

Thinking upstream: Applicability of brief motivational interviewing to prevent falls in older adults

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TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: health care providers, social workers, chw's who work with elders

ABSTRACT: Background: Older adults are physically and psychologically harmed by accidental falls. However, research suggests older adults often under-recognize their risks for falling and are reluctant to make behavior changes. Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a validated behavior change approach that may be applicable for fall prevention. This abstract describes how brief MI may be used to promote fall prevention.

Methods: Thirty-one high fall risk older adults received 15 minutes brief MI by a nurse researcher to assess their perception of fall prevention and to facilitate self-identification of fall prevention strategies. Patients were assessed for confidence/self-efficacy, importance, and the stage of change using mixed-method analyses.

Results: Patients identified fall prevention as important (9.12: 10 is most important) and reported an average of 4 fall prevention actions which were mostly in “action stages.” They also indicated ambivalence related to fall prevention actions. Their confidence was 7.23 (10 is most confident) and their Fall Self-Efficacy Scale was 17.8 (28 is having the most concern related to falling).

Conclusion: Patients were already engaged with selected fall prevention actions, however, ambivalence also existed. MI has a strong potential to address this ambivalence to encourage more sustainable and relevant fall preventative behaviors.

OBJECTIVE(S):

1. Describe fall prevention behaviors
2. Assess methods to increase confidence and self-efficacy toward fall behaviors.

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