

Dear FRIENDS,

In 1996, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging sent surveys to Area Agencies on Aging across the Commonwealth asking PrimeTime Health Coordinators to identify the most pressing, as yet unaddressed, health problems that they saw affecting the health of older adults. The Coordinators' responses overwhelmingly ranked the need to identify people at high risk of falling and to find ways to reduce their potential for falls as the most pressing problem.

As a result of the survey, on February 26, 1997, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's PrimeTime Health Program partnered with KePRO (the organization that protects Medicare rights in Pennsylvania) to convene a statewide Fall Prevention Task Force. Composed of forty-seven representatives from more than thirty health-related organizations, the Task Force established six work groups. Each group assisted in designing a component of a plan to decrease the numbers of falls among older adults. Our comprehensive long-range goal for the project is to educate the public, health care providers, and caretakers of older adults to recognize fall risk factors and to take steps to decrease fall injuries and their devastating consequences.

It is hoped that community organizations will use this project, which we call FRIENDS (Fall Reduction Initiative: Establishing New Directions for Safety), to identify people who may be at high risk of falling, and to help them to take steps to reduce their risks. The feedback that hosts of FRIENDS screenings will receive will allow them to target specific fall risk factors that were found to be prevalent among the participants attending their event(s) and to plan strategies to combat them.

After extensive investigation and collaboration with experts, the Task Force developed a short tool for fall risk screening that can be conducted by both non-professionals, skilled at using a stopwatch, as well as health care professionals. The purpose of the screening is to help identify people who are most likely to be at higher risk for falling and to help them to reduce modifiable risks. The enclosed manual was developed to enable organizations to plan and conduct fall risk screenings in a variety of private and public settings. Additionally, masters for large print participant handouts and educational pieces were developed to increase awareness of a variety of factors that put people at increased risk of falling.

We are excited about the FRIENDS project and the potential enormous benefits it can have for older adults in your communities. Thank you for your interest in hosting a FRIENDS fall risk screening program. Best wishes with your fall prevention efforts.

—Sincerely,
Linda Bowers,
Pennsylvania Department of Aging

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	Note: <i>The fall risk screening described in this manual includes physical skills tests to measure fall risk potential. Performance of these activities inherently contains some risk that the person performing them may lose his/her balance and fall. This risk can be minimized by telling people before testing to stop “right away” if they feel as if they may fall. Careful monitoring by the screener and a spotter for unsteadiness of participants during the tests is strongly advised.</i>	

Fall Reduction Initiative: Establishing New Directions for Safety

Special Thanks to the FRIENDS Task Force Partners:

Age Well Center (a program of Presbyterian Homes, Inc. and St. Luke's Hospital)
Allegheny County Health Department
Allentown Osteopathic Hospital
Allied Services; John Heinz Institute of Rehabilitative Medicine
American Trauma Society Pennsylvania Division
Arthritis Foundation; Central Pennsylvania Chapter
Clearfield County Area Agency on Aging
The Collaborative Assessment and Rehabilitation for Elders (CARE) Program
University of PA School of Nursing
Commonwealth Affiliates
Dauphin County Area Agency on Aging
DuPont Pharma
Elwyn, Inc.
HEALTHSOUTH Rehabilitation of Mechanicsburg
HEALTHSOUTH Rehabilitation Hospital of Reading, Senior Status
Thomas Jefferson University Hospital Trauma Unit
KePRO
Luzerne/Wyoming Counties Bureau for the Aging
PennState Geisinger Health System - Coalition for Lifetime Injury Prevention
PA Association of Non-Profit Homes for the Aging
PA Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
PA Department of Aging, PrimeTime Health and PACE
PA Department of Health
PA Forum for Primary Health Care
PA Medical Society's Center for Professional Drug Education and Information
PA Occupational Therapy Association
PA Optometric Association
PA Physical Therapy Association
Penn State University Center for Locomotion Studies
Penn State University College of Medicine
PA Trauma Systems Foundation
Pinnacle Health Home Care
Prevention Exercise Programs
Psycho-Physical Balance Therapy and Training
Slippery Rock University Gerontology Program
South of Penn 55 Plus Senior Citizens
St. Francis College, Loretto, PA
St. Joseph Rehab Center- Eden
UPMC St. Margaret Classic Care Gerontology
The Tai Chi Foundation
York City Bureau of Health

Part I: Reasons for Fall Prevention

Mission Statement

Our mission is to assist in identifying fall risk factors among older adults; and to increase public awareness of measures that can help to prevent falls.

Long-Range Goal of FRIENDS Screening Program Host Sites

Our long-range goal is to improve the quality of life of people aged 65 and older by decreasing the number of fall injuries.

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to enable community organizations to plan and conduct public fall risk screenings.

Falls Are Becoming Epidemic

Fall injuries are a serious health problem among older adults. Thirty-seven million falls occur each year in the United States. ¹As people age, they fall more often. Every year, about 30% of adults aged 65 and older living in the community fall; about 50% fall by age 80. The average number of falls among nursing home residents may be as high as two falls per resident each year. ²Older adults who fall are more likely to fall again. Of those who fall, about two-thirds will fall again within six months.³

Reported numbers of falls are less than the actual numbers of falls. Many older adults hide falls from others because they feel embarrassed or are afraid of being viewed as unable to live on their own. Fall injuries will become an even bigger threat to older people's health, unless more people play an active role in fall prevention efforts.

Healthy People 2010 Goals

The United States Public Health Service has established goals, commonly called *Healthy People 2010 Goals for the Nation*, to improve health status and reduce risk factors for disease and disability among Americans by the year 2010. Injury prevention was one of the priority areas for which they established goals.

"In 1995, falls became the leading cause of injury deaths among adults aged 65 years and older. In 1997, 9,023 adults over age 65 years died as a result of falls." (4)

For persons aged 65 years and older, 60% of fatal falls occur in the home, 30% occur in public places, and 10% occur in health care institutions. (5)

The most serious fall related injury is hip fracture. Each year approximately 212,000 people over age 65 suffer a hip fracture. 75% to 80% of these fractures are sustained by females. (6) Half of all older adults who suffer a hip fracture are never able to live independently again. The direct cost of all fall injuries for adults age 65 and older in 1994 was 20.2 billion. (6A)

What Puts People at Risk for Falling?

There are many things that can increase a person's risk of falling. These risk factors can be "inside" or "outside" a person. Fall risk factors "inside" a person include his/her physical characteristics (such as height or weight), medical problems (such as arthritis or Parkinson's Disease), and behaviors (such as drinking alcohol). "Outside" risk factors include such things as snow/ice on the ground, cracks in sidewalks, and dim lighting. Fall risks include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Health Problems**

- Diabetes
- Thin, weak bones caused by osteoporosis
- Arthritis
- Heart disease
- Poor eyesight
- Hearing loss
- Incontinence or frequent use of the bathroom
- Cognitive impairments (e.g. Alzheimer's disease, dementia)
- Neurological problems (e.g. Parkinson's disease, stroke)

- **Problems with Moving Around (Caused by health problems, excessive alcohol intake, and/or lack of exercise, etc.)**

- Balance problems (unsteadiness) when standing or walking
- Dizziness, especially after getting up from a bed or chair
- Slow reaction time
- Muscle weakness
- Decreased flexibility and range of motion

- **Problems with Medications/Prescriptions**

- Dizziness and loss of balance caused by prescription and/or over-the-counter drugs, especially when many drugs are taken daily.
- Drowsiness caused by long-acting sedatives

- **Poor Diet (not eating enough fruits, vegetables, enriched or whole grains, milk products/calcium supplements, or protein foods), or Not Eating Enough Food, Which May Cause**

- Weakness or lack of energy, which can lead to inactivity
- Low body weight, which may increase chances of breaking bones during a fall.
- Frail, brittle bones, easily broken in a fall

- **Excessive Alcohol Intake, Which Can Cause:**

- Balance problems
- Impaired judgment

- **Lack of Exercise, Which Can Lead to:**

- Loss of muscle strength
- Weak bones

- **Improper Footwear**
Slippery soles, such as smooth leather, or soles that “stick” to surfaces
Worn shoes that do not support feet enough
Poorly fitting shoes that do not support the feet properly
Slipper socks with decorative designs on soles not intended to provide slip resistance
- **Unsafe Home and Outside Conditions**
Wet, slippery floors and surfaces, especially wet shower stalls or bath tubs
Loose objects in walking paths and on steps
Inadequate handrails or grab bars
Poor lighting any place, but especially on steps or in the bathroom
Furniture with square or sharp corners
Overstuffed, too high or too low chairs that are hard to get out of
Cracked sidewalks
Rainy, snowy, or icy weather.

Who is Most at Risk for Fall Injury?

All adults aged 65 and older are at increased risk for fall injury compared with younger adults. Some older adults are more at risk for fall injury than others. Until after age 75, women are more at risk for fall injury than men. Some fall research has focused on women for this reason. A large study of more than 9000 women by Cummings and colleagues found that women were at higher risk for hip fracture if they had:

- A mother who had a hip fracture, especially before age 80 (doubled risk.)
- A history of any type of fracture after age 50
- Low body weight
- Tall height
- Poor self-rated health
- Use of long-acting tranquilizers or anticonvulsant drugs
- High caffeine intake
- An inactive lifestyle (standing or moving around for less than four hours a day).⁶

Other problems the Cummings study found, which increase fall risk included:

- Inability to rise from a chair without using one’s arms
- Resting pulse rate greater than 80
- Poor depth perception (e.g. unable to judge height of steps)
- Poor ability to detect visual contrast⁶ (e.g. unable to see a street curb).

Methods Proven to Help Lower Risk of Falling

Research has found that the following methods help lower a person’s chances of falling:

- Removing hazards in the home
- Maintaining body weight
- Walking for exercise

- Performing weight-bearing exercises (lifting weights)
- Improving ability to transfer into/out of a bathtub and onto/off a toilet
- Correcting medical problems, especially problems with eyesight
- Decreasing use of certain medicines, especially long-acting tranquilizers
- Minimizing caffeine intake
- Attempting to decrease fear of falling
- Performing Tai Chi to improve balance.

Caution About Medicines: *Some prescription medicines and some remedies that can be bought without a doctor's prescription, particularly those for colds, allergies, and pain, can make people feel sleepy. People who take many medicines every day (as older adults often do) are more likely to fall than people who take fewer medicines, but even one medicine by itself may increase risk of falling.*

Medicare Covers Cost of Bone Density Testing for High-Risk People

Bone density tests evaluate a person's bone health and are a good predictor of the risk of future fractures. Medicare covers the cost of bone mass measurements for the following high-risk people aged 65 and older:

- Estrogen-deficient women at clinical risk of osteoporosis
- People with vertebral abnormalities
- People receiving long-term glucocorticoid (steroid) therapy
- People with primary hyperparathyroidism (major thyroid disease)
- People being monitored to assess response to an approved osteoporosis drug therapy.⁸

There is Good News! You Can Help to Prevent Falls

Although it may not be possible to prevent all falls, many falls can be prevented. To help prevent falls, people need to know what things increase their chances of falling and being hurt. Community organizations can play an important part in helping people understand their risks of falling and in taking steps to lower their chances of falling.

Organizations can provide a variety of fall prevention services, such as:

- Public fall risk screenings,
- Educational and community resource materials,
- Home safety inspections and assistance with making home improvements,
- Educational programs about how to decrease fall risk factors,
- Exercise classes, and
- Assistance to homebound people.

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- 7) Tinetti, M. E., Baker, D. I., McAvay, G., Claus, E. B., Garrett, P., Gottschalk, M. Koch, M. L, Trainor, K., & Horwitz, R. I. (1994). A Multifactorial Intervention to Reduce the Risk of Falling among Elderly People Living in the Community. *The New England Journal of Medicine*. 331. (13) 821-827.
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The next section of this instruction book explains how to plan and conduct a public fall risk screening.

Part II: How to Host a FRIENDS Fall Risk Screening Program

Importance of Fall Risk Screenings

People with whom you are regularly in contact, as well as others in the community, may be very concerned about their risk of falling and what they can do to help lower their chances of being seriously hurt by a fall. Falls are not an inevitable part of growing older. Many falls could be prevented by recognition and treatment of conditions, which could cause a fall. Since some physical problems, such as poor muscle strength, vision or hearing loss, often occur over time, many people may not realize they exist. Your organization can provide a beneficial preventive health service to older adults by hosting a fall risk-screening event.

The results of your screening can provide you with important information you can use to address the risk factors identified among your target population. For example, if your screening identifies that a number of people may be at risk because of problems with medications, your organization may want to plan community programs on medication management or increase publicity for existing programs.

Description of the Fall Risk Screening

The purpose of the fall risk screening is to identify people who are most likely to be at highest risk of falling and who might benefit from professional assessment, changes in behavior and/or diet, increased activity level, and/or environmental or home safety improvements. The screening can be conducted in a variety of settings, by non-professionals skilled at using a stopwatch, as well as health care professionals. Total screening time per participant is about ten to fifteen minutes; the physical skills testing is about five minutes. The screening has three parts:

- 1) Forms completion, including
 - Identifying information and Release signature and date. A greeter/helper makes sure that the participant reads and/or understands the Release before signing and dating it. A follow-up postcard will be offered to participants to address, if they elect to be contacted.
 - Questions that identify specific fall risks. A greeter/helper assists participants with answering the ten 'yes' or 'no' questions. The participant is given a copy of the *Facts about Falls* handout, which explains why the questions are being asked.
- 2) Fall prevention information and community resources, including
 - FRIENDS large-print educational handouts. A greeter/helper assists the participant in choosing appropriate handouts.
 - Community resource list/materials. It is your responsibility to put together a list of the appropriate community resources that may be helpful in reducing fall risk such as available classes on incontinence, exercise, medication management; PrimeTime Health programs; rehab centers; physical therapists, etc.
- 3) Physical skills tests and results, including
 - Functional Reach Test — Using the provided Functional Reach Test Poster, a screener measures how far a person can reach forward while in a standing position, and without taking a step.
 - Timed Get Up and Go—A screener times with a stopwatch, the number of second

person takes to stand up from a sitting position in an armchair, walk a distance of 9 feet, 10 inches (3 meters), turn around and walk back to the chair and sit down.

- One Leg Stand — A screener times with a stopwatch, the number of seconds a person can stand on one foot without touching anything or anyone for support.
- Explanation of Results/Recommendation for Follow-up—the screener explains the participant's test results, answers questions, and refers them to appropriate local organizations as needed for help.

FRIENDS Large-Print Educational Handouts

The FRIENDS project developed large-print educational handouts to alert people about common risks of falling older adults may face and ways to lower their risks. The handouts are listed by the subject and title:

- Poor eating habits — *Feed Your Body Healthy Food*
- Too much alcohol — *Alcohol May Make You Fall*
- Fear of falling — *Ease Your Fear of Falling*
- Problems with medicines — *Reactions to Medications May Increase Your Risk of Falling*
- Improperly fitting shoes — *If the Shoe Fits . . .*
- Medical conditions which may increase fall risk — *Some Medical Conditions Can Make You Fall*
- PrimeTime Health and the Area Agencies on Aging
- Targeted exercises for improving fitness — FRIENDS Exercises, Levels One and Two and Beginner
- Home safety — *Is Your Home Safe?*

Making Copies from Masters

Please do not write on the original master copies. You are requested to make copies of the Step-by-Step Planner for Site Coordinators (pages 23-28), Records of Volunteers, the confirmation letter, Sign-in Lists, and the poster/flyer provided in the appendix. Before your screening day, it would be appreciated if you would make a copy of *Facts about Falls* (the companion piece to the screening form) for each expected participant. Please copy an adequate supply of the nine large-print educational pieces, based on your expected attendance. Participants will select from them based on their responses to the screening questions. You can further help community members by collecting appropriate local resources and printing a list for them to pick up while at your screening event.

TIP: You can produce professional-looking printed materials, if you: 1) make a copy of each master, 2) trim or whiteout the evidence of the hole punches, and 3) then print the pieces in quantity.

Steps to Set Up Your Screening

If your organization would like to host a public fall risk-screening site, here are some steps to follow to help you have a successful program. *When you are ready to plan your screening event(s), a Step-by-Step Planner for Site Coordinators is provided on pages 23 through 28 to record each activity as you go along.*

1. Getting Support for Your Screening Program

Good leadership is necessary to your program's success, but the final results of your fall risk-screening event depend upon a group of people working together to do a variety of tasks. In general, most people will be more willing to help with a project (and continue it from year to year) if they are asked to be part of it from its beginning.

Start your project by getting approval for it from everyone who might be involved. First, ask management staff for their support, if necessary. After management approves the project, talk to potential screeners and spotters. You cannot have a public screening event without adequate screeners and spotters to conduct the physical skills tests. (Refer to Staffing on pages 13-15 and to the Formula to Determine Number of Screeners Needed in the appendix.) Next, solicit interest from potential greeters/helpers, publicity/outreach people, and set-up/clean-up crew.

TIP: Keeping good records will save you time and effort. As people express definite interest in helping with your screening event, complete the Records of Volunteers.

When you ask for support for the fall risk-screening project, be prepared to:

- Explain the need for fall risk screenings. Share your enthusiasm for helping older community members prevent fall injuries.

Falls are not an inevitable part of aging. There are many treatable causes for unsteadiness. But, the first step is to identify those at high risk. A public fall risk screening is a good first step in helping people become aware of their risks for falling and in encouraging them to be further evaluated for treatable conditions and/or to take steps to improve their lifestyles, such as joining an exercise program.

- Describe the screening.

Show the FRIENDS Screening Form, Facts about Falls handouts, and the FRIENDS educational handouts to potential sponsors, screeners, and other assistants. Refer to pages 8-9, "Description of the Fall Risk Screening."

- List possible benefits to your organization.

A public fall risk screening is an opportunity to let community members know about other services and programs offered by your organization.

- Suggest specific tasks people might do, which use their skills and talents as a screener, spotter, greeter/helper, or as a publicity/outreach person.
- Ask each interested person if he/she would like to help to plan the screening event.

2. Planning Your Screening Event

After you've found interested parties, schedule a short planning meeting with those who want to help with planning. Ask them to bring their schedules to the meeting so that you can avoid conflicts in scheduling your program. You should also take to the meeting: this instruction manual, a commu-

nity calendar, pens or pencils for each person, paper, a copy of the Step-by-Step Planner, and copies of the Records of Volunteers.

At the planning meeting:

- 1) Select the date, time, and location of your screening.

Date: Check your community calendar for conflicting events that may decrease attendance. Holding your screening program with another organization should increase attendance. If you would like to hold a fall risk screening event as part of a health fair, etc., be sure to check the available space before setting the date for your event.

Time: Most older people seem to prefer morning times to afternoon times. Your attendance will probably be better if you schedule your screening program in the morning.

Location: Be sure to select a location that is handicapped accessible and with parking nearby. Your location will also need to be large enough to accommodate a waiting area, two large tables (one for forms completion and one for educational handouts and community resource materials), and one or more 6 feet x 12 1/2 feet areas for the physical skills screening stations. Refer to page 11 for a description of the screening stations. A location on a public transportation route or in an area frequented by older adults should increase attendance. A telephone is essential.

Consider the floor surface. Carpeting does not substitute for spotters. With sufficient spotters, any normal floor surface, without carpet or with flat-pile carpet, should be satisfactory. Do **not** choose a location with deep pile carpeting, which may affect physical skills test results. Also avoid area rugs, which may move, bunch, or curl.

NOTE: Please check the screening room before scheduling it! Some facilities might not appreciate tape on walls and/or floors, removing pictures, and moving furniture. Make sure you get permission to use tape on floors and walls before scheduling the location.

If you cannot get permission to use tape and move items, thank the representative for their interest in the program; and look elsewhere for a screening site.

TIP: Do not wax or polish floors several days before the screening event.

- 2) Estimate number of people you expect to screen.
- 3) Plan publicity. Decide who your target audiences are, how to best reach them (posters, flyers, public service announcements, etc.), where to best reach them (newsletters, weekly newspapers, telephone, etc.), and the most effective date(s) to run each publicity. You will need to check submission deadlines to be sure you meet the requirements.
- 4) Confirm jobs with/assign jobs to people and decide what other jobs need to be filled

Consider Privacy

You may find that some people seem to be uncomfortable being tested with peers/others watch-

ing. First, try to reassure participants that the tests are not difficult and that they may stop at any time if they feel uncomfortable. If you find that some people still refuse to perform one or more of the skills tests in public, you might be able to arrange for them to be tested after the public screening event is over, or on another date.

3. Staffing

The site coordinator and/or an assistant should find the remaining volunteers as soon as possible. Do not publicize the screening event until you have enough screeners and spotters.

The following is a list of suggested volunteers and their jobs:

- **Screeners**, who will conduct the three physical skills tests.

Skills Needed: Screeners need to be able to describe and demonstrate the three physical skills tests to participants. (For instructions on how to conduct the physical tests, refer to Screening Tool Procedures.) Screeners also need to be able to accurately time the tests with a stopwatch, interpret and record participants' scores, explain results, and make referrals to appropriate local resources to address a particular individual's fall risk.

A Formula to Determine the Number of Screeners Needed appears in the appendix.

Where to Find Qualified Screeners

If you are unable to find enough volunteers at your organization who are qualified to conduct screenings, you may be able to find them at other community locations including Visiting Nurses Associations (VNA), Home Health Agencies, local hospitals (call the health promotion/education and/or public relations staff), local colleges, nursing schools or medical schools (contact them well in advance), and EMTs (paramedics).

- **Spotters**, who will stand near participants during physical skills testing and aid them, if they appear to be losing their balance. Spotters may also help participants get into the starting position before testing begins.

Skills needed: Spotters need to be alert and physically strong enough to support participants if needed

Number of spotters needed: One spotter to assist each screener.

- **Greeters/helpers, who will**

A. Greet and sign-in participants when they arrive and show them to the waiting area.

B. Provide a FRIENDS Screening Form and a *Facts about Falls* handout to each participant. This greeter/helper will help participants to read and understand the Release and to complete the ten 'yes' or 'no' fall risk questions on the FRIENDS Screening Form. Greeters/helpers will add the screening site number to the screening form. This helper should pay special attention to people who may need assistance with forms completion due to poor eyesight or low reading ability. This greeter/helper will also assist with completion of follow-up postcards.

- C. Provide educational handouts and local community resource lists and materials the hosting organization.
- D. Explain the return postcard to participants and ask them to address it. Greeters will add the participants' number and the site number on the front of the postage-paid postcard section of the postcard brochure.

Total number of greeters/helpers needed: three or four, based on estimated participants.

Skills needed: The greeters/helpers should be outgoing, customer-service oriented people. They need to be able to assist participants with filling out information, understanding and signing the Release, answering the fall risk questions, and choosing appropriate educational handouts and community resource materials gathered by the host site.

- **Set-up and clean-up crew**, who will set up the screening location and clean it after the event is over. *Number of set-up/clean-up people needed: two or more.*
- **Publicity/outreach people**, who will promote the program through posters, newsletters, public service announcements on the radio, etc.

Skills Needed: Publicity people need to be able to use a variety of methods in a timely way to notify the public about the screening event. *Number of publicity/outreach people needed: two or more.*

Confirm volunteer participation

After finding the necessary staff, send each person confirmation letter (master for a confirmation letter appears in the appendix) or memo that includes the person's job assignment, the date, time, and location of the screening event, and the name of a contact person and his/her telephone number. Also provide forms, procedures sheets, and participant handouts as mentioned in the letter. Ask the set-up crew to arrive an hour early to set up the site for a small event.

TIP: Place a reminder telephone call to each staff member five days to a week before the screening event to avoid unexpected cancellations. At this point you can still find replacements, if necessary.

4. Space Planning

You will need to make sure that you have enough chairs and tables or clipboards for people to use when they are waiting to be screened and for completing screening forms. Some older people may become uncomfortable if they must stand for more than a few minutes at a time. If you don't have enough chairs and tables available within your organization, local churches may be willing to lend you furniture for the day or allow you to use their halls for your screening event.

The screening site can be set up with four areas: 1) a sign-in and waiting area, 2) a forms completion area, with one or more tables (or clipboards) and chairs, 3) an information and resource table, and 4) physical skills tests screening stations, based on the number of expected participants.

Physical Skills Tests Screening Stations

When setting up your physical skills tests screening station(s), refer to the "Sample Floor Plan:

How to Set Up a FRIENDS Screening Station” provided in the appendix. The sample floor plan is provided to present a general layout for the screening station. There are many possible correct ways to arrange the screening station depending upon the site location.

There are a few basics to keep in mind, however, when arranging physical skills tests screening station. Each station requires a 6 feet x 12 1/2 feet area next to a sturdy wall with empty wall space to hang the 22 inch x 28 inch Functional Reach Poster. Some participants may lean against the wall, and a wall divider may not be strong enough to support their weight. Be sure to consider the type of wall surface where you will be hanging the poster and the type of fastener you will be using to attach the poster to the wall. Locate the One Leg Stand Test in a corner, if one is available, that is not close to a door. When setting up the Timed Get Up & Go Test, two people will need to work together to accurately measure the 9 feet, 10 inch (3 meters) distance from the front edge of the armchair (at floor) to the turning line.

You will need to provide or borrow two suitable chairs for the Timed Get Up & Go and For the One Leg Stand tests. A sturdy, non-folding “office-type” armchair with little or no padding would work well. The distance from the uppermost top front edge of the seat to the floor should measure about 17 to 18 inches. Avoid “living-room” types of chairs with deep cushions and wide arm rests. Do not use chairs with wheels.

TIP: Before screening day, test your tape on a small, inconspicuous area of the flooring to make sure that it will not leave an objectionable mark. To protect floors and walls, remove all tapes as soon as possible.

Note: If the tape provided with your kit cannot be easily seen due to the color of the screening location’s floor, please provide another color of tape.

5. Requesting Free Supplies

Request free screening supplies as soon as you are sure of the date(s) of your screening event(s). Use the enclosed FRIENDS Supplies Request form. You should order your supplies at least six weeks before your closest screening date based on your estimated number of participants. Free supplies include:

- FRIENDS Screening Forms for each expected participant
- Screening Tool Procedures (instructions sheets), three different tests
- Functional Reach Wall Poster(s) (store to use again)
- Digital stopwatches, one for each screener (store to use again)
- Measuring tape (store to use again)
- Tape to mark lines on floor (store to use again)
- Follow-up postcards for participants to complete, if they elect to be contacted
- Envelopes for returning white copies of the Screening Forms to the PA Department of Aging

Replacement Batteries

It is the responsibility of each site to maintain a supply of replacement batteries to replace worn-out stopwatch batteries. It is a good idea to have one new replacement battery available per

stopwatch being used at your screening event. Remember to take the extra batteries to your screening event, to replace any batteries that might stop during use.

Storage of Materials

You will need to be careful to store your supplies in a safe location so that you will have them available for future use. It is suggested that you keep an extra copy of the masters in a specially marked envelope. It is a good idea to assign someone the job of making sure that all stopwatches and other supplies are collected in one container and stored together for future use. Also ask screeners to return the stopwatches to the designated person after they are finished screening participants. Your Functional Reach Posters will last longer if you roll them rather than fold them for storage.

6. Publicizing Your Screening Event

You should have better attendance at your screening event if you use a variety of publicity methods at the right time. Be sure you stay on schedule and meet submission deadlines. Although the main responsibility for publicity belongs to the assigned publicity/outreach people, others may want to help. Encourage them to adhere to your schedule.

Posters and Flyers

Make posters and flyers to alert community members. You can hang these in senior centers, local churches or synagogues, grocery and drug stores, libraries.etc. A sample for use as a flyer or poster appears in the appendix. You can add your own information to the flyer/poster and photocopy it onto colored paper to make your own ads for professional-looking copies, remember to remove evidence of the hole punches before copying in quantity (refer to tip on page 10).

Press Releases and Public Service Announcements

Sample press releases for newspapers and public service announcements for radio and television, church bulletins, senior newsletters, and small weekly community papers are provided in the appendix.

7. Holding Practice Sessions

It is a good idea to set up a screening station in advance so that you won't have any surprises on screening day. If you practice conducting the screening, particularly the physical skills tests, you will assure that your equipment works and that the actual screening event will run smoothly and finish on time. It is also a good idea to walk through the screening course to check for adequate space and comfort of people using assistive devices, such as canes and walkers. If you can't conduct the entire screening process prior to screening day, it is recommended that screeners spend time practicing with stopwatches.

8. Setting Up on Screening Day

- 1) Take all materials to your site (plan to insert some type of dividers between sets of pages):
Clipboards
FRIENDS Screening Forms for each expected participant

Facts about Falls handout sheets for each expected participant
 Copies of the FRIENDS educational handouts, based on estimated number of participants
 FRIENDS Exercises, Levels One and Two and Beginner
Is Your Home Safe? handouts
 Community resource materials gathered by the host site
 Screening Tool Procedures sheets for each screener (three different tests)
 Sample Floor Plan: How to Set Up A FRIENDS Screening Station
 Functional Reach Wall Poster(s)
 Follow-up postcards for participants to complete, if they elect to be contacted
 Name tags to identify staff members
 Stopwatch(es)—one for each screener performing the Timed Get Up & Go and the
 One Leg Stand, plus extra batteries
 Measuring tape
 Tape or other acceptable wall fastener to hang posters
 Tape to mark turning line on floor, contrasting-colored or neon-colored
 Ballpoint pens
 Optional: Decorations, food, serving utensils, napkins, etc.

- 2) Take out the Sample Floor Plan: How to Set up a FRIENDS Screening Station, the Functional Reach Test Poster, rolls of tape to hang the poster and mark lines, and the measuring tape. Work with another person to arrange each screening station next to a wall (and close to corner, if possible) according to the sample floor plan or as space allows. Watch for and avoid safety hazards.
- 3) Locate the One Leg Stand in a corner, if one is available, and away from all obstacles, such as doors that may be opened. Place a sturdy chair so that the back of the chair will face the participant and so that he/she will have space to move easily to and from the testing position.
- 4) Select a location on a solid wall, several feet away from the One Leg Stand Test. Hang the Functional Reach Test Poster with its bottom 3½ feet from the floor.
- 5) Place the armchair for the Timed Get Up & Go Test.
- 6) Measure and mark the distance for the Timed Get Up & Go Test. You will use the measuring tape and the removable tape. One person should hold the end of the measuring tape on the floor at the front edge of the armchair. The other person should unroll the measuring tape to 9 feet, 10 inches. Next, secure a two to three-foot length of tape to mark the turning line. It's a good idea to remeasure the distance to make sure it is correct. Reposition the tapeline, if necessary.
- 7) Locate the forms completion and information tables for an efficient flow of traffic.
- 8) Conveniently locate the Screening Forms, *Facts about Falls* handouts, follow-up postcards, educational handouts, and community resource materials.
- 9) Arrange chairs for a waiting area, as space permits.

Optional: Hang balloons and/or streamers to decorate; arrange refreshments, serving items, and trash can.

9. Conducting the Screening

The fall risk screenings should be conducted according to the Screening Tool Procedures provided.

- 1) As volunteer staff members arrive, give them their name tags. Make sure all screeners know where the telephone is located and the local emergency number to call, if needed.
- 2) As participants arrive, a greeter/helper meets and greets them at the door, signs them in and helps them find seats, and provides them with a FRIENDS Screening Form and a *Facts about Falls* handout. Greeters/helpers assist the participant with: a) completing the identifying information; b) signing and dating the Release; c) completing the ten “yes” or “no” questions; and d) choosing the appropriate educational pieces based on his/her question responses. Greeters/helpers also assist with completing follow-up postcards, if the participant elects to be contacted. Greeters/helpers will make sure site numbers and participant numbers are on screening forms and follow up postcards.

TIP: When completing the Screening Form, make sure each person uses a ball point pen, presses hard, and writes on a solid surface such as a table top or clipboard.

- 3) The participant proceeds to the physical skills tests station. If there is a waiting line, greeters are encouraged to talk to participants while they wait. Participants enjoy the social part of the screening. Sometimes the best part of the screening is talking to caring staff. This is a good time to tell people about other services your organization provides.
- 4) After all physical skills tests are completed, the screener explains the screening results to the participant and makes recommendations according to the Protocol.

TIP: Screeners should take a break every 45 to 60 minutes to avoid fatigue.

- 5) The FRIENDS Screening Form has three copies. Each completed original white copy is collected by screeners to be returned in the envelope addressed to the Pennsylvania Department of Aging the day after the screening is over. The second yellow copy and the third pink copy are given to the participant. The second copy is for the participant’s records; and the third copy is for the physician.

TIP: Do not let blank or completed Screening Forms lying loose on a table or a place where participants may accidentally pick them up and remove them. Also, do not leave stopwatches or other screening supplies lying loose.

The FRIENDS’ Way of Caring

Most participants who attend your screening event will appreciate when someone reaches out to them in a FRIENDLY, caring way. After being screened, some people may feel unsure and afraid of their risks for falling. All staff members need to be aware of this and attempt to calm and reassure participants and encourage them to take measures to decrease their risk of falling.

Pay special attention to the participant found to be at high risk of falling. Check for his/her understanding of the screening results before you say good-bye. The participant may be unsure of the action he/she should take following the screening. To increase the chances that a participant will take action, the screener should:

- Thank him/her for coming to the screening.
- Assure the participant there are ways to lower his/her chances of falling. Refer the participant to the appropriate community resources and make sure they have been given the appropriate educational handouts.
- Encourage the participant to take charge of his/her health.

Taking charge may involve asking his/her physician to try to find the source of the unsteadiness, which may be followed by a referral for specialized therapy. Taking charge may mean becoming more physically active, such as joining an exercise class or starting a walking program.

Note: If you promote exercise programs to inactive older adults, always advise them that they need to talk to their physicians before starting any new exercise program.

Saying Goodbye

Thank all participants for coming to the screening. Invite them to return for future programs. Remember to thank all staff members for helping to make your screening event successful. Make sure that all participants have transportation home before you leave the site.

Collecting and Storing Materials

After participants have left, collect all stopwatches and other supplies for future use. Note if any items need to be repaired or replaced. Always keep extra batteries on hand for your digital stopwatches. Check rolls of tape.

10. Reporting Process

The day after your screening event, please return all completed PDA white copies of the FRIENDS Screening Form in the envelope provided with your screening materials. Your organization will be sent a tally of the results of your screening event from PDA within six weeks of receipt of your screening forms. Retain the postcards and mail them to your participants 3 months after your screening event. Participants will return their postage-paid postcards to PDA. PDA will correlate the results.

Confidentiality: *All participant information is confidential and is used only for data collection and reporting. Please protect the confidentiality of your screening participants at all times.*

Your screening event is finished. You've helped many people become aware of their fall risks. Congratulations and thank you for being part of the FRIENDS Fall Risk Screening Program!

Part III: Step-by-Step Planner for Site Coordinators

Directions: Complete the planner as you do each of the tasks.

Do as soon as possible:

1. Read the instruction book so that you understand the program.
2. As you solicit volunteer staff members, complete the Records of Volunteers.
3. Set up a planning meeting with interested parties.

Plan the date, time, and location of the screening event. Make sure no other major conflicting community events are planned for that day and time.

Date: _____

Alternate date (if first date is unavailable): _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Estimate number of participants to be screened: _____

Using the guidelines provided and the records gathered, decide what jobs remain to be filled. Assign/confirm jobs to people attending the meeting. Then, determine remaining staffing needs. Set up a group training session to practice setting up the screening stations and to practice the physical skills tests. Arrange to train screeners to use stop watches, if needed. Notify trainers and trainees of the session's date and time.

Training Session Date: _____ Time _____

Plan publicity. A Record of Publicity Activities is provided on the next page. Decide who to target, what kind of publicity to use, where to do publicity, when, and who is responsible.

RECORD OF PUBLICITY ACTIVITIES

List Target Groups

Decide which publicity methods will best reach your target groups. A sample poster flyer and public service announcements are provided in the appendix. Complete the table below. Allow sufficient time to meet submission deadlines of newspapers, church bulletins, radio stations, etc.

HOW?	WHERE?	WHEN?	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?
------	--------	-------	---------------------

POSTERS

FLYERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

CHURCH AND OTHER BULLETINS

OTHERS:

Do as soon as possible:

4. Reserve screening event location.

Is the location available on the date and time selected? Schedule use of the location, if required. Remember to include set-up time before the event and clean-up time after the event is over when you reserve the location. Can you reserve the location the afternoon/evening before your event for set up?

Date(s) reserved:

Hours reserved:

5. Arrange for chairs, large folding tables, and clipboards.

- Chairs needed

Waiting area — decide number based on estimated participants and screening location size

Screening forms completion table(s) — four chairs per table

Information table — four chairs per table

Two sturdy, non-folding “office-type” armchairs without wheels and a seat height of about 17- 18 inches for each physical skills tests screening station

- Large tables needed:

Screening form completion — one or two, based on estimated attendance and location size

FRIENDS large-print educational handouts and community resource materials — one

- Clipboards, one per screener, and one for signing in participants

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

Do as Soon as Possible:

6. Arrange for remaining volunteer staff members.

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

Do as soon as possible, but at least one month before the screening date:

7. Copy and fax the “FRIENDS Supply Request” form in the left pocket of your manual. Request free supplies based on your anticipated number of participants

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

8. Send a confirmation letter or memo to each person helping with your screening event. Be sure to provide copies of the items listed in the letter to each screener, spotter, and greeter/helper.

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

9. Gather appropriate community resources and make a list of the organizations' names, addresses, and telephone numbers.

10. Do publicity as scheduled on the Record of Publicity Activities.

One to two weeks before the screening event:

11. Make sure you have made arrangements for enough chairs, tables, and clipboards.

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

12. Please make one copy of the *Facts about Falls* handout for each expected participant. Also copy an adequate supply of the ten educational handouts, based on estimated attendance. You do not need to provide one copy for each participant. Participants will select subjects based on their answers.

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

13. Make nametags for the site coordinator and all other staff members to wear at the screening event.

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

One week to five days before the screening day:

14. Call all volunteers to remind them of the date, time, location of the screening event, and what their jobs are. Urge screeners, spotters, and greeters/helpers to come at least 15 minutes early to be ready when participants arrive. Ask set-up crew to arrive an hour (or more) ahead of your start time or, if you can, a day in advance.

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

Screening Day:

15. Use the checklist below to make sure that all materials are at the screening site:

- _____ Clipboards
- _____ FRIENDS Screening Forms for each expected participant
- _____ *Facts about Falls* handout sheets for each participant
- _____ FRIENDS educational handouts, based on need
- _____ FRIENDS Exercises, Levels One and Two and Beginner

- _____ *Is Your Home Safe?* handout
- _____ Community resource materials gathered by the host site
- _____ Screening Tool Procedures sheets for each screener (3 different tests)
- _____ Sample Floor Plan: How to Set Up a FRIENDS Screening Station
- _____ Functional Reach Wall Poster(s)
- _____ Follow-up postcards for participants to complete, if they elect to be contacted
- _____ Name tags to identify staff members
- _____ A stopwatch for each screener plus extra batteries
- _____ Measuring tape
- _____ Tape or other acceptable fastener to hang posters
- _____ Tape to mark turning line on floor, contrasting-colored or neon-colored
- _____ Ball point pens
- _____ Optional: Decorations, snacks/beverages, serving utensils, napkins, etc.

- Arrange physical skills tests screening stations using the sample floor plan as a guide.
- Conveniently locate all forms, pens, and educational and resource materials.
- Optional: Hang decorations and arrange refreshments
- When each participant arrives, a greeter welcomes him/her in a FRIENDLY way and then signs the participant in on the Sign-In List (provided in the appendix).
- A greeter/helper makes sure the participant reads and/or understands the Release before signing it. Next, a greeter/helper assists the participant with completing the ten 'yes' or 'no' fall risk questions. The participant should use only a ballpoint pen and press hard to be sure the third copy can be read.
- A greeter/helper assists the participant with selecting appropriate educational handouts (and the optional Community resource materials gathered by your organization). The participant is offered a follow-up postcard to complete, if he/she elects to be contacted. The greeter makes sure the site number and participant's number is on the screening form and the participant's postcard.

The physical skills tests are conducted as described in the Procedures and Protocol.

As people leave, thank them for coming and ask them to return for future events. Remember to thank all the people who helped with the screening program. Sending thank you notes is a nice touch that lets your staff members know how much you appreciated their help.

The Day after the Screening Event

Please mail all completed original white copies of the FRIENDS Screening Forms in the addressed envelope provided.

Done on: ___ / ___ / ___

Your organization will be sent a tally of the results of your screening event within six weeks of the receipt of your screening forms and postcards.

Thank you for helping community members learn about their risks of falling.

FORMULA TO DETERMINE NUMBER OF SCREENERS NEEDED TO CONDUCT PHYSICAL SKILLS TESTS

Note: You will need a spotter to help each screener. After you find out how many screeners you will need, record the same number in the line for number of spotters needed. Use this formula:

- a. Multiply the estimated number of participants times 5 minutes for each screening:

_____ participants X 5 minutes = _____ total screening time

- b. Multiply 55 (60 minutes - 5 minutes break time per hour) times the number of hours your screening will last:

55 minutes X _____ hours = _____ total minutes available

- c. Divide answer (a) by answer (b) to calculate the number of screeners needed. You will need to find one spotter to assist each screener.

_____ total screening time ÷ _____ total minutes available =

Number of screeners needed =

Number of spotters needed (same as above) = _____

EXAMPLE:

You think 75 people will attend your screening event, to be held in a four-hour time slot. One screener (at a single station that includes all three physical skills tests) can conduct all the tests in about 5 minutes, or about 10 to 11 people per hour. The formula uses fifty-five minutes screening time per hour, which includes 5 minutes of break time per hour for each screener. Use the formula on the preceding page to determine how many screeners and spotters you will need.

- a. Multiply the estimated number of participants (75) times 5 minutes for each screening

$$75 \text{ participants} \times 5 \text{ minutes} = 375 \text{ minutes total screening time}$$

- b. Multiply 55 (60 minutes - 5 minutes per hour for breaks) times the number of hours (4) your screening will last

$$55 \text{ minutes} \times 4 \text{ hours} = 220 \text{ total minutes available}$$

- c. Divide answer (a) by answer (b) to calculate the number of health care volunteers needed

$$\begin{aligned} 375 \text{ minutes total screening time} \div 220 \text{ total minutes available} &= \\ 1.7 \text{ (round up to next highest number)} &= 2 \text{ screeners needed.} \end{aligned}$$

Number of Spotters Needed:

One spotter is needed to assist each screener. So, the number of spotters is the same as the number of screeners. Spotters needed = #2.

Choice Two: You may want to change screeners every two hours. To determine the total number of screeners you will need, multiply the number of screeners needed X the number of 2-hour blocks your screening will last. For the above four-hour screening, four screeners would be needed rather than two. When you set up screening hours, remember to ask the replacement screener to arrive at least 15 minutes ahead of the scheduled screening time, so that the first screener will be able to leave on time.

Fall Risk Screening Tasks and Timeline

Tasks	Responsible Party	To Be Done By When
Plan event: date, time, location, scope ways to publicize. Estimate attendance. Assign jobs		As soon as possible
Arrange for chairs, tables, clipboards		As soon as possible
Find remaining volunteer screeners and spotters		As soon as possible (Without screeners, you have no program)
Find remaining volunteer greeters/helpers, set-up and clean-up crew.		As soon as sufficient screeners have been identified
Fax the FRIENDS Supply Request form		At least six weeks before the planned screening date
Arrange for free publicity using posters,flyers radio/television announcements, and newspaper articles		Find out deadlines and be sure to meet them. (Some may be one month or more before screening event)
Send confirmation letter to each person helping. Include forms, etc., as mentioned in the sample letter		At least one to two weeks before screening event
Confirm arrangements for chairs, tables, clipboards		One to two weeks before screening event
Place reminder call to all volunteers		A week to five days before screening event
Conduct screening event		
Return white copies of the screening forms in the envelope provided		Day after screening event

Record of Volunteers

Record each name, telephone number, and mailing address as soon as someone agrees to volunteer. Give the volunteer your name and telephone number to reach you if necessary.

Screeners (Use of stopwatch required)	
Name and Address	Telephone
Able to use a stopwatch:	
Need to be trained to use a stopwatch:	

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our FRIENDS (Fall Reduction Initiative: Establishing New Directions for Safety) Fall Risk Screening Program. The screening event will be held:

DATE

TIME

LOCATION

You have agreed to assist as a (screener, spotter, greeter/helper, set-up/clean-up crew) between the hours of _____ and _____. All staff, except set-up crew, is requested to arrive 15 minutes early to become familiar with the screening layout. Set-up crew should come at _____.

Greeters/Helpers: Enclosed are copies of the FRIENDS Screening Form; the How to Complete the FRIENDS Fall Risk Screening Form; Facts about Falls (the participant handout, which explains the questions); a FRIENDS follow-up postcard brochure; and the large-print educational pieces (so you can help participants choose appropriate pieces based on their answers to the screening questions). It would be appreciated if you would become familiar with the screening questions, and the handouts before screening day.

Screensers: Enclosed are copies of the FRIENDS Screening Form, the three Procedure sheets, the How to Complete the FRIENDS Fall Risk Screening Form, and the Recommendation Protocol so that you can be prepared to perform the physical skills tests. A copy of the participants' companion piece to the screening form, Facts about Falls is also enclosed as well as a list of Community agencies and programs to which you can refer participants based on their needs.

Screensers/Spotters: A practice session will be held:

Date _____ Time _____ Location _____

Call me at the number listed below to let me know if you can attend.

Please call me as soon as possible at _____ if you have any questions, or if you need to make changes to this schedule.

Thank you again for your help.

Sincerely,

PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Contact: _____ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Name of person at your organization to be contacted with questions
Contact person's phone number with area code

FALL PREVENTION INFORMATION

HARRISBURG, PA — Most people know that having a fall injury such as a hip fracture can be devastating, to both the patient and their family. But what many do not know is that there are steps you can take to reduce your risk of falling. Throughout the year, **free** screening events to assess your risk of falling will be conducted throughout Pennsylvania to identify people who are at risk of falling. Screenings have been arranged by the Fall Reduction Initiative: Establishing New Directions for Safety (FRIENDS), a cooperative effort among numerous organizations dedicated to improving health care among Pennsylvanians.

Free fall risk screenings will be held locally at **(List Location)**, on **(Date)** from **(Start Time)** to **(End Time)**. Each screening will include the participant answering fall risk questions and performing three physical skills tests to check balance and the individual's ability to stand up unaided. If a person is found to be at increased risk for falling, they will be referred to their own doctor for a more in-depth follow-up.

To learn more about fall risk screening, please call **(List Location)** at **(Phone Number)**.

PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Contact: _____ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Name of person at your organization to be contacted with questions
Contact person's phone number with area code

FALL PREVENTION INFORMATION

HARRISBURG, PA — Are you at risk for a fall injury? You can control risk factors to lower your risk of falling. A fall can happen to anyone, but many falls can be prevented. As part of the Fall Reduction Initiative: Establishing New Directions for Safety (FRIENDS), free screenings to determine your risk of falling are being held throughout the state.

A screening consists of fall risk questions, along with three physical skills tests. These screenings are done to determine if participants have risk factors which contribute to falls, such as poor balance. Anyone found to be at increased risk of falling will be referred to his or her physician for a more in-depth follow up.

Free fall risk screenings are being held at **(List Location)** on **(Date)** from **(Start Time)** to **(End Time)**. For more information on the fall risk screening, call **(Location)** at **(Phone Number)**. Please take part in this effort to prevent fall injuries in Pennsylvanians!

SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR RADIO AND TV STATIONS

Contact: _____ Name of person at your organization to be contacted with questions
Phone: _____ Contact person's phone number with area code
Date: _____ Date you mail the announcement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

:30 **Are you afraid of falling?**

ANNCR: Is a fear of falling keeping you from doing things you used to enjoy? Are you finding that you aren't getting out as much as you used to? The Fall Reduction Initiative: Establishing New Directions for Safety, known as FRIENDS, is conducting a free fall risk screening at **(Location)** on **(Date)** from **(Start Time)** to **(End Time)**. Come and determine if you may be at risk of falling, and learn steps you can take to prevent falls. Your friends will be there, won't you?

:15 **FRIENDS Hosts Free Fall Risk Screenings**

ANNCR: As adults grow older, their risk of falling increases. Your friends at **(Location)** want you to know more about how you can reduce your risk of falling. To schedule a free fall risk screening, call **(Phone number)** for an appointment. You'll be glad you did!

:40 **FRIENDS Hosts Free Fall Risk Screenings**

ANNCR: Did you know that there are many things which put older adults at risk of falling? Some medical conditions can cause dizziness or unsteadiness. Some medications in combination with others can cause confusion. If you feel you may be at risk of falling, make sure your doctor is aware of your concerns. Be sure your doctor knows about all medicines you are taking, even over-the-counter and herbal remedies. The **(Location)** is holding a free fall risk screening **(Date)** from **(Start time)** to **(End time)**. Please call **(Phone Number)** for more information.

Coming Soon:

**FREE FRIENDS FALL RISK
SCREENINGS**

A FRIENDS screening consists of fall risk questions, along with three physical skills tests. These screenings are done to determine if participants have risk factors which contribute to falls, such as poor balance. Anyone found to be at increased risk of falling will be referred to his/her physician for a more in-depth follow up.

FRIENDS FALL RISK SCREEING WILL BE HELD:

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

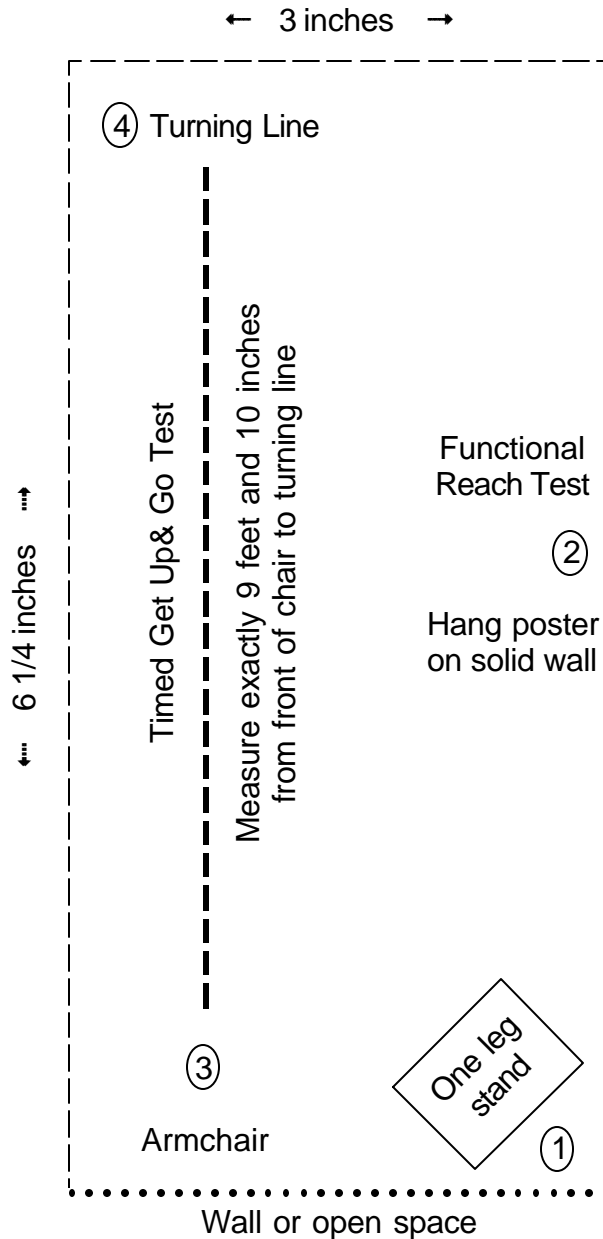
Anyone can fall, but many falls can be prevented.

**Fall Reduction Initiative:
Establishing New Directions
for Safety**

Sample Floor Plan: How to Set Up a FRIENDS Screening Station

Directions: Scale: One inch = 2 feet

- 1) Locate the One Leg Stand Test in a corner, if one is available, that is not close to a door. Place a sturdy chair so that the back of the chair will face the participant, and so that he /she will have space to move easily to and from the testing position.
- 2) Select a location on a solid wall, several feet away from the One Leg Stand Test. Hang the Functional Reach Poster with its bottom 3 1/2 feet from the floor.
- 3) Place the armchair for the Timed Get Up & Go Test against the back wall or open back side of the station, and 5 feet from the corner, if you will be using the corner for the one leg stand.
- 4) Use a measuring tape to measure exactly 9 feet, 10 inches from the front center of the armchair, at the floor. Secure a three-foot piece of non-stick (contrasting color from the floor) tape to mark the turning line.



SIGN-IN-LIST

Name	Name
1	24
2	25
3	26
4	27
5	28
6	29
7	30
8	31
9	32
10	33
11	34
12	35
13	36
14	37
15	38
16	39
17	40
18	41
19	42
20	43
21	44
22	45
23	46

RECOMMENDATION PROTOCOL FOR FRIENDS FALL RISK SCREENING

Test Result	Lower Risk (3 points)	Mod. Risk (2 points)	High Risk (1 point)	Didn't Attempt (0 Points)
Functional Reach	More than 10 inches	6-10 inches	Less than 6 inches	DA
Timed Get Up & Go	Less than 10 seconds	10-30 seconds	More than 30 seconds	DA
One Leg Stand	More than 15 seconds	5-15 seconds	Less than 5 seconds	DA

Standard Score Total (scores on the three tests added together) will be between zero and nine.

If the screening participant's Standard Score Total is 7-9, he/she may be at lower risk for a fall.

Recommend that the participant take the pink Physician Copy of the Screening Form to his/her primary care doctor the next time the participant has a scheduled appointment.

If the screening participant's Standard Score Total is 4-6, he/she may be at moderate risk for a fall.

Recommend that the participant take the pink Physician Copy of the Screening Form to his/her primary care doctor the next time the participant has a scheduled appointment.

If the screening participant's Standard Score Total is 0-3, he/she may be at high risk for a fall.

Ask the participant if his/her primary care doctor is aware that the participant may be at high risk for a fall. If the participant states that his/her primary care doctor is **NOT** aware that the participant may be at high risk for a fall, or the participant is **UNSURE** whether the doctor is aware of this risk, recommend that the participant take the pink Physician Copy of the Screening Form to his/her doctor as soon as the doctor has an appointment available.

If the participant states that his/her primary care doctor is already aware of the participant's fall risk, recommend that the participant take the pink Physician Copy of the Screening Form to his/her primary care doctor the next time the participant has a scheduled appointment.

FRIENDS FALL RISK SCREENING FORM

Site # _____

Participant # _____

Name: _____
 LAST FIRST MI

Born in: 19____ Male__ or Female__
 (Check one)

Release: I consent to this fall risk screening, which may include taking a history of fall risks, a test of how far I can reach without taking a step, a test of how fast I can get up from an armchair and walk, and a test of how long I can stand on one foot. I expressly acknowledge and agree to release FRIENDS from any and all responsibility and/or liability, and I expressly waive any and all right or privilege to litigate against FRIENDS, resulting from any and all injury or injuries I may encounter and/or sustain as a result of participating in this screening. I assume sole responsibility for obtaining medical or other professional help for any health problems identified in this screening. I understand that a low risk screening result is not a guarantee that I will not fall sometime, and that this screening cannot substitute for regular checkups by a physician. All information obtained from me is confidential, and will be used by FRIENDS only for data collection and reporting and program planning. I have read and understand this release, and sign it of my own free will.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: ____/____/____
 (Signature of the person being screened, NOT of the screener) mo. day year

(Circle one)

1. Do you take prescription or nonprescription medications daily? Yes No
 2. Does fear of falling limit your activities? Yes No
 3. Have you fallen more than once in the past six months? Yes No
 4. Do you sometimes feel dizzy when you stand up? Yes No
 5. Are you sometimes unsteady when you stand or walk? Yes No
 6. Do you sometimes have to rush to the bathroom? Yes No
- (If you don't drink alcohol, skip to question 8.)
7. Do you sometimes feel unsteady when you drink alcohol? Yes No
 8. Have you often been told you are not hearing correctly? Yes No
 9. Does your vision affect your ability to see where you are stepping? Yes No
 10. Do you feel you should be more physically active than you are? Yes No

Record Raw Score	Lower Risk 3 points	Mod. Risk 2 points	High Risk 1 point	Didn't Attempt 0 Points	Stand. Score (Record a 3, 2, 1, or 0)
Functional Reach _____ in.	More than 10 inches	6-10 inches	Less than 6 inches	DA	_____
Timed Get Up & Go _____ sec.	Less than 10 seconds	10-30 seconds	More than 30 seconds	DA	_____
One Leg Stand _____ sec.	More than 15 seconds	5-15 seconds	Less than 5 seconds	DA	_____

Standard Score Total _____

Recommendation (based on the Standard Score Total of the Physical Skills Tests)

(Screener: check one)

_____ **Your TOTAL score is 7-9:**

The results of your Physical Skills Tests found that you may be at a lower risk of falling than many older Pennsylvanians. You may want to show this form to your Primary Care Doctor at your next scheduled visit.

_____ **Your TOTAL score is 4-6:**

The results of your Physical Skills Tests show that you may be at a moderate risk of falling. Please show this form to your primary care doctor at your next scheduled appointment.

_____ **Your TOTAL score is 0-3:**

The results of your Physical Skills Tests show that you may have a high risk of falling. See your doctor soon if he/she is not already aware that you may have a high risk for falling.

White Copy-PDA Yellow Copy-Participant Pink Copy-Physician

Special Instructions

Please Do Not Copy This Form. The Screening Form has three copies as indicated above. The preceding page is part of the 14-inch form. The next page is the back of the Pink Physician Copy of the form.

Spanish-language FRIENDS Screening Forms are available by special request and with sufficient notice of at least five weeks.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE FRIENDS FALL RISK SCREENING FORM

Directions: (Using a ball point pen, complete a FRIENDS Screening Form for each participant)

I. Completing the Identifying Information, Release, and Fall Risk Questions

Greeters/helpers assist the participant with completing the identifying information; signing and dating the Release; completing the ten 'yes' or 'no' questions; and choosing the appropriate educational pieces based on his/her question responses. Greeters/helpers also assist with completion of follow-up postcards. They should pay special attention to participants who may need assistance due to poor eyesight or low reading ability.

II. Conducting and Documenting the Physical Skills Tests

A screener, assisted by a spotter, uses the guidelines on the FRIENDS Screening Tool Procedures to conduct each of the three physical skills tests. Raw Scores. As soon as an actual test result is obtained, the screener records the result on the corresponding line for each test in the Raw Score column, as follows:

- Functional Reach — record the highest whole number of inches the participant is able to reach
- Timed Get Up and Go — record the exact number of whole seconds
- One Leg Stand — record the exact number of whole seconds.

Standard Scores. The screener derives a Standard Score for each physical skills test by reading across from the recorded Raw Score and circling the correct number interval/category within which the Raw Score falls. Next, the screener records in the Standard Score column the corresponding 3, 2, 1, or 0 Standard Score points listed above the circled interval/category.

Standard Score Total. After the screener records a Standard Score of 3, 2, 1, or 0 for each of the three physical skills tests, the three numbers are added to obtain the Standard Score Total, ranging from 0 to 9. The total is recorded on the line designated Standard Score Total.

III. Completing the Recommendation Section

The screener enters a checkmark on the line for the range (7-9, 4-6, or 0-3) in which the participant's Standard Score Total falls and reads the Recommendation to the participant. All participants should be reminded that a fall risk screening neither excludes nor establishes a diagnosis, and that it does not take the place of a regular exam by a physician. The screener gives the yellow and pink copies of the completed form to the participant. The screener carefully collects all completed white copies and gives them to the site coordinator to return to KePRO for data collection.

IV. Encouraging Follow-up

The screener thanks the participant for coming to the screening, assures the participant that there are ways to lower his/her chances of falling, and encourages him/her to take charge of his/her health. Taking charge may involve asking his/her physician to try to find the source of the unsteadiness, which may be followed by a referral for specialized therapy. It may also mean becoming more physically active or making changes to one's living environment, etc.

Thank you for your interest in the FRIENDS fall risk screening program.

FRIENDS SCREENING TOOL PROCEDURES: FUNCTIONAL REACH TEST

Functional Reach — A screener measures how far a person can reach forward without taking a step.

Personnel: Screener (Provides verbal instructions, performs measurements, and records data)
Spotter (Provides standby supervision or necessary assistance to prevent participant from falling)

Materials:

- Functional Reach Measurement Poster (Supplied by FRIENDS)
- Removable Tape or Other Acceptable Wall Fastener

Set-up: Secure the Functional Reach Measurement Poster to a sturdy wall.

Clean-up: Remove the poster and the tape/fastener as soon as possible after the screening event is finished.

Procedures:

1. The screener performs a quick demonstration of the test before having the participant perform the test.
2. The screener stands about three feet away from the poster directly in line with the bold vertical line labeled number “1”. The spotter stands slightly in front of and close to the participant’s left side without touching the participant so that assistance can easily be provided as necessary to prevent a fall.
3. The screener directs the participant to stand comfortably with the Functional Reach Poster on his/her right side, so that his/her shoulders are perpendicular to the poster and the participant’s right foot is parallel to, and about 3-4 inches away, from the wall.
4. The screener asks the participant to raise either arm to the height of his/her shoulder and parallel to the ground, and to make a fist with that hand. The screener directs the participant to step forward or backward so that his/her knuckles are even with the bold vertical line (labeled “O”) which is the starting line. The screener instructs the participant, “without taking a step, reach as far forward as you can, and then return to your starting position.”

Note: The participant may go onto the balls of his/her feet and may bend forward at the waist as long as he/she does not take a step and the extended arm stays parallel to the floor. If the participant cannot do this test without an assistive device, the test should be stopped and the “didn’t attempt/DA” interval/category should be circled on the screening form.

5. The screener records, in the raw score column, the highest whole number of inches the participant is able to reach. The screener circles the appropriate interval/category of risk and records a standard score based on whether the participant’s knuckles (distal ends of the metacarpals):
 - Did not reach the bold vertical line marked “ 1” on the poster — record 1
 - Reached past the bold vertical line “1”, but did not reach past line “2” — record 2
 - Reached past the bold vertical line marked “2” on the poster —record 3
6. The participant may be allowed a second attempt, if he/she requests one or if the first attempt was not valid because the participant touched the poster or took a step before returning to the starting position. The screener records the best attempt.

FRIENDS SCREENING TOOL PROCEDURES: TIMED GET UP AND GO

Timed Get Up and Go - A screener measures with a stopwatch how fast a person can get up from an armchair and walk a measured distance, return and sit back down.

Personnel: Screener and Spotter as described in Functional Reach Procedures.

Material:

- Non-folding armchair without wheels and with a seat height of approximately 17-18 inches
- Stopwatch
- Measuring tape or yardstick
- Contrasting-colored or neon-colored adhesive tape.

Set up: Screener and spotter measure out exactly 9 feet, 10 inches (3 meters) from the front edge of the chair seat at floor level and mark a turning line with a two-to three-foot piece of tape.

Clean up: Remove tape as soon as possible after the event is over to prevent sticking.

Procedures:

1. Prior to the start of testing, the screener encourages any participant who uses a walking aid or other assistive device to use his/her customary device during the test.
2. The screener directs the participant to sit in the chair with his/her arms resting on the armrests and his/her walking aid, if applicable, at hand. (The participant may use the armrests to aid himself/herself in rising if he/she chooses to do so.)
3. The screener instructs the participant that, on the word "Go," he/she is to stand up and walk at a comfortable and safe pace past the colored tape line on the floor, turn, walk back to the chair, and sit back down.
4. The screener asks the participant if he/she has any questions. The screener answers any and all questions from the participant to insure that he/she understands what is expected and is ready. The screener asks the participant on which side he/she would prefer to have the spotter stand. The spotter stands slightly behind and to the desired side of the participant, watching closely to provide assistance as needed to prevent a fall.
5. The screener asks the participant to say "Ok" when he/she is ready. Then, the screener says "Go" and starts the stopwatch.
6. When the participant completes sitting back down, the screener stops the stopwatch and records whole seconds elapsed under the Raw Score column. The screener circles the appropriate interval/category of risk and records a Standard Score as indicated:
 - More than 30 seconds (at which point the test is stopped) — record 1 point
 - Between 10 and 30 seconds — record 2 points
 - Less than 10 seconds — record 3 points
7. The participant may be allowed a second attempt.

FRIENDS SCREENING TOOL PROCEDURES: ONE LEG STAND

One Leg Stand - a screener times with a stopwatch, the number of seconds a person can stand on one foot without touching anything or anyone for support.

Personnel: Screener and spotter as described in Functional Reach Procedures

Materials:

- Stopwatch
- Sturdy non-folding chair without wheels

Procedures:

1. The screener directs the participant to stand close to (within arm's reach) and facing away from the corner of the room (if the test station is in a corner) and behind the chair with his/her hands on the back of the chair.
2. The screener explains the test by saying: "When you are ready, you will lift one leg off the floor so that no part of your foot touches the floor. Then remove your hands from the chair. Timing will begin when you have both hands free and are standing on one foot." The screener cautions the participant to avoid extreme efforts to stand on one leg (e.g. "I want you to stand on one foot as long as you can without feeling like you are going to fall.") If the participant cannot do this test without the aid of an assistive device, the test should be stopped and the "didn't attempt" interval/category should be circled on the screening form.
3. The screener demonstrates the test and asks if the participant has any questions. The screener explains that a spotter will help to insure his/her safety and asks on which side he/she would prefer to have the spotter stand.
4. The spotter takes his/her place slightly behind and to the desired side of the participant, watching closely, and assisting when necessary, to prevent a fall if the participant becomes unsteady.
5. The screener instructs the participant to raise one leg off the ground and remove his/her hands from the chair. (Timing begins when both conditions have been met.)
6. When the participant's raised foot touches the floor or the participant touches the chair, wall, or spotter, the screener stops the stopwatch and records seconds elapsed under the raw score column. The screener circles the appropriate interval/category of risk based on the raw score and records a standard score:
 - Less than 5 seconds — record 1 point
 - Between 5 and 15 seconds — record 2 points
 - More than 15 seconds — record 3 points
7. The participant may be allowed a second attempt, if unsuccessful the first time.

PrimeTime Health & The Area Agencies on Aging

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging's PrimeTime Health Program, through its 52 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), helps older persons learn and maintain good health habits. The program focuses on the following priority areas: exercise; nutrition; chronic conditions; incontinence; mental health; injury prevention; medication management; and alcohol.

A component of PrimeTime Health, PEPPI (Peer Exercise Program Promotes Independence), offers peer-led weight-resistance training. FRIENDS (Fall Risk Initiative-Establishing New Directions for Safety) is also part of PrimeTime Health.

Pennsylvania's Area Agencies on Aging, covering all 67 counties, are the local representatives for the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and administer these PrimeTime Health Programs and various other programs and services offered to older Pennsylvanians.

Area Agencies on Aging are available to offer needed assistance, supportive service and advice on issues affecting and relating to older Pennsylvanians. They are staffed with workers skilled in various fields such as: Geriatrics, Social Work and Community Resources. AAAs can assist in many areas including: providing in-home care for an older adult; investigating reports of abuse or neglect; and helping with Medicare questions; providing transportation to medical appointments; chore services; friendly visitors; assessing the appropriateness of long-term care and much more.

To contact your Area Agency on Aging, look under Aging in the blue pages of your telephone directory.

Dear Doctor:

FRIENDS is a partnership of health related organizations that came together in 1997 for the purpose of reducing the toll that fall injuries take on older Pennsylvanians.

Injuries due to falls are a major cause of morbidity and mortality among the older population, and a significant contributor to the medical care expenditures of this age group. With more of the population living to advanced ages, fall injuries are increasing in importance as a potentially preventable cause of permanent disability, need for hospital treatment, and long term institutional care.

People fall for many reasons, which can be conveniently divided into two main types, "intrinsic" and "extrinsic." Intrinsic risk factors for falls include disease states, disuse atrophy of muscles, sensory deficits, and other characteristics of the individual. Extrinsic risk factors are environmental hazards such as slippery surfaces, poor lighting, and individual microenvironmental hazards such as polypharmacy. There is much that you, as a primary care physician, can do to help your older patients decrease both types of fall injury risks.

FRIENDS is conducting fall risk screenings in various parts of Pennsylvania. The screenings are intended to help older Pennsylvanians become more aware of their own risk of fall injury so they can discuss constructively with their primary care physicians ways to reduce that risk.

The questions on this FRIENDS fall injury risk screening form were designed to stimulate discussion between you and the patient. A "yes" answer to any of the ten questions may indicate the presence of a modifiable risk factor.

For the screening, the "screening workgroup" of the FRIENDS partnership chose three commonly used tests of lower limb strength and balance, which were simple and safe enough to be conducted by lay persons in a community setting. The Functional Reach and One Leg Stand are tests of balance, while the Timed Get Up and Go is a functional test of independent mobility.

We hope you will discuss the patient's answers to the questions on this screening form and his/her performance on the tests of physical function with him/her, and follow up on any risk factors the two of you have not already dealt with to your satisfaction.

Call your local Office on Aging (listed in the Blue Pages Guide to Human Services in your phone book) for suggestions about available community resources.