

Project Title

Safety Assessment Falls Education (SAFE) Program

Sponsoring Organizations

1. Continuing Care Division of Catholic Health System's Senior Services
2. American Red Cross of Buffalo
3. Independent Health

Summary of Program

The Safety Assessment & Falls Education (SAFE) program is a voluntary eight-week program aimed at providing falls education, screening, and intervention to reduce the risk of falls in older adults in underserved communities. The SAFE program has been utilized at senior apartments and community centers and is easily adaptable to an array of settings serving older adults.

SAFE Program Staff:

This program is implemented with a team approach. Every team has a "Team Leader" and a "Volunteer". The Team Leader is a Physical and/or Occupational Therapist or Physical and/or Occupational Therapy Assistant. The purpose of the Team Leader role is to assess the clinical needs of the participants and ensure the program is appropriate for each older adult. Team leaders will not attend every session but will conduct periodic clinical assessments to determine progress towards reduction of falls risk.

The Volunteers are responsible for coordinating the implementation and weekly details of the SAFE Program. Volunteers run every session for eight weeks and serve as the primary contact to the older adults. There is regular communication between the Team Leader and the Volunteer throughout the eight weeks. It is critical to the success of the SAFE program that the Volunteer build a strong relationship with the older adults to foster commitment to improving falls risk.

SAFE Program Components:

- Eight sessions for one hour per week
- One home visit for each participant conducted by the Team Leader and Volunteer
- Three assessments of participant fall risk occurring at week 1, week 4 and week 8 conducted by the Team Leader and Volunteer

Impact on Falls Prevention

1. 77% of Program participants decreased their TUG Score
2. 79% of Participants maintained their daily exercise and falls calendar
3. 54% of participants increased their Activities Specific Balance (ABC) Scale score