

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

Alaska Commission on Aging

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Dear Senior Provider:

Are you aware that

- Accidental falls are the number one cause of injury to Alaskans age 65 and older, often causing serious injury such as brain trauma or hip fracture.
- Falls are the second leading cause of accidental death in the United States
- Seventy-five percent of these falls occur in the older adult population
- Of the older adults who fall, sustain a hip fracture, and are hospitalized, one third die within a year

Health care costs for falls and rehabilitation average 70 billion dollars a year! Yet, most falls are preventable. Fifty percent of all hospitalizations among seniors are attributable to a “slip, trip, or tumble” incident, according to the Alaska Trauma Registry.

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) is teaming up with other agencies and advisory boards to prevent falls of older Alaskans in an Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition campaign. It is our hope that you will join us in this effort.

Throughout the year, ACoA will send out information and ideas for activities each month focusing on fall prevention for Alaskan seniors. This information can be used in a variety of ways and with different community partners. Below are some suggestions for this campaign:

Potential Community Partners – Consider engaging the following partners to expand awareness and improve safety for seniors in your community.

- churches
- community health clinics
- fitness centers
- hardware stores
- senior health fairs
- hearing aid vendors
- hospitals
- libraries
- elected officials
- senior housing
- opticians' offices
- pharmacies
- physical therapy clinics
- senior centers
- senior meal sites
- senior advisory commissions
- assisted living facilities
- Pioneer Homes

Potential Locations – Here are some suggestions for places to distribute information or to host activities:

- churches
- malls
- fire departments
- senior day care
- hospital or health care providers
- libraries
- local businesses
- local newspapers
- home-delivered meals
- volunteer organizations

Potential Activities – Consider the following ways to promote awareness to reduce the risks of senior falls that use resources in the Alaska Senior Fall tool kit posted on the ACoA website at www.alaskaaging.org:

- Encourage seniors to ask their pharmacist to review their medications
- Present the Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition slide show (included in the tool kit)
- Distribute the Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition flyer to seniors in both congregate meals and home delivered meals and to community agencies
- Hang the poster “Don’t Fall for it Alaska” in buildings where seniors congregate
- Write a letter to the editor in the local newspaper about the prevention of senior falls
- Write an article for the local senior center newsletter
- Distribute the Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition flyer at churches, doctors offices and other places where seniors congregate (see list above)

The Coalition is dedicated to improving safety for Alaska seniors by minimizing senior falls in Alaska and their devastating effects. Won’t you help and become a partner today by planning an activity or publishing something in your newsletter or newspaper?

We have included materials for you to use in this endeavor and have posted them on our website at www.alaskaaging.org. If you have any questions, please contact Lesley Thompson at 465-4793 or lesley.thompson@alaska.gov.

Thank you for your participation in the Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Campaign and for your good work improving the lives of Alaskan seniors.

Sincerely,

Sharon Howerton-Clark
Chair, Alaska Commission on Aging

Sincerely,

Denise Daniello
ACoA Executive Director