

Coalitions and Network Opportunities

Coalition participation is an important and recognized avenue to disseminate curricula and best practices and to impact policy. Currently the CGEC helps to coordinate the North Carolina Mental Health and Aging Coalition and the North Carolina Falls Prevention Coalition. Each of these meets quarterly. AHEC partners are encouraged to participate in one of these statewide coalitions or in a regional coalition centered around grant priorities. Eastern and Western regions have very active regional falls prevention coalitions. Similarly participation in a research focused regional or statewide group would be appropriate.

More information about the North Carolina Falls Prevention Coalition can be found at

<http://www.med.unc.edu/aging/ncfp/>

Membership

For a list of NC Falls Prevention Coalition member organizations, please see Appendix A.

Contact

For additional information about the NC Falls Prevention Coalition, please contact Ellen Schneider: eschneider@schr.unc.edu.

Formed in April, 2008, the North Carolina Falls Prevention Coalition brings together researchers, planners, health care providers, housing specialists, aging services providers, and many others to **work together to reduce the number of falls and fall-related injuries for North Carolinians**. The founding partners of the NC Falls Prevention Coalition include the Carolina Geriatric Education Center, NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, NC Division of Public Health, and UNC Institute on Aging.

Committees have been formed to address the following Coalition Goal Areas:

1) Infrastructure Development and Maintenance

Establish and maintain a statewide Falls Prevention Coalition of key state, regional, and community stakeholders to systematically identify needs, resources and successes and to build capacity for falls prevention throughout the state. The role is primarily address by the Falls Prevention Steering Committee comprised of members from the Carolina Geriatric Education Center, NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, NC Division of Public Health, and UNC Institute on Aging.

2) Community Awareness and Education

Develop and apply effective social marketing materials and practices to engage and better inform the public and specific constituencies about falls risks and proven strategies to reduce falls.

3) Provider Education

Identify, develop, and implement training programs at state, regional, and community levels for both clinical and community providers to raise falls prevention awareness and enable them to plan, deliver and evaluate effective evidence-based falls prevention programs and practices/interventions.

4) Risk Assessment and Intervention

Create and implement plans to identify and establish necessary complements of risk assessment and intervention strategies at the state, regional and community levels to address the varying and diverse needs of those at risk for falls.

5) Advocacy for Supportive Policies and Environments

Assess, advocate, and facilitate the development of policies, environments, and resources that advance falls prevention.

Key Accomplishments to Date

- For the first time, the NC Division of Public Health identified older adult falls as one of its top 3 priorities in the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan for Preventing Injuries and Violence in NC.
- For the first time, the NC Institute of Medicine identified falls prevention as an injury priority in its Healthy Carolinians 2020 objectives.
- For the first time, the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services listed falls prevention as a priority in the State Aging Services plan.
- “A Matter of Balance,” an evidence-based, community-based program to address fear of falling, is being disseminated in all 17 Area Agencies on Aging in the state.
- Secured a grant from the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors to advance falls prevention policy initiatives in the state.
- Secured a grant from the NC Division of Public Health:
 - Held four workshops in Spring 2010. The purpose of the workshops was to raise awareness of the growing falls issue, educate targeted audiences on falls prevention strategies, develop partnership, and build capacity to address falls prevention. As a result, five regional/local falls prevention coalitions have been formed, increasing the infrastructure and capacity for falls prevention initiatives in the state.
 - Supported the development of the NC Falls Prevention website.

- The NC Falls Prevention Coalition has been featured twice in NC Medical Journal articles.
- Solicited and obtained proclamation for 2009, 2010, and 2011 Falls Prevention Awareness Week; promoted and tracked activities.
- Created a Speakers Bureau
- Created a website with links to resources, tools, and best practices

“This site is a key element of the Coalition’s efforts, supporting the group’s goals to increase awareness, education, and training, provide tools and resources, and foster linkages between programs and organizations working to reduce falls.”

Western Falls Prevention Coalition

<http://sites.google.com/site/agingwelllearningnetwork/professional-health-and-development/fall-prevention-task-force>

Eastern Falls Prevention Coalition

www.ecu.edu/encfpc

Guilford county <http://fallsfreeguiford.blogspot.com/>

North Carolina Mental Health and Aging Coalition

<http://www.med.unc.edu/aging/cgec/nc-mental-health-and-aging>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that approximately 20% of individuals age 55 and older suffer from some form of mental health issue with depression being the most prevalent problem. These mental health issues are often serious, under-recognized, and untreated. The mission of the NC Mental Health and Aging Coalition (MHAC) is to focus attention on the mental health needs and substance use of older adults; build community capacity; and support advocacy and action. The MHAC is comprised of three committees:

- Advocacy - Building awareness of the mental health needs of older adults
- Training - Developing workforce capability to serve older adults
- Dissemination – Promoting broad adoption of evidence-based practice

Key Accomplishments to Date:

- Mental Health and Aging Coalition website has been established:
<http://www.med.unc.edu/aging/cgec/nc-mental-health-and-aging%20>
- Mental Health and Aging Coalition listserv has been created
- A spreadsheet of mental health and aging training courses in the state has been compiled

- Exemplary mental health and aging practices in the state are being compiled.

The MHAC will work collaboratively to address the mental health needs of its older citizens. Contact Ellen Schneider for additional information eschneider@schr.unc.edu

CGEC Health Literacy Network

The CGEC maintains an active database of its Faculty Development Health Literacy Alumni. AHEC staff receive priority admission to the Health Literacy Faculty Development course which meets monthly January – June. More information is available at <http://www.med.unc.edu/aging/cgec/Health%20Literacy>

Dissemination

In the interest of curriculum dissemination, which is a core goal of this grant, the CGEC expects that AHECs will willingly share CGEC related work product with each other and with outside agencies who may request them from time to time without charge.