



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D
DIRECTOR

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**STATEWIDE FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN
JUNE 22 – AUGUST 30
DESIGNED TO REDUCE FALL INJURIES AMONG KUPUNA**

HONOLULU – Fall-related injuries and fatalities among Hawaii seniors are reaching troubling numbers. Every year in Hawaii an average of 86 seniors die, 1,912 are hospitalized, and 8,010 are treated in emergency departments.

Falls disproportionately affect the elderly, and statistics show those older than age 65 are the most vulnerable. In addition to the emotional and physical impact of falls on seniors and their caregivers, falls create a significant financial toll on families and the healthcare system: almost \$102 million in hospital and physician charges are incurred every year in Hawaii.

To address this issue, a statewide Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign will be launched from June 22 to August 30. The campaign features a newly broadcast educational video about fall prevention, new public service announcements, free medication reviews, balance testing, tai chi workshops, and community presentations that focus on preventing falls among older adults.

Hawaii's fall prevention program was recently recognized as "the finest public awareness campaign in the nation" during the White House Conference on Aging - 2016 NCOA National Falls Prevention Resources Conference in Alexandria, Virginia.

The Hawaii State Department of Health and the Hawaii Fall Prevention Consortium are sponsoring the campaign in collaboration with FOODLAND Supermarkets, TIMES Supermarkets, KTA Superstores, Kaiser Permanente, the Hawaii Community Pharmacy Association, SAFEWAY Supermarkets, and CITY MILL, the senior home safety headquarters.

The Hawaii Fall Prevention Consortium was founded in 2003 with support and leadership from the Injury Prevention and Control Program of the Hawaii State Department of Health. The consortium includes government agencies, professional associations, non-profit organizations, hospitals, care facilities and senior organizations.

"Almost every hour, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, a senior is transported by ambulance to an

emergency room in our state because of a fall injury. Yet many falls and fall-related injuries can be prevented with existing knowledge and technology,” said Dr. Virginia Pressler, Director of the Hawaii State Department of Health. “The Department of Health is glad to be collaborating with other partners to help ensure the safety and well-being of Hawaii seniors, the fastest growing segment of our population.”

The Hawaii State Department of Health offers the following important advice to seniors, their family members, and caregivers to prevent falls and fall-related injuries that can limit mobility and independence:

- Have your doctor or pharmacist review your medications yearly;
- Get an annual eye exam;
- Make your home safer by removing fall hazards and improving lighting; and
- Exercise regularly to increase balance and flexibility. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, evidence based exercise programs such as tai chi for health can increase strength and improve balance, making falls much less likely.

Free Medication Reviews and Balance Testing

“During the campaign period, pharmacists from the Hawaii Community Pharmacy Association and the other organizations will conduct in-store reviews of senior medications as well as balance tests to support senior health and well-being,” said Catalina Cross, Director of Pharmacy for TIMES Supermarkets.

Throughout July and August, nearly 220 in-store pharmacists from sponsoring stores statewide, including our new pharmacy partner SAFEWAY, will conduct FREE medication reviews (by appointment only) of medications for seniors to help identify medications that could contribute to a fall. In addition, pharmacists at the eight participating companies will also conduct balance tests for those interested in determining their risk for a fall.

“Fall-Proof” Senior Assistive Safety Devices at Home

The CITY MILL store on Nimitz Highway will host fall prevention and home safety specialists from the Department of Health to answer questions from seniors and their families about the latest senior assistive safety devices that can help make a home almost “fall-proof” on two Saturdays, July 9 and August 27, from 10 am to 2 pm each day.

Tai Chi for Arthritis/Fall Prevention Classes

From June to August, tai chi for arthritis/fall prevention classes are being offered at more than 33 locations statewide. For information on the classes and their locations call (808) 733-9202 or go to the DOH website tai chi classes at

<http://health.hawaii.gov/injuryprevention/home/preventing-falls/3000-2/>

See attached fact sheet of other resources and activities during the Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign.

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Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign 2106

The Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign 2106 includes a number of different activities and resources:

- **Fall Prevention Tips**

Beginning June 22, more than 66 stores and clinics statewide representing nine major market, pharmacy, and hardware corporations will begin to distribute 68,000 “bag-stuffers” that contain fall prevention tips for seniors plus information on additional resources.

- **Fall Proof Home Safety Video, produced by Kaiser Permanente**

Kaiser Permanente Hawaii is committed to preventing falls by partnering with the Fall Prevention Consortium as part of its June 2016 Older Americans Month program. Kaiser Permanente, in partnership with the Consortium, produced a home safety video designed to reach families of frail seniors to demonstrate how simple it is to make a senior home “fall proof.”

The video can be shown during home visits by social workers and for playback in clinic waiting rooms. Kaiser Permanente will continue to offer medication reviews, regular eye and hearing checkups, and provide outreach programs that provide recommendations for fall-proofing homes with advice on how to stay active.

Additional information and fall prevention support for all its members statewide can be found at www.kp.org/healthyaging or call the Kaiser Prevention and Health Education Department for a free listing of programs and classes. On Oahu, call (808) 432-2260; on Maui, (808) 243-6484; and on Hawaii Island, (808) 933-4510.

- **Public Service Announcements**

During July and August, public service announcements on fall prevention will air on KHON, HAWAII NEWS NOW, and KIKU.

- **Fall Prevention Video Re-Broadcasts**

Olelo (Community Access Television) will feature “Hana Hou” re-broadcasts featuring the two award-winning educational videos, “*Senior to Senior*” and “*Caregiver to Caregiver*,” which give a detailed demonstration of what everyone can do to help prevent falls for seniors. Visit Olelo’s website for broadcast times in July and August.

In addition, the videos can shown at senior clubs statewide. To request a presentation, or if your organization would like a copy of the videos, e-mail stanley.michaels@doh.hawaii.gov

- **GPS Fall Prevention Locator**

Beginning July 1, the Department of Health will have an upgraded GPS fall prevention locator program available on the DOH website at www.nogethurt.hawaii.gov. The web-based program helps individuals locate fall prevention services closest to their community.

- **Tai Chi for Health Institute Instructor Workshops**

On July 23 and August 6, Tai Chi for Health, Arthritis/Fall Prevention Instructor Workshops will be held at The Plaza - Moanalua in Honolulu, and in Lihue, Kauai. These instructor workshops enable individuals to study, practice and then work to pass a very

effective exercise course worth 12 CEU Credits from the American College of Sports Medicine.

Those that are successful become certified and are then able to teach this evidence-based exercise to seniors. These will be the third and fourth workshops of this season, with previous workshops held on Oahu, and at The Kaunoa Senior Center on Maui. For information the workshops, call (808) 733-9202.

- **Community Presentations**

From June through August, Stan Michaels from the Department of Health's EMS and Injury Prevention System Branch, and Michael Dowell, Chair of the Fall Prevention Consortium, will give presentations to various Oahu senior clubs and at the 31st Annual Public Health Nursing IDT Luncheon in Wailuku, Maui, on July 14.

The presentations will feature the newly broadcast KHON TV Special *"Fall Prevention: Securing Senior Safety and Independence,"* featuring fall prevention tips, plus new information gathered by Michaels and Dowell during the White House Conference on Aging-2016 NCOA National Falls Prevention Resources Conference in Alexandria, Virginia. Hawaii's fall prevention program was recently honored as having *"the finest public awareness campaign in the nation."*

Go to <http://health.hawaii.gov/injuryprevention/home/preventing-falls/information/> or call (808) 733-9202 for more information about fall prevention for seniors.