling.</li><li>• To include two falls-related questions within AF&amp;RS HFSV questionnaire. (The questions were approved by the NHS National Institute for Clinical Excellence and are only asked with the consent of the householder.</li></ul>



	<p>Information is shared with NSCP only if the answers to the questions were positive.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AF&amp;RS HFSV database will be programmed to automatically generate referrals where identified criteria, including consent, were met.</li><li>• Referrals will be forwarded by secure email to NSCP.</li><li>• To continue the scheme until it can be established as being no longer worthwhile – the scheme will be monitored to ensure the process remains relevant and cost-effective.</li></ul>
<p>Outcomes, Evidence &amp; Evaluation</p>	<p>Over the reporting period AF&amp;RS made 393 falls related referrals to NSCP (an average of 22 per month). Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 153 were already known to the Falls Prevention Team, leaving 240 cases (61%) to be actively pursued.</li></ul> <p>Initially NSCP telephoned each referee but that proved to be resource-intensive so a letter was developed inviting referees to engage with Falls Prevention services. As a result 76 referees so engaged, representing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 32% of those cases actively pursued (the not known); &amp;</li><li>• 19% of the total referred by AF&amp;RS.</li></ul> <p>In each case a telephone triage assessment was conducted with face to face interventions subsequently arranged. These could either be at “falls clinics” or via home visits. The latter were arranged in cases where referee was either housebound, or lacked transport and/or presented a higher risk of falls in transit.</p> <p>A full “falls assessment” was conducted with all 76 referees with comprehensive advice provided. Of those assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 55 (72%) were subsequently referred to other “falls” related services (and/or provided with advice about other services) with, 26 (34%) referred to more than 1 service.</li><li>• 21 (28%) received advice only.</li></ul> <p>Historically 96% of those engaged with NSCP Falls Prevention Team have reduced incidents of “falls” after 6 months.</p> <p>The pilot also demonstrated that CFRMIS database can be programmed to support such initiatives. This is advantageous given AF&amp;RS desire to “make every contact count”.</p>



	Over the same period NSCP referred 161 vulnerable service users to AF&RS for HFSV's.  The joint referral activity continues between AF&RS & NSCP.
In partnership with:	North Somerset Community Partnership
Linked to other scheme/plan/strategy	Community Risk Reduction Strategy Home Fire Safety Strategy NSCP, Falls Prevention Plan
Lead Officer or primary contact	Les Fry, Partnerships Manager
Contact details	<a href="mailto:Les.Fry@avonfire.gov.uk">Les.Fry@avonfire.gov.uk</a> ext 271

## Appendix

A breakdown of services/referrals that were provided during the trial period is shown in the chart below:

