

Wellington Primary Care Partnership  
Whole of Community  
Falls Prevention Project  
Evaluation  
2006 – 2009



The Wellington region is characterised by its strong agricultural, timber, aviation (both private and defence force) and tourism sectors. The lifestyle benefits for people living in the area are particularly strong, with the Gippsland Lakes being Australia's largest inland waterway, and the Ninety Mile Beach in the south and east.

Source: [www.gha.net/cghs/viewinfopage](http://www.gha.net/cghs/viewinfopage)

Report written by: Julie Hall  
Falls Prevention project worker  
Wellington Primary Care Partnership  
March 31 2009

## **Introduction:**

This report is an evaluation of the Wellington Falls Prevention project, funded by the Aged Care Division, Department of Human Service (DHS) through the Wellington Primary Care Partnership (WPCP). The evaluation was undertaken by the project worker, Julie Hall for the funding body DHS. The information for the evaluation was collected from a range of stakeholders involved and through the evident outcomes of the project. This report also provides some recommendations for the future.

The total population of Wellington is 40,082 (Australian Bureau of Statistics). Of this population 50.5% are males and 49.5% are females. Indigenous people comprise 1.1% of the total, compared with 2.3% in Australia. 28.4% of the population in Wellington are aged 55 years and over.

*Source: web page: [www.gha.net.au/cghs](http://www.gha.net.au/cghs)*

Significant partnerships were formed during the life of the project. These partnerships were instrumental in allowing the project to undertake a variety of tasks which also assisted in meeting the project objectives.

A critical partnership was with the WPCP Healthy Active Living (HALS) project which resulted in a joint steering committee overseeing both the HALS and FALLS projects.

As the project progressed, planning was adjusted to meet the identified needs in the region, while still ensuring the planning was in line with meeting the objectives.

The Falls project was extended on two occasions from the initial date of completion, 30 September 2008. The first extension was to complete the project by 31 December 2008, and the second extension took the project through to 31 March 2008. The reason for the two extensions was due to a portion of funding not being expended by the project, mainly due to the difficulty in recruiting a project worker in the first year and then the initial project worker leaving after three months of work. This delayed the project by approximately one year.

### **Project rationale and logic:**

The WPCP Falls project was part of a Gippsland wide network of Falls prevention projects. The Gippsland wide network initiated the projects name change to Upright & Independent in 2006. For the purpose of this report the project will be referred to as "Falls project".

The Gippsland network coordinated Falls forums twice per year aimed at Health Service Providers from community settings to acute care.

The Wellington project was instrumental in driving two of these forums over the three year period, one occurring at the beginning of the project in 2006 and the second in the later stages of the project in 2008.

The Falls project worker managed the day to day tasks of the project which included the following stages:

- preparation
- planning
- determining evaluation indicators
- collecting data
- analysing data
- reporting on the findings

Key challenges for the project was establishing time lines due to the project worker being employed at .6 EFT and the delay with recruitment of a project worker in the first year of the project. One of the successful achievements of the project was the formation of partnerships with key stakeholders, which also provided the opportunity to institute the falls prevention message.

The project distributed drink bottles, exercise books, bookmarks, pedometers and other falls prevention information to the participants of focus groups and educational sessions.

The Falls project was aimed at senior community members, health service providers and exercise trainers in the Wellington region. Partnerships were formed with other organisations and network groups, such as Sale aged care network, Central Gippsland Health Service (CGHS) and Gippsport.

Community people involvement came about through requests to talk to groups such as country women's association (CWA), senior citizens, and planned activity groups (PAG). Another major activity involving community was the Healthy Ageing Expo, of which the Falls project undertook a leading role in coordinating.

It was found that some of the strategies implemented by the Falls project often overlapped with meeting different objectives, therefore the following tables will on occasion mention one strategy more than once, matching it to the relevant objective.

Project Goal:

*"To strengthen the capacity of services and individuals in the Wellington PCP catchment area through a multi-strategy integrated health promotion approach to reduce the risk and incidence of Falls and the severity of injuries from Falls among older people".*

The following tables outline the projects objectives, strategies, measures & participation and outcomes.

**Objective 1:** “To reduce Falls related injuries and the hazards contributing to Falls through the development of consistent procedures regarding screening, assessment, discharge planning and referral processes to maximise continuity of care and ensure better follow-up after Falls risk has been identified”.

Strategies	Measures	Participation
Mapping of residential aged care services (RACS) to assess consistency of screening, assessment, discharge and referral	All residential units consulted via letter and follow up e-mails/phone calls	Four RACS responded
Provide service providers working directly with community with Falls prevention kit	Project worker attended residential units, discussed Falls tools being utilised, Ways in which the Falls project could be of assistance to the residential units	Six RACS requested Falls prevention kit
	Project worker involvement with CGHS Falls committee which overseen development of a Falls risk and assessment tools and protocols	CGHS clinical, health & RAC service providers X7



**Outcomes**

The mapping exercise identified RACS were using an electronic tool called “WE CARE” which covers mobility and transfer and allows the service to do an audit of falls and what has caused them. Contact with RACS resulted in requests to do educational sessions, involvement with operation sunshine committee and networking with diversional therapists. Through the CGHS Falls committee a falls risk assessment tool was developed and trialed, and the Falls Expo was planned which was attended by 155 CGHS workers.

**Objective 2:** “To engage with clubs and social organisations providing services and support to older people to promote physical activity, strength building, social connectedness and a positive approach to Falls prevention.”

Strategies	Measures	Participation
Provide train the trainer sessions in Sale	Tai chi for Arthritis Warm Water & Chair Based Duo training – Fit & Active Adults Duo training – Frail and dependent adults	29 19 15 5
Establish exercise trainers network Provide assistance for further training Establish Lifeball in Wellington	Network established Assistance provided Lifeball established	23 1 participant How to Establish Lifeball: <b>24</b> Come & Try training: Rosedale: <b>12</b> Gormandale: <b>10</b> Maffra: <b>14</b> Sale: <b>23</b>



**Outcomes:**

Train the trainer sessions were attended by the wider Gippsland region including East, South and Latrobe, although the majority of participants were from the Wellington region. These sessions were a successful venture and important partnerships were formed between Arthritis Victoria, Duo training and the Falls project. The establishment of the exercise network group allowed the train the trainer sessions to be successful as most of the Wellington participants were connected to this group. Assistance was provided to one applicant to study for certificate 3 & 4 in fitness. Lifeball was successfully established across Wellington in four towns, Briagolong, Gormandale, Maffra and Rosedale. The Falls project worked in partnership with the Healthy Active Living project and Gippsport in establishing Lifeball.

**Objective 3:** *“To build on existing programs, including Well for Life, Active Script, Health and Active Living, and Walk and Talk, to build the capacity of individuals and communities to address Falls risk”.*

Strategies	Measures	Participation
Mapping exercise of physical activity options and barriers across Wellington through focus groups and in partnership with Healthy Active Living project.	8 focus groups across Wellington. Reports prepared for each focus group	84 participants across Wellington
Development and review of activity booklet in partnership with Healthy Active Living project.	“Getting Active in Wellington” developed and printed	3,000 printed and distributed.

**Outcomes:**

The focus groups were conducted across Wellington in the following towns; Sale, Yarram, Gormandale, Loch Sport, Tinamba, Dargo, Briagolong and Seaspray.

The information gathered from these focus groups was presented in a report and sent to a leading participant of the focus group. The report was also sent to the local community house who often had assisted in providing a venue and promoting the focus groups.

The ‘Getting Active in Wellington’ booklet was distributed widely throughout Wellington. The booklet contained information on various activities available in the Wellington region and included contact details, address, cost, venue and information on the suitability of the exercise sessions for senior people and people with a disability.

**Objective 4:** *“To work with local organisations and government agencies to develop effective procedures for hazard identification through regular audits and corrective action to minimise Falls risks.”*

Strategies	Measures	Participation
Referral tool for RAV	Established contact with local RAV	1 participant
Service provider resources / information	Developed Falls Kit	20 service providers or organisations providing direct service to community people.

**Outcomes:**

Contact with the local RAV identified they were already utilising a referral tool for people at risk of falling. This contact resulted in a RAV representative attending the Sale Falls Forum in November 08 to present on this tool and how it is actioned within their work.

The Falls kit contained information, resources, samples and giveaways on topics such as; medications, nutrition, personal alert, vision, continence, osteoporosis, home safety checklist, hip protectors, physical activity and feet & footwear. The Falls Kit also included a disk with the Falls Fact sheets loaded, for future printing and distribution.

**Objective 5:** *“To build partnerships between residential aged care facilities, healthcare service providers, community based support services and consumers, to develop information and standards regarding environmental safety factors (including furniture, floor coverings and appropriate footwear).”*

Strategies	Measures	Participation
<p>To connect with CGHS Falls committee</p> <p>Attendance to aged care network meetings</p> <p>Develop Community friendly Falls Fact Sheets</p>	<p>Worked with CGHS Falls committee throughout 2008 CGHS Falls expo</p> <p>Attended aged care network meetings, shared information and resources</p> <p>Healthy Ageing Expo</p> <p>Fact Sheets developed covering Falls topics</p>	<p>CGHS clinical, health &amp; RAC service providers X7</p> <p>155 RACS &amp; healthcare provider participants (Expo)</p> <p>Varied between 10 – approx 20 participants</p> <p>208 participants</p> <p>Distributed throughout Wellington region.</p>



**Outcomes:**

Involvement with the CGHS committee allowed for sharing of information and resources on safety factors including furniture, floor coverings and footwear. This was further enhanced with the Falls expo which covered safety factors and was attended by 155 service providers. The attendance to aged care network meetings resulted in a partnership between RACS, health service providers and community support services in coordinating a Healthy Ageing Expo which resulted in 208 community participants. The Falls Fact sheets were distributed throughout Wellington and resulted in Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS) and the East Gippsland Falls project requesting the fact sheets be adapted to suit their regions. The Falls project adapted the fact sheets for distribution across East & South Gippsland and Latrobe. The Fact sheets were also included in the falls kits for future distribution.

**Objective 6:** *“To increase community awareness about Falls prevention for people living in smaller towns and outlying rural areas, through development of strategies and promotion with existing groups, such as Neighbourhood Houses.”*

Strategies	Measures	Participation
Falls project to provide community education sessions	36 community interactive sessions Educational session delivered by COTA	501 community people 13 community people
Distribute a quarterly newsletter	Newsletter developed and distributed	Community groups / service providers
Conduct focus groups	Eight focus groups conducted	87 participants from across Wellington towns
Promotion of falls through stakeholders newsletters	3 stakeholders	WPCP & GWHS & LCHS Newsletter
Develop a Falls prevention bookmark	Bookmark developed	5,000 printed and distributed in Wellington
Develop a Falls prevention calendar	500 - 2009 & 2010 calendars printed	2009 distributed to key stakeholders/community 2010 to be distributed in Sept/Oct 2009 by WPCP.



**Outcomes:**

The community education sessions were presented across the wellington region including towns such as Sale, Rosedale, Stratford and Maffra. The Falls project also coordinated a community session with a Peer Educator from COTA. This session was held in Sale and covered the topics of “quality use of medicines” and “active ageing.”

The quarterly Falls newsletter was widely distributed to senior clubs, community groups and other stakeholders and covered specific topics ranging from home safety, continence, nutrition and physical activity and often included free items people could request such as Falls prevention bookmarks and recipe books. The focus groups were conducted in the following towns; Seaspray, Briagolong, Dargo, Tinamba, Sale, Loch Sport, Gormandale and Yarram. The focus group participants in Sale, were a multi cultural group residing in Sale or just outside of the Sale township.

**Objective 7:** “To work in partnership with local government to implement integrated Falls prevention programs in line with the Wellington Healthy Living Plan and the Wellington PCP Community Health Plan.”

Strategies	Measures	Participation
Ascertain status of Healthy Living Plan and how Falls project can intersect and support	Contacted Wellington Shire to ascertain the status of this plan	No participation due to plan being reviewed
Look at WPCP Health Plan	Ensured Falls activities were in line with WPCP Health Plan	Joint project work with WPCP Health Promotion worker
Develop and distribute an environmental tool for identification of trip hazards in the wider Wellington environment	Tool adapted to suit Wellington region and distributed at forums and educational sessions	21 community responses



**Outcomes:**

The Wellington Healthy Living Plan was to be reviewed before any further action. The review was not actioned during the life of the Falls project. The Falls project worked inline with the WPCP Health Plan and this is evident with the joint work conducted between the Falls prevention and Healthy Active Living projects. Joint work consisted of developing an “Active Living” booklet, facilitating focus groups, coordinating Tai Chi for Arthritis training and establishing Lifeball in Wellington. The Falls project was also instrumental in providing information and participants for the Tai Chi for Dementia training coordinated by the Health Promotion worker in line with the “Access to an Active Life for Seniors” project. Community people actively returned the trip hazard tool to the Falls prevention project and 21 trip hazards were then lodged with the Wellington Shire.

**Objective 8:** “To further promote awareness of and responsibility for falls prevention across the catchment areas, continuing the roll out of general community awareness and Falls risk training for home carers, allied health staff, fitness instructors, and others working with and caring for older adults.”

Strategies	Measures	Participation
Provide service provider educational sessions/attend network groups, meetings, committees.	Educational sessions delivered HACC educational Attendance at committees/networks	189 service providers 15 attendees 4 committees / networks
Newsletter / Fact Sheets	Falls Newsletters and Fact Sheets distributed to service providers	Service providers / community
Regional Falls Forums / CGHS expo	Five Falls forums in conjunction with the Falls alliance / One CGHS Expo	220 participants at Falls forums 155 at CGHS expo
Healthy Ageing Expo	The Falls prevention project was instrumental in leading the coordination of the Healthy Ageing Expo held in Sale	208 participants at expo
Train the trainer	Four train the trainer sessions in Sale	68 participants in train the trainer sessions



**Outcomes:**

The Falls project was active in attending network groups, participation on committees and meetings in Wellington to update and inform of falls prevention strategies being implemented. The Falls project also presented two educational sessions to service providers, one in Sale and one in Yarram and coordinated a session for HACC workers, facilitated by COTA covering the topics of “Myths & Stereotypes of Ageing” and “Beyond Maturity Blues.” The Falls newsletters and fact sheets have helped to reinforce the falls message with service providers and community members.

The Healthy Ageing expo was a success with 208 participants attending the one-day expo. This was in partnership with the aged care network group in Sale, and the Falls project took on a leading role in coordinating the expo.

Train the trainer sessions have been well attended by Wellington participants. These sessions were also extended to the wider gippsland regions with people from East Gippsland finding it beneficial to attend training in Sale, which resulted in markedly reduced travel times to attend training.

## Results/findings:

The Falls project actively involved participants such as:

Senior community members: community education sessions / focus groups / healthy ageing expo / providing resources

Exercise trainers: train the trainer sessions

Service providers: CGHS Falls expo / educational sessions / providing resources

The following is the findings from feedback questionnaires and outcomes of resources developed. For the purpose of this report, a snapshot of the responses to feedback questionnaires will be noted.

### Community educational sessions:

The Falls project presented educational sessions to 501 community members over a two year period. Some of these groups did not complete feedback questionnaires due to involvement with other educators such the polio day where 50 community people attended but questionnaires were not distributed as this was a joint information day shared with other service providers.

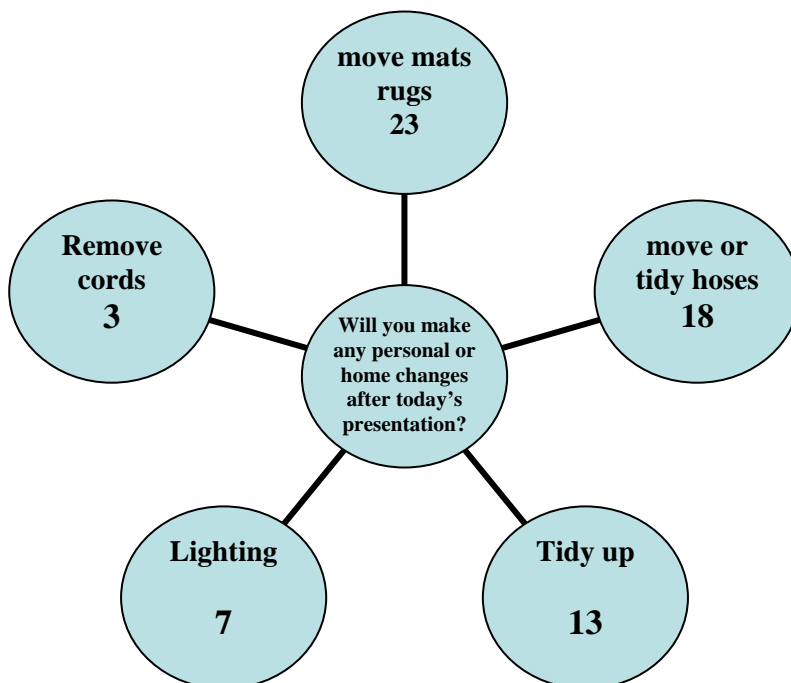
In some instances participants preferred not to fill in the feedback form or if they were attending as a couple, only one of the couples would fill it in.

166 questionnaires were received back from senior community educational sessions.

The same questionnaire was distributed to all the sessions, to allow for comparisons to be easily observed and also for assistance in the collation.

The aim of involving senior community people with educational sessions was to bring "an awareness" to preventing falls and the main topics around falls prevention, such as nutrition and physical activity.

A total of six questions were asked on the questionnaires. The following chart shows the responses to question 6 on the community education questionnaire:



166 questionnaires were returned, with 138 people responding to this question:

- 89 stating YES
- 49 stating NO.

Of the 89 who stated "YES" the adjacent responses were recorded. Not all "YES" answers elicited a comment on changes to be made.

Above notes the top five responses to changes people listed they would change.

Source: Falls prevention community education questionnaires collated report, January 2009

### COTA educational sessions:

The Falls project also coordinated a community session in conjunction with Council of the Ageing (COTA). This session covered two topics of "Quality use of medicines" and "Active Ageing." 13 people attended these sessions and 11 feedback questionnaires were returned.

Question 2 of the questionnaire asked participants to rate their response on a scale from excellent (5) to very poor (1).

Q2. Did the session today help you understand the importance of medications and physical activity in relation to preventing falls?

Excellent 5	Good 4	Average 3	Poor 2	Very poor 1	Total
4	6	1	0	0	11

Question 3 asked the participants to respond to YES or No.

Q3. Will you make any changes to your management of your medications after today's session?

YES	NO	Total
5	6	11

### Further comments:

*"will talk in more detail to a doctor or chemist"*

*"get appointment with my doctor"*

*Look at my medications more carefully"*

*Check with chemist"*

*"do not handle my own medications"*

*"I use Webster packs and that has helped"*

*"no need to change"*

### Focus groups

Eight focus groups were conducted in the Wellington region between June 2007 and May 2008. The towns these were held in were: Seaspray, Sale (multi cultural), Dargo, Briagolong, Tinamba, Loch Sport, Yarram and Gormandale. These towns represented a good cross section of the Wellington region.

The focus groups were facilitated by the 'Healthy Active Living' project and the 'Falls' project workers. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather information on physical activity options, barriers to people attending physical activity, and physical activities the community would like to have in their towns.

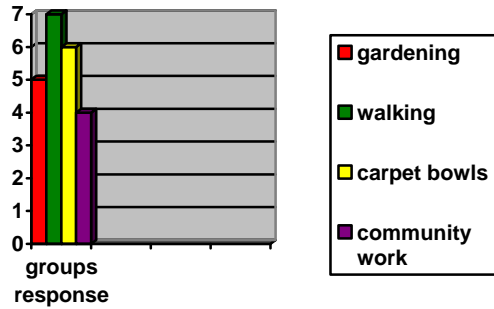
The focus group had a fun element in the form of a quiz that was conducted throughout the session, with prizes for the winner/s at the end. Each participant of the focus groups also received a show bag with Falls bookmarks, falls prevention newsletters/fact sheets, activity guide booklet and other healthy active living information. At some of the more rural towns, the show bags also included a DVD on drought and farming. The focus groups gathered important information and this information was collated into individual reports. When the focus groups were completed one final report was compiled.

Feedback questionnaires were generally handed out to the group at the end of the sessions, but on occasion were posted out to participants approximately one week after the session with a return paid envelope attached. This occurred when the facilitators became distracted at the end of the focus group when participants were eager to talk about their experiences one on one with the facilitators, and other participants had left.

A total of 87 participants attended the focus groups with 53 feedback questionnaires received back.

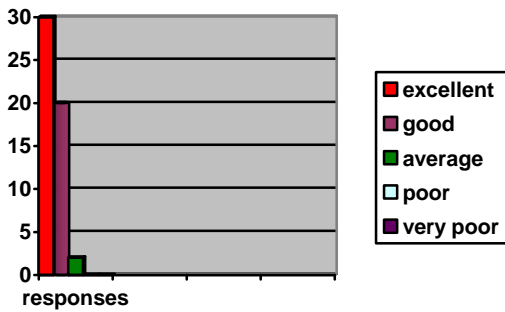
The feedback questionnaire developed had a total of 6 questions. The same questionnaire was handed out to participants of all the focus groups to allow for consistency when collating.

The following graph is a response to "types of activities currently being attended by participants"



Note: the data shown is the top four responses from each of the groups: ie 7 groups noted walking as the most popular activity.

The following chart shows the response to question 2 on the questionnaire:



Question 2:  
Can you rate the way the session today was facilitated?

Note: no responses were recorded against "poor" and "very poor".

Other comments noted were:

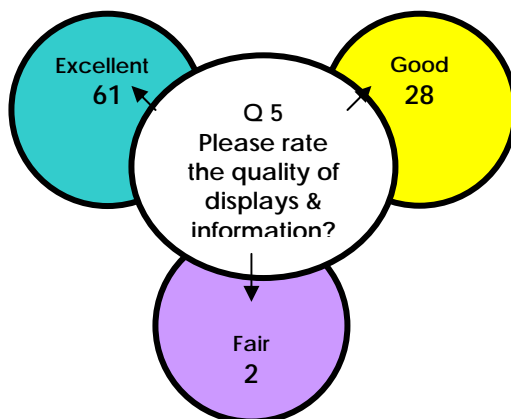
- "fun, informative and thorough"
- "good concept, made those attending try harder to become involved, thus gaining extra clues, friendly facilitation helps"
- "all members felt they had valid input into the sessions, and that they were listened to"
- "relaxed atmosphere"
- "need to coordinate time"

Source: focus group questionnaire collated report, January 09

### Healthy Ageing Expo

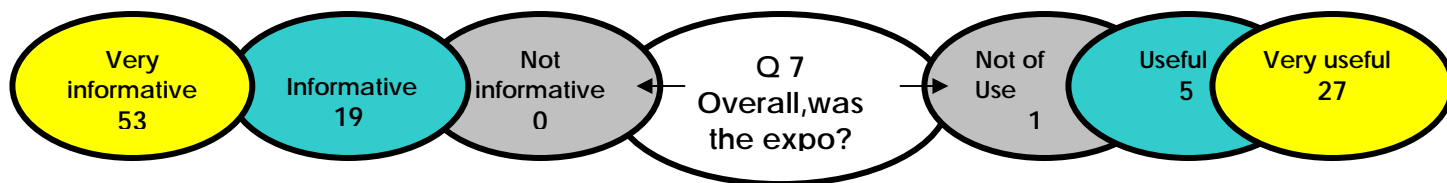
The Healthy Ageing Expo was organised and implemented through an aged care network working group, which comprised aged care network and WPCP HALS and FALLS project workers. The expo was opened by the Wellington Mayor at the time. The expo had guest speakers, activities and display stands relevant to Healthy Ageing and was a free day with lunch provided. The weather on the day was a hot 36 deg but this did not deter people attending with 208 attending on the day. The HALS & Falls Steering Committee approved expenditure to support the expo, therefore the Falls project carried out a leading role in coordinating the expo. The expo was a huge success with positive feedback received from the 92 returned questionnaires.

The following diagram show responses to question 5 on the questionnaire:



Note: the participants could also respond to "poor", but this category did not elicit any responses.

The following diagram shows responses to Question 7:



Source: Healthy Ageing Expo questionnaire collated report, 18 March 2008

## Train the trainer sessions

### Tai Chi for Arthritis:

The Tai Chi for Arthritis training was attended by 29 participants. This training was in partnership with the HALS project and the funding to provide this training was shared between HALS and the FALLS project. The coordination of the project was the responsibility of the Falls project.

The training was conducted over two days (Friday and Saturday). The decision to have one day of the training on Saturday, was due to this being preferable for the Arthritis Victoria facilitators and also it was deemed participants would be more able to attend if they only had to take one working day out of their week.

A decision was made to give preference to the Wellington region in accepting registration, but as the training could accommodate 30, it was anticipated 30 registrations would not be received from Wellington, therefore, the training was offered to the wider Gippsland region and in particular to East Gippsland (due to their remoteness). 17 participants were from the Wellington region, with 9 from East Gippsland with one participant from as far as Swift Creek, and four from South Gippsland.

The feedback questionnaire was distributed one week after the training finished due to the facilitators from Arthritis Victoria distributing their feedback questionnaires at the end of the two day training, therefore to avoid confusion, the Falls project decided to post out feedback questionnaires one week later.

30 registrations were received with 29 attendees on the day and one apology.

16 feedback questionnaires were returned from the 29 mailed out.

The following is responses to question 3 & 5 of the questionnaire:

### **Did the training meet your expectations?**

Participants were asked to respond to YES or NO

YES	NO	Total
16	0	16

Further comments:

*"I was extremely surprised by how much I learnt and got out of the training. I have recommended it to all my allied health peers" "more than my expectations"*

### **Do you believe the Tai Chi for Arthritis will help your clientele with preventing Falls?**

Participants were asked to respond to YES or NO

YES	NO	Total
15	0	15

Note: one questionnaire was not filled out for this question

## Further comments:

*"unsure, still in trail stage"*

*"slow movements create an awareness of body position and weight transfer. Core muscles are stabilised and strengthened as are leg muscles"*

*"elderly clientele will benefit with mobility, movement, joints not as stiff, coordination"*

*Tai Chi concentrates on slow movements with posture correct. Stepping or transferring weight helps concentration and balance.*

*Movement with legs enhance leg strength. Completing movements together very satisfying mentally"*

*"opportunity for the elderly clients I work with to perform gentle exercise, improve standing balance, tone and confidence to move freely. Also I feel Tai Chi will teach them to take more ownership of their health and empower them to have more control and make informed positive choices"*

*"Tai Chi is good for core balance. When I first started the moves, there were a couple of times I was off balance, but by the end of the sessions my balance had improved"*

*" Tai Chi is good for challenging your balance but gentle enough for Falls risk people"*

*"But also by improving general sense of well-being and enhancing their control over their bodies"*

*"It will help with balance, strength – the care of the client, help with strengthen muscle"*

*"It helps with balance, addresses shifting weight from one leg to the other, increases muscle strength. It also improves co-Ordination all of these things help prevent Falls"*

*"assist to maintain/regain muscle tone and balance"*

*"its all about balance and feeling stable the Tai Chi we learnt has an after step, which ensures being in a stable position at all times.*

*With this stability and balance confidence will grow"*

*source: Tai Chi for Arthritis questionnaire collated report, Jan 09*

## Warm Water & Chair Based

The Warm water & Chair Based training was conducted in Sale, facilitated by Arthritis Victoria trainers and the training was coordinated by the Falls prevention project worker.

This was a three-day training course and combined both warm water and chair based exercises. The participants had the opportunity to attend the full three day training which covered both of the exercises or only attend one exercise training, such as the chair based and attend at the relevant times.

Most of the participants attended the three days while 5 attended the chair based only. The training was limited to 20 participants only and 20 registrations were received. One participant was an apology for the training due to a personal matter, therefore 19 people participated in this training. The one apology was given the option to complete the training at a later date in Melbourne by Arthritis Victoria facilitators.

This training was also opened up to the wider Gippsland region and registrations were received from Wellington (11), East Gippsland (3), South Gippsland (3), Baw Baw (1) and Latrobe (1).

The Falls project financed the training and participants were asked to pay a nominal fee to cover catering only.

The feedback questionnaire for the Falls prevention project was mailed out to the participants with a paid reply return envelope. The reason for mailing out these forms was due to Arthritis Victoria distributing their feedback questionnaires at the end of the three day training for participants to complete and the Falls project decided to avoid confusion by mailing out the questionnaires one week after the training had been completed.

19 questionnaires were sent out and 7 returned.

Of the questionnaires returned 6 completed the full three days while one completed chair based only. The following is responses to questions 3 & 5.

### **Did the training meet your expectations:**

Participants were asked to respond to YES or NO

YES	NO	total
7	0	7

If participants noted NO, they were asked for further comment:

### Further comments:

*No further comments noted*

## Do you believe the training will help your clients with preventing Falls?

Participants were asked to respond to YES or NO

YES	NO	total
7	0	7

Further comments;

*"Clients in SRS's"*

*"working with aged they find comfortable doing in chair or holding chair. This ageing group hope to target in community and later date where they will feel comfortable."*

*"Clients - with improved balance and muscle control should have more confidence and all over strength to help prevent Falls."*

*"knowledge of increased flexibility and increased strength"*

*"building their strength, mobility and confidence"*

Source: warm water and chair based training questionnaire collated report, Jan 09.

## Duo Training for 'fit and active older adults':

Duo training involves training exercise trainers to work with their exercise groups in pairs, therefore adding interest and a different context to what can be mundane exercises if people are doing them alone. This was a one day training which required specific equipment to do the exercises. The Falls project funded the training for all participants and purchased equipment for the Wellington participants of the training. This training was also extended to the wider Gippsland region. The Falls prevention project in East Gippsland expressed an interest in purchasing the duo training equipment for participants that attended the Wellington training and therefore the names of these participants were passed onto the East Gippsland Falls project. Participants from South and Latrobe indicated they were going to put in for grants so as to purchase the equipment.

15 participants attended the training, with:

- 7 from Wellington,
- 5 from East Gippsland
- 2 from South Gippsland
- 1 from Latrobe

The feedback questionnaires were mailed out after the training was completed with a return paid envelope attached. 15 questionnaires were mailed out with 11 returned. The following is responses to questions 4 & 6.

## Do you plan to use the duo training in your classes in the near future?

Participants were asked to respond to YES or NO

YES	NO	Total
10	1	11

Further comments:

*"I would use a modified version in my classes, the equipment is way to expensive for all members of a class to use"*

*"providing we can purchase some equipment"*

*"may use elements, but don't have equipment. Yes, maybe in the future, I have passed on and discussed info with management and staff"*

## Do you believe the training will help your clients with preventing Falls?

Participants were asked to respond to YES or NO

YES	NO	Total
10	0	10

Note: One participant recorded "not sure" as a response to this question

### Further comments:

*"resistance training strengthens muscles, clients will approach tasks with greater confidence, they will become more aware of their bodies reaction times will improve as will their co-ordination skills"*  
*"As part of an overall selection of options to reduce risk factors, techniques are good to use in small communities as equipment is simple and portable and works with small group situations"*  
*"the unilateral component to duo training will transfer well in terms of balance training and therefore will be of benefit in preventing falls"*  
*"participants will build strength through abdominals and legs"*  
*"as part of a fitness program all forms of resistance, strength training help. This program would need balance exercises incorporated into it as well"*  
*"good for strengthening exercises, spatial awareness, proprioception. Intelligent resistance won't compromise client's ability to perform exercise and get the best benefit"*  
*"any increase in strength and mobility has got to help in Falls prevention"*  
*"strengthening and functional exercise has long been proven to assist with Falls prevention and duo training addresses this"*  
*"absolutely, they will be strengthening hips knees and their gait and posture. All helps in preventing Falls"*  
*"yes, because they can start to get co-ordination back and it will also encourage the clients to get more active through its social requirements for use"*

### Duo Training – 'frail and dependent older adults':

Duo 'train the trainer' sessions also provided a session for trainers who worked with frail older people and this session occurred on 28 November 2008.

This training received 11 registration with 5 people attending on the day and the outstanding being apologies. The five people who attended responded verbally that the duo training was excellent and they enjoyed the smaller group.

No feedback sheets were received back from this training.

### Falls Expo

The expo was attended by 155 CGHS staff and had displays on: continence, nutrition, feet & footwear, and various equipment, including low bed display. The falls prevention kit was launched at the expo and the Falls project also provided a table display. This was a very successful day and all participants received a show bag with falls prevention literature and novelty items.

*Note: Due to an unexpected situation arising with one of the key persons from CGHS who was collating the Falls expo feedback, the Falls project has not been able to have access to this data and therefore cannot note it in this report.*

### Service Provider educational sessions

The Falls project in conjunction with allied health staff from Sale & Yarram presented Falls prevention education to service providers. These sessions were held in Sale and Yarram.

8 service providers attended the Yarram session and 7 attended the Sale session.

Written feedback from these sessions included:

*"I enjoyed the session at Yarram, there is always something new to learn"*  
*"looking forward to the kit being released, that will help to know where services are and what is available"*  
*"I really enjoyed the Falls presentation, although the content was quite familiar to me, as I do home safety assessments on a regular basis".*

### HACC educational session:

The Falls project coordinated training for the HACC workers. This training occurred in Sale and was facilitated by peer educators from COTA. The topics covered were "Myths & Stereotypes of Ageing" and "Beyond Maturity Blues." There were 15 attendees and 13 feedback questionnaires were returned.

The response to question 2 on the questionnaire were:

Q 2. Did the session today help you understand the topics of "myths of ageing and depression in older people"?

YES	NO	Total
13	0	13

Q 3. Will the session today help you when you are working with your HACC clients?

YES	NO	Total
12	1	13

Further comments:

*"not a lot of change"*

*Recognize the symptoms, be an active listener and if necessary report back to office"*

*"we now know what symptoms to look out for with someone suffering from depression"*

*Knowledge is power, feel more equipped to know where to refer people in need"*

*"case study, get help for client through HACC"*

*"I will be more aware of my clients moods etc"*

*"I may view client's behaviour differently"*

*Made me more aware of signs to look for"*

*"more knowledge"*

*More knowledge and understanding and strategies"*

**Falls Forums across Gippsland:**

The Gippsland Falls Alliance held forums across Gippsland and the WPCP Falls project was active in assisting to coordinate these forums. The Falls forums aimed to reach a variety of health disciplines with attendees from community and acute settings. The forums were held on:

Sale: 17 May 2006  
Traralgon: 22 May 2007  
Lakes Entrance: 13 November 2007  
Trafalgar: 1 April 2008  
Sale: 12 November 2008

The regional Falls forums have had excellent key note speakers ranging from Dr Chris Mogan talking on "Clutter" and Michelle Skinner from the Coroners Court presenting on "Coroners Court process with a focus on Falls."

The Gippsland alliance also presented the Gippsland Falls projects to the November 08 Statewide meeting.

**Resources:**

Resources were developed and distributed to both service providers and community by the Falls project.

**Falls Prevention Kit:**

This kit comprised of a large material folder that contained 11 clear expandable envelopes. Each envelope covered a particular topic related to Falls prevention such as: personal alarms, vision, nutrition, osteoporosis, medications, safety, feet & footwear, hip protectors, continence and physical activity.

Each envelope held brochures, samples, giveaways and other information relevant to the envelope topic.

Also provided was a disc with all items provided in the kits noted and how to obtain these items to top up the kit if necessary. The disc included was loaded up with all the Falls Fact Sheets developed by the project. The kit was distributed to 20 service providers in the Wellington region.

### Falls Fact Sheets:

Fact sheets were developed and distributed in the Wellington region by the Falls project. The fact sheets were designed to be community friendly and covered the topics of: nutrition, vision, feet & footwear, continence, osteoporosis, home safety and physical activity.

They contained easy to read information on these topics relating the topic back to falls prevention and also noted relevant telephone contacts for the Wellington listed on the back page along with items that may assist people with falls prevention.

Requests were received from Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS) and East Gippsland Falls project for the fact sheets to be adapted for distribution to their clients in the wider Gippsland regions.

Subsequently the Wellington Falls project adapted the fact sheets to suit these regions and this resulted in the fact sheets being distributed by LCHS and East Gippsland Falls project to East and South Gippsland, Latrobe and Baw Baw.

### Falls Bookmark:

A Falls bookmark was developed in 2006 and 5,000 printed for distribution. These bookmarks had Falls prevention tips and relevant contact details for the Wellington region. The bookmarks were distributed as giveaways through the educational and focus group sessions and forums and expos. They were also posted out to community groups and placed in areas where they could be accessed such as the local library.

### "Getting Active in Wellington" booklet:

This booklet was developed and printed for distribution in the Wellington Region. This was in partnership with the HALS project. The booklets comprised of a number of physical activity options available across the Wellington region with details such as: place of activity, times and days, suitability for seniors and people with a disability etc. These booklets were also distributed through the Falls educational sessions, focus groups, forums and expos.

### Falls prevention calendar:

A Falls prevention calendar was developed by the Falls prevention project for 2009 & 2010. 500 copies of each year were printed for distribution across Wellington. The Calendar was developed with a different topic for each month relevant to Falls prevention ie: March as "medications and Falls".

The calendar had colourful pictures and the topics had tips and hints as well as information on preventing Falls.

The 2009 Calendar was distributed through community groups and through service providers who work directly with the community in the Wellington region. It is anticipated the 2010 Falls Calendar will be distributed by the WPCP Health Promotion worker

### **Conclusion & Recommendations:**

The Falls project in Wellington will conclude at the end of March 2009. Once the Wellington project is finalised there will be only one other such project in the Gippsland region, that being East Gippsland. The East Gippsland project is due to complete at the end of June 2009. This will conclude all of the Gippsland wide Falls prevention projects.

A strong recommendation would be that further funding is made available and distributed for the Falls prevention message to continue to be rolled out across the Wellington and wider Gippsland region.

The community education sessions in Wellington identified that when people are made aware of trip hazards they think about what changes they can make in their homes. This was evident in the feedback received from the sessions.

The community responded well to the sessions and generally most participants had "a story to tell about falls". If a falls prevention project is again established in the Wellington region, it would be recommended that the community education sessions be reintroduced as this helps the community to keep falls and trip hazards uppermost in their thoughts.

The Healthy Ageing Expo was a huge success and shows how 'successful partnerships' can have excellent results. This was very much a team effort, although the Falls project did take on a leadership role in coordinating the expo and also provided funding. The Falls project was in a position to take the lead with this event as it does not do 'direct client work' as the other group members did. The aged care network group discussed the possibility of holding an expo on a yearly basis, and although this would be greatly beneficial to the community, realistically this would be difficult to achieve without available funding and someone to lead and coordinate.

The exercise network group assembled by the Falls project proved to be invaluable to the project, as this group identified their local issues and concerns relating to delivering physical activity sessions to the senior community. From this, the Falls project identified the need for local 'train the trainer' sessions to be held in Wellington for local trainers. The Wellington region is located at least two and half hours travel time from Melbourne and if trainers travel to Melbourne for training, it is usually an overnight stay and the expense is high. Given some of these trainers deliver sessions to senior community on a voluntary basis or for a small donation, the expense connected to travelling for training becomes 'too much'.

Trainers also need to accumulate Professional Development Points (PDP's) to stay qualified to continue delivering exercise sessions. By attending the local 'train the trainer' sessions in Sale, exercise trainers travel was limited, while they also accumulated PDP's.

The Falls project extensively covered this gap for the trainers in the Wellington region and also opened this up to the wider Gippsland region, which was greatly appreciated, especially by the East Gippsland participants. Given the Falls project injected much needed and very broad 'train the trainer' sessions into the Wellington region during 2008, it would be recommended any future train the trainer sessions be provided not in the near future but perhaps at least 12 months post the last sessions were offered in Wellington.

Overall, the WPCP Falls prevention project has been successful in establishing "Falls prevention" on the agenda in the Wellington region. This has been established through education, forums, expos, focus groups and resources provided. It would be beneficial to the Wellington community and health service providers to continue to have the Falls prevention message being injected into the community and organisations. Hopefully, this will be recognised by the funding bodies and future planning will include a "Falls prevention project" for Wellington.

End of report.