



COMMUNITY GRANT OUTCOME REPORT

Wisconsin Falls Reduction Project

Helping state's seniors step with confidence

In statewide testing, Sure Step and Stepping On programs help achieve a decline in falls among participating seniors



Dr. Jane Mahoney (white coat) oversees a home visit as part of the Wisconsin Falls Reduction Project. The program saw a 50 percent decrease in falls among participants in the Sure Step Program.

► **Description:** Falls are the leading cause of injury among those over 65. The Wisconsin Falls Reduction Project represented a statewide effort to reduce the incidence of falls by integrating two evidence-based programs into existing services. One program, *Sure Step*, a multi-component, one-to-one intervention, is the only program demonstrated to decrease falls among the cognitively impaired. The other, *Stepping On*, is a seven-week group class developed in Australia. The efforts were led by the Kenosha County Division of Aging and Disability Services, but tested statewide.

► **Results:** Participants in the *Sure Step* program (about 250) showed a 50 percent reduction in falls after six months. In addition, 75 Wisconsin health professionals were trained to administer the curriculum. Many organizations involved have incorporated the program into its regular offerings. *Stepping On* was provided to 612 older adults, garnering much enthusiasm from participants. While initial results showed little reduction in falls, a 40 percent reduction in falls was subsequently

shown once program improvements were incorporated.

► **The Partnership:** An established team, the academic partner assisted with study design, IRB protocol preparation, and led the implementation and analysis.

► **Next Steps:** The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA), a multi-partner organization, continues to administer *Stepping On* and *Sure Step*. WIHA seeks grants to expand the programs and to advocate for policy changes that would embed these prevention programs in Wisconsin's health care system. Kenosha and several other counties have added *Stepping On* to their public health offices or Aging and Disability Resource Centers. The CDC has funded the academic partner to disseminate *Stepping On* nationally. To date, almost 3,000 older adults across Wisconsin have taken *Stepping On*, and WIHA has trained leaders in five additional states (California, New York, Utah, Montana, Nevada).

GRANT FACTS

Grantee: Kenosha County Division of Aging and Disability Services

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Grant Award: \$448,898 over three years