

Implementation resource tool kit

What is it all about?

The focus of this aspect of the initiative is to improve the capacity of health services across Victoria to address key factors that place older people at risk of functional decline while in hospital.

Why is this important?

Functional decline is a decrease in physical and/or cognitive functioning. It is a leading complication of hospitalisation in older people and can occur as early as the second day of admission. Between 34 and 50 per cent of older people experience functional decline in hospital, and as many as 30 per cent of people aged over 70 years return home from hospital with a reduced ability to perform their usual activities of daily living. There is evidence that functional decline in older people is associated with increased length of hospital stay, higher levels of institutionalisation and increased mortality.

Functional decline can manifest as malnutrition, decreased mobility, loss of skin integrity, incontinence, falls, delirium, problems with medication, poor self-care and depression.

What is being developed?

A resource implementation tool kit is being developed that will aim to minimise functional decline in older people, with a focus on acute and sub-acute settings. The information contained in the tool kit will build on previous work undertaken

and use the guidelines, *Best practice approaches to minimise functional decline in the older person across the acute, sub-acute and residential aged care settings*, which have recently been updated.

Who is involved?

Ten key areas addressing functional decline have been identified, which will be incorporated into the tool kit. For each key area, referred to as a domain, a number of health services are involved as shown in the following table. The approach has been taken to ensure that metropolitan, regional and rural health services are adequately represented in the tool kit. Field testing will be undertaken across various areas of health services to ensure the tool kit is relevant across and within health services.

The National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) has been funded to develop a framework for the domains to ensure an integrated user-friendly resource kit is produced.

How can you help?

If you know of significant work that has been undertaken in your health service in relation to particular domains, you are invited to complete a template and return to NARI by 14 December 2007. This information will be shared with the relevant lead agency and assist in developing the tool kit.

Domain	Lead agency	Partner agency	Regional partner
Assessment	Western Health	Bayside Health Northern Health	Loddon Mallee
Skin integrity	Eastern Health	Austin Health Bayside Health	Loddon Mallee
Mobility	Peninsula Health	Austin Health Eastern Health	Gippsland
Nutrition	Bayside Health	Peninsula Health Melbourne Health	Gippsland
Delirium	Melbourne Health	St Vincent's Health Western Health	Barwon South Western
Dementia	Ballarat Health	Barwon Health St Vincent's Health Western Health	Barwon South Western
Depression	Southern Health	Calvary Bethlehem Healthcare Melbourne Health	Grampians
Medication	St Vincent's Health	Werribee Mercy Hospital Peninsula Health Northern Health	Grampians
Continence	Austin Health	Eastern Health Southern Health	Hume
Culture	Northern Health	Southern Health Latrobe Regional Hospital	Hume

