

RELEVANCE

Adopting healthy habits and behaviors, staying involved in activities and taking advantage of preventive services can contribute to a productive and meaningful life as a person ages. There are many things that affect an older adult's health. These include the increased risk of falling and memory loss.

- Up to half of senior adults have a fear of falling and many respond to this concern by curtailing activity.
- A majority of falls occur during routine activities and are usually caused by a variety of issues.
- Not being active can result in loss of muscle strength and balance.
- Falls can compromise social interactions and increase the risk of isolation, depression and anxiety. Fear of falling can actually contribute to falling.
- Studies show that 80% of older adults worry about memory loss.
- As people get older this is an increase in memory related health issues.

RESPONSE

Programs conducted to address healthy aging included: A Matter of Balance Fall Prevention classes and Master of Memory Classes. The Family and Community Health Committee provided guidance for these programs. News articles and social media blitzes were used as a way of educating a great audience.

Target Audience: These programs targeted older adults as this age group of people are more at risks for falling and have issues with memory problems.

Partners & Collaborators:

- For A Matter of Balance Classes partnered with the North Central Texas Area Agency on Aging to conduct the A Matter of Balance Classes. Also partnered with a local church senior adult group to offer the classes.
- Volunteers were involved in helping to secure a location and helping to teach the classes.

A Matter of Balance is an evidence-based fall risk program that helps older adults reduce their fear of falling and increase activity levels. The class is taught by two people in small group classes in eight two-hour sessions. The behavior change curriculum addresses the fear of falling and engages the participants to view falls and fears of falling as controllable. Exercises were introduced and performed in sessions 3 through 8. During the classes participants were involved in group discussion, problem-solving, skills-building, assertiveness training an exercise at each session. A guest speaker who was a physical therapist was brought in the seventh session to discuss how to safely get up from a fall. Participants were encouraged to continue exercising regularly. All of these lessons and activities contribute to changing behaviors that contribute to falling.

VALUE STATEMENT

A Matter of Balance Fall Prevention

Many older adults experience a fear of falling. People who develop this fear often limit their activities. This can result in physical weakness and make the risk of falling even greater. A Matter of Balance series is an evidence-based program designed to reduce the fear of falling.

**1 IN 3 OLDER
ADULTS REPORT
FALLING EACH YEAR**

1 in 9 adults 45
or older report
confusion or
memory
problems



RESPONSE CONTINUED

Master of Memory was a lesson series that was held in August at Meadow Vista Apartments.

The lessons helped participants reduce their anxiety and fears related to memory loss. Also, the lessons helped them to understand the biological and psychological factors associated with memory. The lessons focused on the importance of physical activity, good nutrition and cognitive activities that help older adults strengthen and retain their memory.

EVALUATION STRATEGY

For the Matter of Balance Fall Prevention class, participants took part in pre and post survey. There were two series taught. There were 32 participants. Twenty-four completed the surveys.

Master of Memory: There were 9 participants. They all completed the pre-survey. The series ended in four lessons. The last two were canceled due to scheduling conflict.

RESULTS

A Matter of Balance Fall Prevention Classes Participants increased confidence that they can manage fall risks better. The class helped them reduce the risk. In addition, participants indicated that their concerns about falling were interfering less in their day-to-day activity and they reported that they have increased their exercise level.

- Increased falls efficacy, falls management, falls control and exercise level.
- Decrease in self-reported falls.
- Participants were more comfortable talking about their fear of falling and feel comfortable increasing general activity.
- Most plan to continue to exercise.
- Most plan to recommend this program to others.

Master of Memory

Participants demonstrated higher confidence levels in their ability to take steps to improve their memory function. Similarly, respondents indicated a reduction in negative attitudes related to memory and aging. Data also indicated that respondents had a significant increase in their understanding of risk factors that may be controlled to help memory function, including diabetes, depression, hearing loss and vision loss.

SUMMARY

A Matter of Balance has shown a \$938 savings according to a recent evaluation. The savings were in the area of unplanned admissions, long term care and home health.

Master of Memory classes demonstrated high confidence in their ability to take steps to improve their memory

"Because of A Matter of Balance classes I have less fear of falling. I am more comfortable about getting out."

FUTURE PROGRAMMING

A Matter of Balance Fall Prevention classes will be offered in 2023. There will be an effort to offer the classes to other communities in Parker County.

There is a need to address caregiving. In 2023 a class will be offered. This agent will be working the the North Texas Area Agency on Aging, Home Health Agencies and other local groups with an interest in caregiving.



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