FALLS

Skills for Practice NPA

CONTENT

Definition and statistics
Risk factors
Balance challenge
The ageing process and falls complexities
Dementia
Clinical review and assessment
Preventative measures
environmental factors

Aim of session

To explore the factors associated with falls risk

And how to reduce these risks to prevent falls

Definition and statistics

" A fall is defined as an event which results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground or floor or other lower level"

WHO 2023

1 in 3 people over the age of 65 experiences a fall at least once a year

in Scotland, more than 18,000 older people are admitted to hospital after a fall each year

falls are the most common reason for an ambulance being called to an older person

there are around 6,000 broken hips in Scotland each year, most of which are caused by a fall.

Risk factors

What do you think increases our susceptibility to falling?

Discuss in groups

Risk factors

weak muscles, especially in the legs

poor balance

dizziness or lightheadedness

black outs, fainting or loss of consciousness

foot problems

memory loss, confusion or cognitive impairment

vision and hearing problems

taking medication that makes you dizzy or drowsy

drinking too much alcohol, especially with medication

some bladder or bowel conditions

Balance challenge

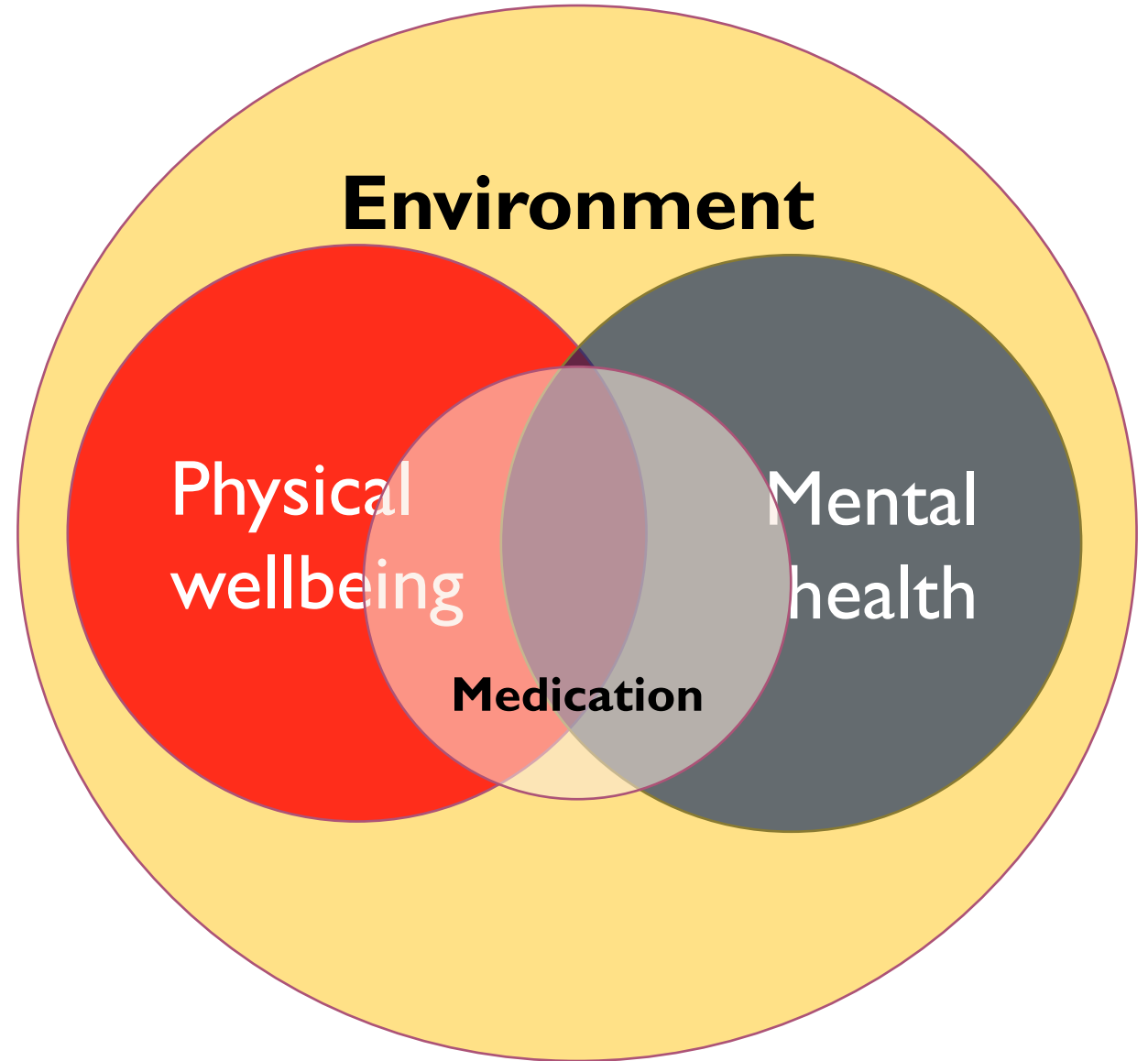## Stand up

- Beside your chair

Balance on one leg

- we will aim for 30 seconds

Close your eyes

- we will try the balance again for 30 seconds

Complexities of falls risk

Environment

Physical wellbeing

Mental health

Medication

The Ageing Process

Brain and Nervous system
Motor control diminishes
Reduction in brain mass
Decrease in blood flow

Respiratory system
Rib calcification
Reduced lung capacity
Reduced elasticity

Cardiovascular system
Stiffening of blood vessel walls
Reduction in cardiac function and efficiency

Endocrine system
Hormone changes

Gastro-intestinal system
Peristalsis reduced
Changes in saliva

Renal system
Longer for kidney to eliminate waste
Reduced bladder elasticity

Senses
Age related hearing loss
Saliva becomes thicker
Reduced sense of smell
Stiffening of lens

Skin
Reduced collagen
Diminished hair follicles
Reduced skin secretions

Musculoskeletal
Discs shrink
Wearing of cartilage
Loss of muscle mass
Reduced bone density

Ageing process and falls

- Slower reaction time

- Less mobile due to breathlessness

- Poorer circulation, changing BP

- Weight loss/increased frailty

- Bowel and bladder dysfunction

- Medication toxicity

- Increased risk of infection

- Reduced sight and/or hearing

- Higher risk of skin tears/bruising

- Reduced mobility/bone strength and balance

Dementia

There are different personal risk factors that cause people to fall, however, **people with dementia are at greater risk because they**

are more likely to experience **problems with mobility**, balance and muscle weakness

can have **difficulties with their memory** and finding their way around

can have **difficulties processing** what they see and reacting to situations

may take **medicines** that make them drowsy, dizzy or lower their blood pressure

are at greater risk of **feeling depressed**

may find it **difficult to communicate** their worries, needs or feelings

Preventative Measures

Eyes and Ears

Muscle and Bone Strength

Feet

Fluid and Nutrition

Bladder and Bowels

Confidence

maximise mobility

The Environment

Space

Lighting

Signage

Noise

Business

Belongings

Equipment

Summary

- Reducing the risk of falls is everyone's responsibility

- There are many factors which contribute to the risk of falling

- Falls risk increases with age

- People living with dementia are at a higher risk of falling

- It is important to work with each person to reduce their falls risk by taking preventative measures

- Environments should be considered from an aspect of minimising falls risk, escalating any concerns