Strong and Stable: Promoting Health and Preventing Falls in Older Adults

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This poster describes a partnership between the occupational therapy department at Dominican University of California and the Division on Aging of Marin County, California, to design and deliver a series of fall prevention workshops for older adults living in the community. The faculty member from DUC helped design and develop the workshops, and a community-practicing occupational therapist delivered the workshops to over 100 seniors, who were also given specialized exercise booklets to take home. This program is an excellent example of campus-community partnerships that can be developed to promote the health of older adults living in the community.

**Introduction**

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**Methodology**

In summer, 2008, faculty and alumni from the occupational therapy department at Dominican University of California worked with the Marin County Division of Aging and the Commission on Aging to develop a series of fall prevention workshops.

- Workshops were offered free of charge at sites throughout the county, including senior centers, senior residences, and community centers.
- Workshops were two hours long each and based on the Strong and Stable Program developed by the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence.
- Workshops were facilitated by an occupational therapist, who led the participants through all the exercises and explained the functional application of each exercise, for example increased ankle mobility for walking down stairs, and neck mobility for crossing the street.
- Participants also discussed ways to avoid falls in the home and in the community.
- Healthy snacks and water were served at the conclusion of each workshop.

**Results**

- Five workshops were held between May 2 and June 17, 2008.
- 100 older adults participated.
- 13% had fallen in the last six months.
- One workshop was held in Spanish.
- Participant ages ranged from 60-95 years.
- Primary group of attendees aged 60-74, yet fall risk is highest in those over 75.
- 95% of participants found the workshop helpful.
- Participants were given copies of the workbooks, theraband of home use, and information about older adult health and wellness programs.
- 100% stated they planned to continue the exercises at home.
- Follow up suggestions included offering a "train the trainer" workshop for health care providers, and offering the workshops in Spanish.

**References**