



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Annual senior fall prevention awareness campaign to launch statewide, June 18 – August 19

HONOLULU – Fall-related injuries and fatalities among Hawai'i seniors continue to increase each year statewide at a concerning rate. Every year, accidental falls and fall-related injuries amongst Hawai'i seniors cause an average of 94 fatalities, 1,940 hospitalizations and 8,050 emergency room visits.

To better prevent fall-related injuries and fatalities in *kupuna*, the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) will launch its annual Senior Fall Prevention Awareness campaign, from June 18 – Aug. 19. The campaign will feature an educational video about fall prevention, new public service announcements, free medication reviews, balance tests, *tai chi* workshops and community presentations that focus on preventing falls among older adults.

Statistics from DOH's Emergency Medical Services & Injury Prevention Branch show that falls disproportionately affect the elderly and the most vulnerable population is 65-years and older.

"We know that fall-related injuries can take a serious emotional, physical, and financial toll on our *kupuna* and their caregivers, and can also impact the overall healthcare system," said Danette Wong Tomiyasu, DOH Deputy Director of Health Resources. "It is estimated that hospital costs associated with fall-related injuries are nearly \$120 million per year in Hawai'i. As our state's elderly population continues to grow, it is crucial to educate *kupuna* and their loved ones about how to best prevent falls and the injuries falls can cause."

DOH offers the following advice to seniors, family members and caregivers to prevent falls and fall-related injuries:

- Have your doctor or pharmacist review your medications yearly;
- Get an annual eye exam;
- If you live alone, get a life-saving Personal Electronic Safety Device;
- Make your home safer by removing fall hazards and improving lighting; and
- Exercise regularly to increase balance and flexibility.

DOH and the Hawai'i Fall Prevention Consortium are sponsoring the campaign in collaboration with Foodland Supermarkets, Times Supermarkets, KTA Superstores, Safeway Supermarkets, Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, the Hawai'i Community Pharmacy Association, Project Vision Hawai'i and City Mill.

The Hawai'i Fall Prevention Consortium was founded in 2003 with support from DOH's Injury Prevention and Control Program. The consortium includes government agencies, professional associations, non-profit organizations, hospitals, care facilities and senior organizations.

Resources available to the public include:

Free Medication Reviews and Balance Tests

Nearly 200 in-store pharmacists from the Hawai'i Community Pharmacy Association and other organizations will conduct in-store reviews at Times Supermarkets across the state of seniors' medications, as well as balance tests to determine fall risk and support senior health and well-being.

Project Vision Hawai'i Partners with the Fall Prevention Consortium

On Friday, June 15, Project Vision Hawaii and the Fall Prevention Consortium will offer free eye tests and vision screening at the Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center at 9-11 a.m. Visit the Project Vision Hawai'i website at <http://www.projectvisionhawaii.org/> for more information.

"Fall-Proof" Senior Assistive Safety Devices at Home

City Mill will host "meet-and-greet" sessions with the public to offer home safety recommendations. Home safety specialists from DOH will be present to answer questions about the latest senior assistive safety devices to help make a home as "fall-proof" as possible.

Sessions will be held at the following times and locations:

- City Mill Iwilei: Sunday, July 8 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- City Mill Pearl City: Sunday, July 15 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tai Chi for Arthritis/Fall Prevention Classes

From June to August, Tai Chi for Health, arthritis and fall prevention classes will be offered at more than 33 locations statewide. For more information, call (808) 733-9202 or visit <http://health.hawaii.gov/injuryprevention/home/preventing-falls/tai-chi/>.

See the attached fact sheet for other resources and activities taking place during the state's upcoming Senior Fall Prevention Awareness campaign.

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FACT SHEET

2018 Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign

The 2018 Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign will include the following activities and resources:

Fall Prevention Tips

Beginning June 16, more than 62 stores and clinics statewide representing nine major market, pharmacy and hardware corporations will distribute 31,000 “bag-stuffers” that contain fall prevention tips for seniors plus information on additional resources.

Fall Proof Home Safety Video Produced by Kaiser Permanente

In partnership with the Fall Prevention Consortium, Kaiser Permanente Hawaii has produced a home safety video demonstrating how to make a home “fall proof” for seniors. The video can be shown during home visits by social workers and for playback in clinic waiting rooms. The video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YB2OPxIvl&feature=youtu.be>.

Kaiser Permanente will continue to offer medication reviews, regular eye and hearing checkups, and provide outreach programs that provide recommendations for fall-proofing homes and advice on how to stay active.

Additional information and fall prevention support for Kaiser members can be found at www.kp.org/healthyaging or by calling the Kaiser Prevention and Health Education Department for a free listing of programs and classes at (808) 432-2260.

Public Service Announcements

During July and August, public service announcements on fall prevention will air on KHON, KGMB, KHNL, 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 fall-related injuries. Visit Olelo’s website for broadcast times in July and August. To request a presentation or if your organization would like a copy of the videos, e-mail stanley.michaels@doh.hawaii.gov.

Community Presentations

From June through August 2018, Stan Michaels from the DOH’s EMS and Injury Prevention System Branch, and Michael Dowell, Chair of the Fall Prevention Consortium, will give presentations to various senior organizations and community groups around the state.

The presentations will feature the 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-2018 NCOA National Falls Prevention Resources Conference in Arlington, Virginia.

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