

22 June, 2018

Free prevention program to address falls in the Chinese community

Every day, 24 adults on average living in the south east of Sydney are hospitalised due to falling. At least one in four people aged 65 years and over fall each year, and this rate doubles in the 80 years and over age group.

For many people, a fall can result in a serious injury and loss of independence.

The South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, in partnership with Bayside Council, have organised a free seven-week falls prevention program called 'Stepping On'.

'Stepping On' is for people who are Cantonese or Mandarin speaking and are aged 65 years or over. It is targeted at those who have had a fall in the past, or have a fear of falling.

The evidenced-based program has been proven to reduce falls by 31 per cent in the community.

Myna Hua, Manager Health Promotion Service, said falls are preventable by doing exercises to improve leg strength and balance.

"The 'Stepping On' program includes a physical exercise component, led by an accredited physiotherapist who guides participants to build leg strength and balance. Participants are encouraged to practice the simple exercises at home between sessions to help increase their confidence," Ms Hua said.

"A participant from our last program said that she learnt and practiced the exercises regularly. She now can walk uphill more easily and without stopping a few times."

Every week, guest speakers will talk about how medications, home hazards, road safety and nutrition relate to falls prevention.

The next 'Stepping On' program will commence weekly from Wednesday 24 July, and will be held at Rockdale Library, 444-446 Princes Highway, Rockdale, NSW 2216.

Bookings and medical clearance from a doctor are essential to participate.

To register or for further information, please contact Brenda Leung, Health Promotion Service, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District on 9540 8259 or email Brenda.leung@health.nsw.gov.au, or call Stephanie Lee, Rockdale Library, Bayside Council on 9562 1694.

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