



Community falls prevention program sustainability guidelines and workbook

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Aim

The aim of these guidelines is to help agencies implement community-based falls prevention programs and achieve long-term program sustainability by addressing sustainability from the outset.

Sustainability

In these guidelines sustainability refers to the long term continuation of effective programs or the effective components of the program. Or more specifically, where the set of activities aimed at achieving the program's objectives are incorporated into the organisation's routines.

When to use the guidelines

The guidelines should be used at each stage of program development: planning, implementation and sustainability.

1. **Planning:** use the guidelines to develop your sustainability plan from the outset. Your sustainability plan is your guide that defines what will be sustained (the components and activities considered essential to the program outcomes), how this will be achieved (this includes staffing, funding and other resources) and how sustainability will be measured. Planning for sustainability includes anticipating issues or problems that may need to be addressed during implementation. This is a working document, to be reviewed and adapted as you progress through your implementation and sustainability phases.
2. **Implementation:** use the guidelines to review and modify your sustainability plan. Address issues or problems arising during implementation and evaluation that may impact on long-term sustainability.
3. **Sustainability:** use the guidelines to review your program sustainability at the end of the implementation phase, and at regular points thereafter. Sustainability is a dynamic process, as changes occur in the organisation and the community. The ability to anticipate, monitor, adapt or respond to these changes will help your program continue successfully over a longer period of time.

This guidelines booklet is accompanied by a supporting document. The supporting document provides the background information and rationale for the guidelines and more detailed examples, strategies, additional reading, links and reference details.

The falls prevention sustainability guidelines and supporting document are based on information from falls prevention, health promotion and injury prevention program literature and health practitioners' experience and practice.

Additional supporting resources include a literature review and a training program.

How to use the guidelines

As you work your way through these guidelines you can refer to the supporting document for further information and suggestions. Add as much detail as possible to the worksheets, which will guide you through the process to develop your sustainability plan. Review and update your plan as required throughout your implementation.

The first section of the guidelines and workbook document (Factors promoting program sustainability) details 12 factors considered essential in sustaining falls prevention programs. Read the details (background, actions and examples) for each of the 12 factors, and make notes in the space provided after each factor detailing features of your program that do or do not address the recommended actions. All the actions listed in each sub-category are listed in the Sustainability Actions Summary table.

The second section of the document (Checklists, action and sustainability plans) includes a number of resources that will help you develop a sustainability plan for your program. These include:

- a. The sustainability checklist, which contains questions related to the actions listed in each sub-category. The questions help you identify the factors that need to be strengthened to improve the likelihood of achieving sustainability and to refine and review your sustainability plan. Consider these questions for each specific falls prevention program initiative. Respond to each question using either 'yes' to indicate the item has been addressed or 'no' to indicate further action is required. Prioritise all items requiring action ('no') as low, intermediate or high priority. Transfer high priority checklist item details to the Action and Options Plan. If the priority items listed are too extensive you may need to further prioritise items to a manageable set, noting when other priority items need to be reviewed or actioned.
- b. The action and options plan is where you document the actions to be undertaken to address the priority items, by whom and by when (timelines). Add actions for follow-up to your diary.

The options listed are not exhaustive; there may be a number of items specific to your program you could include. The priority rankings and the number of items to be addressed at any time need to be considered by the program team or advisory group, and you should bear in mind the resources required to address each of these.

- c. The program components to be sustained sheet is where you document the core program components to be sustained, how they will be sustained and how sustainability will be measured. This is your program sustainability plan summary to be reviewed and amended as required.

The sustainability status checklist is a separate tool that will help you determine the overall level of sustainability achieved at a given time and can be used to compare your sustainability at different time points. It also helps identify the areas needing to be addressed to improve your program's sustainability.

In addition, examples of an implementation and sustainability Gantt chart have been included in Appendix 1 to help you chart timelines for each component activity.

The Community falls prevention sustainability guidelines and workbook, including the checklists and action and options plan, will help you work towards sustainability and document the process. Remember that all actions should be reviewed, updated and signed off as completed on a regular basis.

To assist organisations further a training program has been developed to support the implementation of the guidelines. The training program is available at www.monash.edu/muarc

Resources to support organisations implementing programs to prevent falls are available at www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/maintaining/falls/index.htm.

Plan, engage, implement, evaluate, adapt, evaluate and monitor.

Sustainability is achievable

Sustainability actions summary

Establishing a need for the program

Document the reasons why you want to implement the falls prevention program. Describe the problem or issues to be addressed and why it is important for your organisation and partner organisations to address.

Core business and fit with the organisation

Outline how the program fits with and enhances the goals, values and core business of your organisation. Identify how the program helps expand your core business adding value to your organisation or clientele (also do this for partner organisations). Determine where the program is best located (in your organisation, a partner organisation or both).

Benefits

Determine what information (about benefits and program effectiveness) is to be disseminated and to whom. Determine how this information will be disseminated. In addition, think more broadly than the immediate stakeholders. Identify how you will market and promote the program to the community, for example senior citizens' groups, health professional organisations, local councils, and general practitioners.

Organisational capacity

Based on your detailed implementation plan (including the resources, knowledge, skills and supports required) determine how realistic it is for your organisation to conduct the program. Determine which components of the program your organisation can or should provide or support and those best provided or supported by a partner organisation.

Planning from the outset: implementation, evaluation, sustainability

Develop:

- a detailed implementation plan: include program aims, objectives, target audience, evidence supporting the selected intervention; detail the specific components

of the intervention, the resources, income and supports required, the partnerships to be established and their roles and responsibilities; and strategies to engage stakeholders.

- an evaluation plan: include all appropriate process, impact or outcome measures relevant to your organisation's and partner organisation's needs.
- a sustainability plan: specify what components of the program need to be sustained and how; and what measures will be used to determine whether sustainability has been achieved.

Program adaptability

Outline the essential components of the program that need to be maintained to achieve program effectiveness and the methods you plan to use to monitor program fidelity and program outcomes.

Outline how the program is being adapted (if applicable) and the systems in place to monitor the effect of these modifications.

Integrating into existing routines

Review all current programs, processes and roles within your organisation to identify those able to incorporate the program or program components. Detail how the program will be incorporated into these existing routines and systems. Amend or develop documentation, policies, manuals and position descriptions to support the falls prevention program activities.

Partnerships

Brainstorm a list of potential partners, what their role might be within the program and what they could contribute to the program. Once partnerships are confirmed and negotiated, develop a memorandum of agreed goals and actions.

Stakeholder engagement

Develop a stakeholder engagement plan that includes education and methods of providing avenues for involvement in program design and implementation. Include potential and actual challenges and strategies to address these issues.

Capacity building

Identify initial and ongoing training needs and develop an appropriate training program for your organisation, key program drivers or champions, and partner members and organisations..

Funding and resources

Develop a financial and resources plan that includes all program components and their associated costs. Identify all potential sources of funding and in-kind support, noting which funding or resources are short term and those that are available long term. Regularly review your costs and funding.

Program champions

Identify key staff in your organisation and partner organisations who can act as program champions, and any external program supporters. Determine the role of each program champion and what support they will need to effectively undertake their role.

Checklists, action and sustainability plans

Sustainability checklist

This checklist will help you identify the aspects of your program or program implementation that could be enhanced to improve sustainability. Steps involved:

1. **Identify items that require further action** (column one):
 - Yes = item is addressed and requires no further action (how this has been addressed should be outlined in your workbook)
 - No = item requires further action (go to step 2).
2. **Prioritise items requiring action ('no')** Prioritise items requiring action ('no') (column two): (1 = high; 2 = intermediate; 3 = low): High priority items are those that need to be addressed first in order to progress to the next level, issues that set the foundations of the program or address immediate concerns, and can include items that are easily addressed. If there are a number of high or intermediate items, they can be further broken down into 1A or 1B, 2A or 2B, with A items taking priority over B items.

3. **Tick which items will be addressed and go to the Action and options plan** (column three): Tick the items you wish to address in the short term and go to the Action and Options Plan to outline the actions to be undertaken, who will do these and by what date. If there are quite a few areas requiring further action, it is not possible to address all of these in the short term, determine when to review the checklist to initiate further action.

Date to be reviewed:

To further assist with program scheduling an example of an implementation and sustainability Gantt chart are included in Appendix 1. Gantt charts allow you to clearly portray timelines associated with program activities.

Sustainability checklist

| Sustainability question | Has this item been adequately addressed (circle as appropriate) | If 'no', rate level of priority: (1 = high; 2 = intermediate; 3 = low) | Tick which items will be addressed and go to action plan |
|--|---|--|--|
| Establishing a need for the program | | | |
| 1. Has the program been developed to meet a local need or demand? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Have you described the benefits to your organisation and clientele? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Have you described the benefits to your partner organisations? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Have you identified and disseminated the research evidence that supports the chosen activities? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Core business and fit with organisation | | | |
| 5. Does the program or program components fit in with the goals and values, and core business of your organisation? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Are falls or falls prevention a priority issue or area of interest for your organisation? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Have you determined which organisation (yours, a partner, or both) is best suited to host the program because it fits in with their goals, values and core business? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Benefits | | | |
| 8. Have you outlined the potential benefits (and addressed any potential negative impacts) of the program to the organisation, to stakeholders, and to the target audience? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Have you established an evaluation plan from the outset? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Does your evaluation plan measure all program goals and outcome objectives? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Are the outcomes (actual benefits) of the program evaluation regularly disseminated to all key stakeholders? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Do you have a broader marketing plan? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Organisational capacity | | | |
| 13. Does your organisation have the capacity to run the program alone? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Even if your organisation does have capacity, have you determined whether potential partners should be sought and why? Have potential partners been identified and recruited? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. If your organisation's capacity is limited, have you identified and recruited partner organisations that have the required capacity or with whom you can jointly build capacity? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Sustainability question | Has this item been adequately addressed (circle as appropriate) | If 'no', rate level of priority: (1 = high; 2 = intermediate; 3 = low) | Tick which items will be addressed and go to action plan |
|--|---|--|--|
| 16. Does your organisation have the required commitment to embrace change? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Is this capacity available in the long term (after short term external funding has ended)? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Note: questions 13–15 includes capacity both at a service delivery and organisational level.

Planning from the outset: implementation, evaluation, and sustainability

| | | | |
|--|--------|--|--------------------------|
| 18. Do you have a well-written (clear and detailed) implementation plan? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. Do you have an evaluation plan that includes process, impact and outcome measures corresponding to the goals and objectives of your program? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. Do you have a sustainability plan that details what will be sustained and how, and how sustainability will be measured? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. Do you have a process to progressively review your sustainability plan and implement modifications if required? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Program adaptability

| | | | |
|---|--------|--|--------------------------|
| 22. Have you identified any program changes needed to make integration and local delivery easier, in the short term and long term? (Note if no changes are required to program.) | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. Do these changes maintain the essential components of the program? Are strategies and evaluations in place to implement evidence-based programs in ways that reach the people they are intended for and that achieve program outcomes as intended? This includes systems to monitor the effects of any adaptations. | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. Are program results and broader environmental changes adequately and regularly monitored to determine the need for further modifications to the program or method of operation? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Integrating program activities into existing routines

| | | | |
|---|--------|--|--------------------------|
| 25. Are there existing programs, processes and/or roles within your organisation that can integrate the falls prevention program/program components? If yes, have you determined how this will be done? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. If the program has been successfully integrated into existing operating systems, have existing policies, reporting and funding processes, position descriptions, procedure manuals, been modified to incorporate the falls program activities and duties? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Sustainability question | Has this item been adequately addressed (circle as appropriate) | If 'no', rate level of priority: (1 = high; 2 = intermediate; 3 = low) | Tick which items will be addressed and go to action plan |
|---|---|--|--|
| 27. If the falls prevention program cannot be integrated, have new policies, reporting and funding processes, procedure manuals and position descriptions been developed and incorporated into the organisation's standard operating systems? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Partnerships | | | |
| 28. Have you identified potential partners who can contribute to your program, in the short and long term? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. Have you detailed their role and contribution in the program, and outlined the benefits the program offers them? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. Have you developed a memorandum of agreed goals and actions? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31. Are there broader collaborations or networks your program staff could engage with? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stakeholder engagement | | | |
| 32. Are all stakeholders sufficiently engaged in the program? Have you outlined how those identified as insufficiently engaged will be followed up to increase engagement? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 33. Have you provided opportunities for stakeholder involvement and feedback? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34. If you have identified any resistance or concerns, have these been addressed? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35. Have you provided evidence of a need for the program and for the effectiveness of the falls prevention program? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36. Have you provided evidence of the actual benefits and effectiveness of the current program? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Capacity building – staff/partners | | | |
| 37. Have you formulated a training program to meet the initial and ongoing training needs of new staff, and to maintain or update existing staff knowledge and skills? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 38. Have you formulated a training program that meets the initial and ongoing training and support needs of program champions? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 39. Have you formulated a training program to meet the initial and ongoing training needs of partner members? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Funding and resources | | | |
| 40. Have you detailed each component of your program and the resources you require to implement this program (staff, knowledge, facilities, infrastructure and other resources)? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Sustainability question | Has this item been adequately addressed (circle as appropriate) | If 'no', rate level of priority: (1 = high; 2 = intermediate; 3 = low) | Tick which items will be addressed and go to action plan |
|--|---|--|--|
| 41. Have you costed the program realistically (each component) including the ongoing maintenance costs of the program? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 42. Have you identified all sources of funding, short term and after any initial external funding ends? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 43. Is some funding provided from internal budgets? This is a fundamental source of funding particularly in the long term. (This includes where components are integrated into existing positions funded by the organisation.) | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 44. Have potential external funding avenues been identified, and processes established to apply for these if required? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 45. Are the program's funding, resources and support needs, and their availability monitored over time similar to other programs in your organisation? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Program champions | | | |
| 46. Have you identified program champions and defined their roles? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 47. Do the champions understand the culture of the organisation? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 48. Are the champions well positioned in the organisation (are listened to by management and have the authority to influence work practices and staff)? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 49. Are the champions respected, credible, motivated and committed to the program? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 50. Are the champions appropriately skilled (have program knowledge and skills to manage change and influence people)? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 51. Are there adequate supports, for example training and other staff, to enable the champions to effectively undertake their role? | Yes No | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Action and options plan

The options in this section are not an exhaustive list. The supporting document provides more specific options, but you can add your own. Add actions to your diary for follow-up.

| Options | Actions | Who will initiate action and completion date |
|---|---------|--|
| Establishing a need for the program | | |
| Document and detail the need or demand and data source. ('Our data show ...') | | |
| Document the potential benefits and the evidence sources. ('The research evidence has shown ...') | | |
| Present the evidence in: management meetings, partner meetings, committee meetings, staff meetings, training sessions; in proposals, management reports, staff newsletters and emails. | | |
| Core business and fit with organisation | | |
| List the core business of each organisation and how the program fits in with their core business. This will help determine which organisations within your partnership are best suited to conduct the program or program components. | | |
| Determine what role your organisation and partner organisations should take in the program given its goals, values and core business. | | |
| Present the information that documents the need or demand and makes the issue important to your organisation. | | |
| Benefits | | |
| Document and present the potential benefits and the evidence sources to initiate and maintain stakeholder engagement. | | |
| Identify any negative impacts of program implementation or sustainability, outline how they will be addressed and how the benefits outweigh the need for any additional action. | | |
| Present the evidence in: management meetings, partner meetings, committee meetings, staff meetings, training sessions; in proposals, management reports, staff newsletters, and emails. | | |
| Develop an evaluation plan from the outset that includes measures substantiating benefits and program objectives (see the supporting document for specific options). | | |
| Disseminate program outcomes regularly, such as program participation rates and anecdotal evidence. Once follow-up data have been obtained and reviewed preliminary findings can be circulated, for example pre- and post-balance assessment comparisons for the first 15 participants. | | |

| Options | Actions | Who will initiate action and completion date |
|--|---------|--|
| List all stakeholders and the information they should be provided with. | | |
| Develop a marketing plan defining how you will promote the program to your target audience or referral sources. | | |
| Organisational capacity | | |
| Document the resources, knowledge, skills and supports your organisation can contribute to the program short and long term. | | |
| Identify potential partners, including older people who could be approached to participate and establish what they potentially have to offer. | | |
| Approach all partner organisations to gauge interest and present the evidence related to need or demand and potential benefits. | | |
| Gauge staff and management attitudes to change and their perceptions of the need for change. Talk to people (individually or in groups, in meetings or focus groups) or conduct a survey. | | |
| Planning from the outset: implementation, evaluation, and sustainability | | |
| Review and amend your implementation plan where necessary. Existing falls prevention guidelines can assist you. Detail: – what will be implemented, how and by whom – the program objectives and how they will be measured – what must be sustained and how, and how sustainability will be measured, using the sustainability guidelines. | | |
| Document the key milestones that signal the need to review your sustainability plan to see if it requires modification (for example every two months or after the first exercise class). | | |
| Program adaptability | | |
| Document the essential components of the program that must be maintained. | | |
| Document the program adaptations that make integration or delivery easier and how their effects will be monitored. | | |
| Document how program fidelity will be monitored and evaluated (for example audits). | | |
| Regularly review outcomes (identify key milestones or specify times, for example every two months). | | |

| Options | Actions | Who will initiate action and completion date |
|--|---------|--|
| Integrating program activities into existing routines | | |
| Review all current programs, processes and roles within your organisation to identify those able to incorporate the program or program components. Short list and rank the options. | | |
| Talk to managers and staff in these programs and roles to gauge interest and discuss viability of the integration. | | |
| Include relevant staff in committees and program development, for example focus groups, working parties or action research. | | |
| Develop new or modify existing program procedure manuals to reflect the falls program components. | | |
| Partnerships | | |
| Brainstorm potential partners and list their contributions (knowledge, infrastructure, staff, funding). Build on the information you developed to determine organisation or program fit. | | |
| Present and discuss evidence of benefits to the partner organisation. | | |
| Develop a memorandum of agreed goals and actions that outlines each partners' role and contribution to the program. | | |
| List and consider broader networks or collaborations you could engage with. | | |
| Stakeholder engagement | | |
| Present and discuss evidence of benefits (potential and actual) to each stakeholder. | | |
| Regularly disseminate outcome findings supporting benefits (for example monthly updates). | | |
| Provide avenues for feedback and involvement in program development (meetings, surveys, open door policy, inclusion in steering or working committees or groups). | | |
| Gauge and address attitudes, concerns and resistance through discussions (one to one or group meetings) or surveys. Do not blame or judge, use the information to develop strategies. | | |
| Capacity building – staff and partners | | |
| Conduct a skills analysis to help inform your training program. | | |

| Options | Actions | Who will initiate action and completion date |
|--|---------|--|
| Consider external courses, including falls conferences and broader skills courses (leadership and marketing), particularly for program champions. | | |
| Document and implement your initial program-specific training for staff and partners (how many sessions, at what times or days, and the structure of the training program). | | |
| Consider conducting more sessions if required – identify how many sessions are required, whether the training program needs to be modified, and when they are to be conducted. | | |
| Document the ongoing program-specific training and include in your organisation’s training program. Once again, look at how many sessions, at what time points, and the structure of the training program (for example annual in-service training and staff induction programs). | | |
| Funding and resources | | |
| Document each component of your program including the resources required, and the estimated costs and funding available. Seek assistance from your finance department if needed. | | |
| Adequate resources include contingency plans (for example when staff are sick or on leave) and adequate time to plan, implement and sustain the program. | | |
| Brainstorm with key partners and document all potential funding. | | |
| Monitor and review the estimated costs and resources after each key milestone during implementation to see if they need to be revised. | | |
| Review funding and resources at each key milestone, and annually along with other organisational budgets. | | |
| Program champions | | |
| <p>Each partner organisation should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – list all potential staff who could act as program champions keeping in mind the characteristics of champions listed in the supporting document. – define and document the role of each program champion – outline the training and supports needed to undertake their role. | | |

Program components to be sustained (sustainability plan)

Organisation: **Date:**

Program Title:

In this document outline what components will be sustained and how, and how sustainability will be measured for each component. List all sub-components of your program. This is your sustainability plan summary. The guidelines, action plan and sustainability checklist are your worksheets that guide (and document) your progress to sustainability and help you refine your sustainability plan.

| Program components to be sustained | How they will be sustained | In place or Needs action | Measures | In place or Needs action |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Sample sustainability plan

Organisation: ABC Community Health Centre

Date: 12/11/1010

Program Title: Making a Move: multi-strategy falls prevention program (exercise, nutrition (including hydration) and continence, footwear and foot care, and vision)

In this document outline what components will be sustained and how, and how sustainability will be measured for each component. List all sub-components of your program. This is your sustainability plan summary. The guidelines, action plan and sustainability checklist are your worksheets that guide (and document) your progress to sustainability and help you refine your sustainability plan.

| Program components to be sustained | How they will be sustained | In place or Needs action | Measures | In place or Needs action |
|--|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Run four 12-week group exercise programs based on the NoFalls Exercise Program per year. | To be incorporated into the CHC exercise program schedule; to be conducted at the CHC by trained CHC physiotherapy staff; existing policies, procedure manuals and schedules, and position descriptions to be modified to include program details. Program to part be of the CHC funded activities, but program will charge a nominal participant fee of \$5.00 per session. | Needs action | Number of sessions conducted, number of participants, survey of staff/ referral sources/older clients re program awareness/enjoyment or acceptability | Needs action |
| Nutrition education sessions to be incorporated into the four 12-week exercise programs listed above – there will be two 15-minute sessions to be conducted in weeks 2 and 3, prior to exercise class. | To be conducted at the CHC by the CHC dietitian position descriptions to be modified to include program details. To be incorporated into the CHC education program schedule; costs to be part of the CHC client education budget. | Needs action | To be included in the above measures – the number of participants attending the nutrition sessions to be recorded separately from the exercise participation | Needs action |
| Provision of a falls prevention booklet to all program participants (and a brief discussion about continence, footwear and foot care and vision). | To be provided to all participants at the first exercise class – ongoing funding still being sourced for printing booklet. if no additional funds obtained – to be converted into a simple A4 word document where costs can be covered by existing education budget. Discussion to be conducted by the physiotherapist conducting the session in the second week. | Needs action | To be included in the above measures – number of booklets provided, comments re value of the booklet to be included in the participant survey | Needs action |

Indicators of sustainability

In determining whether program sustainability has been achieved you need to define exactly what you want to be sustained. What components of the program are critical to the program outcomes (benefits)? Once this has been articulated in writing, assessing whether sustainability has been achieved is possible.

The questions in the sustainability status checklist below can help you determine the level of sustainability your program has achieved. These questions are indicators of sustainability: the presence of established structures; written processes and procedures; and permanent

resources allocated to the program and routine awareness of the program by relevant stakeholders. Based on your answers to the questions, how would you rate your current level of sustainability?

As programs evolve, and organisations and environments change, your level of program sustainability may vary. Reviewing the level of sustainability regularly throughout your 'sustainability phase' is recommended. Any important changes to the program (structure/processes/roles) need to be reflected in the organisation's formal operating systems (policies/manuals/positions descriptions).

Sustainability status checklist

Program: **Date:**

To determine your current level of program sustainability answer the questions below. Tick which one applies

| Level of program sustainability | No or rarely | Some but informal or ad hoc | Some formal systems in place | Yes, formal routines and systems in place |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Does the program have permanent and regular (long-term) funding available to it (including funding contributions from internal budgets)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the program have permanent staff, supervision, resources and place of operation, and a regular and permanent time of operation year after year? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has the program influenced practice? What practices have been changed and have these practices been formalised? Does your program have written job descriptions (or included in existing job descriptions), processes and procedure manuals (structures in place to support practices)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the program have written objectives and targets? Are these objective and targets included in scheduled evaluation reports? Are they required to be submitted regularly similar to other established programs within your organisation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are other staff, including management, aware of the program? Do they refer to the program or advocate for the program? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are other key stakeholders aware of the program? Do they refer to or use the program or advocate for the program (are networks still in place and actively engaged)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(Based on the project literature review, Goodman et al., 1993, Pluye et al., 2004b and the QLD *Stay on Your Feet*® toolkit).

Based on your answers above, how would you rate your current level of program sustainability?

| Tick which applies | (Based on Pluye et al., 2004b) |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Absent | No program activity continuing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some activity | Residual activity, may be unofficial or ad hoc |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partially achieved | Partially achieved but not routinised, some program activity continuing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Routinised activity | Routinised activities are maintaining the program, perceived as sustainable |

Conclusion

Program sustainability involves six key elements:

- good people, staff and champions who are skilled, motivated and engaged;
- sufficient resources (including time);
- supportive and engaged networks and partnerships;
- planning from the outset, including implementation, evaluation and sustainability;
- good program fit and program adaptability;
- clear benefits and active promotion.

Sustainability is a dynamic and ongoing process that needs to be well planned, managed, monitored and regularly evaluated so the program continues to improve and meet the needs of the population it aims to help.

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Appendix 1: Gantt chart

A Gantt chart is a bar chart that allows you display your program components, and activities within each component, and the proposed timelines for the start and completion of each component or activity. The chart allows you to easily see what needs to be done and by when, and if you are on schedule to meet the planned timelines.

Gantt charts could be based on a weekly or monthly basis, depending on your specific requirements at the time. You may have developed one as part of your implementation plan. An example is provided below based on the example in the sustainability plan.

| Month | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| Establish program steering committee with key stakeholders and establish a memorandum of agreement. | █ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disseminate evidence of need for program and effectiveness of the chosen interventions to all staff, managers and partners. | █ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Establish and confirm program staff and champions in the CHC. | █ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Provide training in the NoFalls program to program staff. | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop the nutrition education program. | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop the general falls prevention education program. | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | |
| Establish the NoFalls Exercise program (the venue, the equipment, and the handouts). | | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop a recruitment plan and recruit participants (ads in local papers, flyers to GP clinics and seniors' groups). | | | █ | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop an evaluation (including surveys, and evaluation assessment form) and sustainability plan. | | | █ | | | | | | | | | |
| Conduct the first NoFalls program. | | | | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | |
| Evaluate the first NoFalls program and make any changes required to the program, modify evaluation and sustainability plans if required. | | | | | | | █ | | | | | |
| Disseminate the findings from the evaluation to staff, management, and other key stakeholders (including newspaper article re achievements). | | | | | | | █ | | | | | |
| Conduct the 2nd NoFalls program. | | | | | | | | █ | █ | █ | | |
| Evaluate the 2nd NoFalls program and make any changes required to the program. | | | | | | | | | | | █ | |
| Disseminate the findings from the evaluation to staff, management, and other key stakeholders (including newspaper article re achievements). | | | | | | | | | | | █ | |
| Develop or change policies, position descriptions and embed into organisational operating systems. | | | | | | | | | | | | █ |

In terms of sustainability, each of the actions you list in your action plan can be added to a Gantt chart to help you work towards sustainability. Place high priority items first, followed by second priority items etc. You can also plot your sustainability plan and actions as shown in the example below.

| Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|
| Conduct 2 x 2 training programs per year (one on Tue and one on Wed). | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Conduct general falls session (in the 2nd week) and nutrition session (in 3rd and 4th week). | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Review and disseminate outcomes from program regularly to staff and stakeholders (as per the marketing and promotional plan). | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Promotional activities re recruitment (as per marketing and promotional plan). | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Provide annual falls training session to program and other key stakeholders as per your training schedule. | | staff | | | | | | | others | | | |
| Annual review of program outcomes (annual evaluation). | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Annual review of program funding sources and budgets. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix 2: Additional resources

Falls prevention guidelines

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care 2009, *Preventing falls and harm from falls in older people: best practice guidelines for Australian community care*: www.health.gov.au/internet/safety/publishing.nsf/content/FallsGuidelines-AustCommunityCare

American Geriatrics Society (AGS) and British Geriatrics Society (BGS) 2010, *Clinical practice guidelines: prevention of falls in older persons* (targets health care professionals): www.americangeriatrics.org/health_care_professionals/clinical_practice/clinical_guidelines_recommendations/2010/

Queensland Health, *Stay On Your Feet® toolkit*: www.health.qld.gov.au/stayonyourfeet/toolkit/default.asp

National Institute for Clinical Excellence and the National Collaborating Centre for Nursing and Supportive Care, Royal College of Nursing (United Kingdom) 2004, *The assessment and prevention of falls in older people guidelines* (targets community, hospital and residential care setting): www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=233391

Peninsula Health Falls Prevention Service 2006, *FRAT pack facilitators guide* (community pack): available by contacting them on 03 9788 1260, costs apply.

Links and references

Victorian Falls Clinic Coalition (includes lists of useful references and falls guidelines) www.mednwh.unimelb.edu.au/vic_falls/vic_falls_home.htm

Victorian Government Department of Health, Aged Care Branch (provides a range of falls prevention resources) www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/maintaining/falls/index.htm

