

Responding to Falls in Care Homes

Contact for further information:

Ann Smith, Head of Patient Safety and Quality Improvement, Operations and Delivery.

Tel: 07789618193: Email: ann.smith@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

At the June meeting of this Committee members met with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). NWAS highlighted that ambulances are sometimes requested by residential care homes to pick up someone who has fallen and put them back in bed.

This report provides members with:

- Overview of the assistance that Lancashire County Council (LCC) and partners provide to private residential homes regarding training, advice and guidance on falls
- Evidence that LCC are working with NWAS and other partners to reduce the number of falls in care homes
- The policies that homes should have in place in homes to deal with falls
- Assurance that LCC care home staff are fully trained in dealing with falls

Recommendation

Members are asked to note and comment on the report

Background and Advice

Falls and fall-related injuries are a common and serious problem for older people. People aged 65 and older have the highest risk of falling, with 30% of people older than 65 and 50% of people older than 80 falling at least once a year. (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2013)

At the June Committee members met with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) to discuss amongst other things, their response times. As part of the discussion NWAS highlighted to members the high number of ambulance call-outs to residential care homes due to falls. Of particular concern was the requests made to NWAS to pick someone up off the floor who has fallen and put them back in bed.

This report provides information for members on the following themes:

- Overview of the assistance that LCC and partners provide to private residential homes regarding training, advice and guidance on falls
- Evidence that LCC are working with NWAS and other partners to reduce the number of falls in care homes
- The policies that homes should have in place in homes to deal with falls
- Assurance that LCC care home staff are fully trained in dealing with falls

There is a significant amount of data available on the number of falls experienced by the older population across Lancashire. Members will be provided with a presentation by the Public Health Business Analyst at the July Committee Meeting.

The presentation will provide an overview of falls in Lancashire's population aged 65 and over and will include data on demographics, falls projections, emergency hospital admissions for injuries due to falls and ambulance call-outs for falls.

Assistance for private residential homes regarding training, advice and guidance on falls

Care Home providers are responsible for accessing and providing training for their staff in relation to falls. Care homes can, and do refer individuals who are at high risk of falls to falls teams/therapy services in their areas. Support is then provided to both the individual and to the care home staff to enable the risk to be managed accordingly.

Although they are not commissioned to do so specifically, falls and therapy teams will offer education sessions to care home staff and provide them with toolkits and resources. This element does vary across Lancashire and for some falls teams it is an identified gap, which if they tried to manage within existing resource envelopes, would overwhelm them.

East Lancashire

The East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (ELCCG) commissions East Lancashire Hospitals Trust (ELHT) as a specialist resource for the care home sector. The team provides information and advice as appropriate and links with other professionals, they regularly visit homes to share Multifactorial assessments and specialist resources. The over 75's nurses are Advanced Nurse practitioners that are commissioned to support the care home sector specifically.

In East Lancashire there is a 'Reducing Avoidable NWAS Calls to Residential and Nursing Care Homes' task and finish group led by Lancashire County Council which has undertaken the following activity:

- Online training survey and review of care home policies/procedures
- Focused work with 10 care homes with most call outs

- NWAS awareness sessions re emergencies/use of pathfinder tools

Preston, Chorley and South Ribble

Preston, Chorley and South Ribble Clinical Commissioning Group (PCSRCCG) have also commissioned a service to specifically support care homes. The Care Home Effective Support Service (CHESS) is a multi-disciplinary team which is delivered by Lancashire Care Foundation Trust.

Preston/Chorley/South Ribble CCGs have commissioned falls lifting and response services. The lifting service is provided by a third party provider, and is linked to the community alarm service.

West Lancashire

Care home providers can refer people who are at risk of falls to the falls team and therapy services who will offer support and guidance. West Lancashire do not have a dedicated care home nursing team.

North Lancashire

Lancashire North Clinical Commissioning Group (NLCCG) commission a care home support team which has been operating since January 2015. The focus of the team is currently to support Care Homes with Nursing. The team is multidisciplinary with nurses, therapists and a pharmacist. The team does not have a specific focus for the prevention of falls but would assist in the completion of falls assessments and liaise/refer to the relevant community falls/therapy services.

Fylde and Wyre

Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group (FWCCG) have commissioned a falls response service. This service pairs a health professional (Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Nurse) with an NWAS advanced paramedic using a 'falls' car rather than an ambulance to respond to amber and green coded falls.

Fylde Coast Care Home Strategy has been produced with Blackpool CCG and Blackpool Teaching Hospital to support improvements with care homes. Public Health have worked with NWAS to deliver falls training in the past, specifically in Fylde and Wyre, via a workbook format.

Policies and Procedures in Care Homes

Care homes are required to have policies and procedures in place to assess residents for the risk of falls and to include actions to minimise risk within individual care plans. Care homes are also required to have in place moving and handling policies and to train staff accordingly in line with health and safety legislation.

Care homes do have access to information, advice and resources via the NWS website, particularly around the 'what to do when a resident falls'. Care home staff can complete NWS online training.

Lancashire County Council, Older People Care Homes:

All residents have a falls risk assessment. This identifies the actions that must be completed if a particular risk is applicable, for instance polypharmacy would trigger a medication review and identify any medications that may have a sedative effect therefore increasing the falls risk. The risk assessment is reviewed at least every month. The information is transferred to the falls section in the person's individual support plan to give staff more detail of how to support the person.

LCC care home process In the event of a fall

- If it is an obvious emergency 999 procedure is followed.
- If not then the duty officer completes an initial assessment using guidance and determines whether medical advice is required.
- A falls protocol is followed which determines the number of observations required to ensure well-being does not deteriorate.
- The Risk Assessment is reviewed and support plan updated as necessary.
- The family are informed and accident reporting procedures followed.
- There is analysis of resident's falls history to identify causes and prevention.
- The falls prevention team are contacted for those experiencing frequent falls.
- All staff are given the relevant information about the fall at handover.

The use of assistive technology identifies when a resident may require assistance, particularly at night when they are tired, which may help with preventing falls. Families are made aware of items they can purchase to prevent injury in the instance of a fall, hip protectors for example.

All staff are trained in moving people and refresh their training every three years. This includes the use of hoists, slings for hoists, wheelchairs, slide sheets, stand aid hoists, moving belts, and transfer boards. A number of registered managers are moving people trainers. Managers carry out at least one observation of practice supervision each year which includes assisting a resident to move.

Care staff complete a distance learning workbook in falls prevention and another on falls response level 2. Falls and all accidents are discussed anonymously at management and staff meetings to analyse trends and identify preventative measures.

All LCC protocols and policies are available on the LCC intranet pages.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

N/A

Risk management

There are no risk management issues

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
-------	------	-------------------------

N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A