**An Interdisciplinary Multi-level Approach to Resident Safety at Villa Colombo, Toronto.**

**A Successful story of a Falls Prevention Program**

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Villa Colombo Toronto is a 395-bed long term care home located in Toronto. This LTC home is a pre-designate Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) of the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario (RNAO). The team shares their story of reducing falls for the residents by implementing the RNAO’s Best Practice Guideline on Preventing Falls and Reducing Injury from Falls, Fourth Edition with an interdisciplinary approach.

The interdisciplinary team, attended RNAO Best Practice Champion’s Workshops and the Clinical Best Practice Institute. They also learned from Champions Network Webinars and Knowledge Exchange meetings as part of RNAO’s Best Practice Spotlight Organization program (BPSO). Finally, the team participated in the Community of Practice for Fall Prevention to implement and evaluate their work supported by their BPSO Coach and RNAO’s LTC Best Practice Coordinator.

A multi-level, interdisciplinary team approach helps to prevent falls among residents. In this large home, the falls program structure has an overall falls program committee with unit-specific falls sub-committees and unit team huddles. The falls program committee members represent the various department teams in nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, restorative care, pharmacy, dietary and housekeeping.

Falls program Committee team members include the following activities in the monthly meetings:

1. Conduct annual falls program reviews and set goals for the program.
2. Evaluate the program using the RNAO BPG gap analysis tool for falls and related injury.
3. Identify program priorities and plan for improvements in resident care strategies and processes.
4. Review falls prevention policies, procedures and protocols.
5. Analyze the falls program reports and understand the trends and patterns to support decisions.
6. Monitor the progress of residents in the program.
7. Make recommendations and support decision making for practice changes.
8. Develop strategies for fall prevention and reducing injury from falls.
9. Plan for implementation of improvements in the fall prevention program.
10. Provide education for staff and families.

In 2021, based on the falls gap analysis, the committee focused on injury tracking and prevention; falls that happened soon after admission; and ensured continuity of falls prevention interventions as the residents’ transition to make Villa Colombo Toronto their home.

Monthly Activity: Interdisciplinary team members align the overall falls committee’s work, at monthly unit level sub-committee meetings. In these meetings, the teams review the incidence of residents who have had frequent falls and those residents who have high risk for falls. In collaboration with the resident and family, resident care plans are re-evaluated and updated as needed.

Weekly Activity: The unit teams address urgent resident care and safety needs, during the weekly huddles. The team focusses on the goals to prevent and manage falls and related injuries. The team members review the falls that occurred in the week, conduct in-depth investigation of the fall, re-evaluate the effectiveness of preventative strategies. Team members who provide direct resident care for the resident provide feedback on the care strategies proposed and implement new and/or changes to strategies to prevent further falls.

Residents are screened for falls on admission and assessed when they have a moderate to high risk of falls. The unit team conducted screening and assessment when the resident has a change in health status and quarterly, using validated screening and assessment tools. The Falls Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT) determines the residents’ level of risk for falls. For residents who are at high risk for falls, a comprehensive assessment is conducted. Based on the level of the fall risk of the resident, the team uses a person and family-centered care approach to plan care. Interventions focused on prevention are implemented in a timely way. Thereafter, the resident and family are consulted regularly to review and evaluate the individualized falls prevention plan of care.

When there is a fall, a formal post-fall protocol is followed. In this process, unit team members first care for the resident to ensure safety. Then, a Post-Fall Investigation is done using a tool. The RN, RPN, PSWs and the interdisciplinary team assess the resident’s status and identify and analyze the factors that contributed to the fall. In this way the team cares for the resident and immediately puts in place preventative measures. The RN and RPN complete the Risk Management Incident Protocol. The family is contacted to keep them informed of the incident, resident’s health status and care and discuss interventions to prevent further falls. When there is an injury, such as laceration, fracture, or significant change in health status, a Critical Incident Report is submitted to the Ministry of Long-Term Care.

Villa Colombo has many success stories to share. One newly admitted resident was non-ambulatory and required significant assistance to stand and transfer. The interdisciplinary team implemented an individualized approach for this resident. Physiotherapy interventions helped to improve the resident’s mobility. The team considered using a special, adult-size walker, so the resident could sit down on a seat, when she felt unsteady while walking. The physiotherapist, nurses, PSW’s, and housekeeping interdisciplinary team, along with the resident and family, developed a plan of care. This specialized walker was effectively used by the resident support from the team. This enabled the resident to walk and provided safety when she had restless movements while standing and walking. This intervention kept the resident safe from falls and fulfilled her desire to walk. The resident progressively learned to walk independently with her own specialized rollator walker. A true resident success story with an interdisciplinary team approach!

Another success strategy of teamwork is the Falls Prevention Contest sponsored by the physiotherapy service provider organization at Villa Colombo, Toronto. The contest is a friendly competition between all units. The unit showing the most improvement in the number of falls for the month receives the Falls Prevention trophy and gift cards for coffee for each member on that unit team. The competition engages all unit teams, on all shifts with positive reinforcement and recognition of falls prevention efforts.

Villa Colombo Toronto’s interdisciplinary team approach has prevented residents from falls while creating an excellent team spirit