

# The Importance of Assessing Visual Impairment in Patients Admitted Following a Fall

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## Background

- Falls and associated injuries are a significant area of concern for older adults.
- Approximately 30% of those aged over 65 and 50% of those aged over 80 experience at least one fall each year.
- NICE guidelines state, "Older people who present for medical attention because of a fall, should be offered a multifactorial falls risk assessment", which includes review of visual impairment<sup>1</sup>.

## Aims

- To identify if visual impairment was documented on the orthopaedic clerking document for patients admitted following a fall.
- To raise awareness of visual impairment as being a significant risk factor for falls in the elderly population.

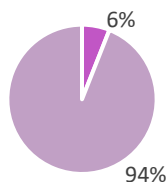
## Methods

- Data collection was carried out retrospectively for patients presenting following a fall at Tunbridge Wells Hospital, via the orthopaedic admission list.
- The orthopaedic clerking document was reviewed to identify visual impairment.
- Initially, data was collected from April to May 2024 and then from July to August 2024 following the first teaching intervention.

## Results

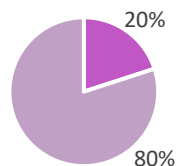
- Initial data collection showed 6% of documentation (n = 50) noted visual impairment.
- Following the first intervention, 20% of documentation noted visual impairment.

April - May 2024



- Visual Impairment Documentation
- No Visual Impairment Documentation

July - August 2024



- Visual Impairment Documentation
- No Visual Impairment Documentation

## Discussion

- In line with NICE guidelines, the standard was set at 100%, to complete visual impairment documentation as part of a multifactorial falls assessment.
- Initial data collection from April to May showed 6% of documentation noted visual impairment.
- The first intervention involved delivering a teaching session to the orthopaedic team, highlighting the significance of visual impairment contributing to falls.
- Data collection from July to August 2024 has shown an improvement, whereby 20% of documentation noted visual impairment.

## Conclusion

- Visual impairment was not routinely documented on orthopaedic clerking.
- The second intervention will involve including these findings in the departmental induction and designing a poster to further raise awareness.
- Further teaching sessions are needed regarding multifactorial falls assessment.

## Six Tips To Help Prevent Falls

More than one in four people age 65 years or older fall each year, yet many falls can be prevented.



Learn more about reducing your risk of falling at [www.nia.nih.gov/falls-prevention](http://www.nia.nih.gov/falls-prevention).



## References

1. NICE guidelines: Falls in older people: assessing risk and prevention
2. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/falls-and-falls-prevention/six-tips-help-prevent-falls>