



## **Falls Free CT Kickoff Meeting**

**Date/Time:** December 10, 2024, 11:00am – 12:00pm

**Location:** Zoom

**Facilitators:** Angela Vázquez, Department of Aging and Disability Services and Robin Tousey-Ayers, Department of Public Health

### **I. Introduction**

Robin Tousey-Ayers welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a brief introduction to the purpose of Falls Free CT.

### **II. Survey Results Highlights**

Angela Vázquez thanked everyone who was able to complete the Falls Free CT survey that was shared after the kick-off meeting in September. A total of 65 survey responses were received. Based on the feedback and information provided, working group topics were selected, a new falls prevention program guide was developed, and a steering committee was formed.

The working group topics that were chosen include: community-based programming and screenings, community awareness and education, data collection and surveillance, home safety modifications and falls prevention technology, and workforce development and training. Working group meetings will be coordinated to meet monthly beginning in January 2025. Working groups will be very action oriented and a space where projects and initiatives can be planned and implemented collaboratively.

The Falls Free CT Falls Prevention Program Guide is now available online at:

<https://portal.ct.gov/aginganddisability/content-pages/programs/falls-prevention>. This guide lists falls prevention programs and services in Connecticut by geographic region. This is a living document that will be updated regularly, so revisions and additions are always welcome.

Next, Robin Tousey-Ayers introduced all the Steering Committee members:

Robin Crogan Ganley, Stamford Health

Amy Emanuel, Central Connecticut Health District

Debra Neeb, Danbury Hospital

Eva Ng'ongolo, Johnson Memorial Hospital

Nancy Perrotta, Hartford HealthCare Rehabilitation Network

Odali Rodriguez, Wallingford Health Department

Christy Ross, University of Hartford

Renee King, Day Kimball Health

Susan Yurasevecz, Connecticut Department of Public Health

The Steering Committee members were selected through a surveying process. The intention was to create a committee that represented all regions of the state and reflected a diversity of professionals



and disciplines. The Steering Committee will help to inform the direction of the coalition and develop a strategic plan.

### **III. Steps to Safety Presentation**

Fire Marshal Patrick Tourville provided a presentation on the Steps to Safety program. More information about the program can be found at: <https://www.nfpa.org/en/education-and-research/home-fire-safety/older-adults/Steps-to-Safety>

### **IV. Connecticut Steps to Safety Training**

A Steps to Safety training will be offered in CT on Wednesday, March 19, 2025. The training will be led by an expert from the National Fire Protection Association. This training is open to all fire service, EMS, public health, injury prevention, elder care, and social service professionals who want to work together to reduce the impact of fire and falls among the older adults in their community. It is recommended that a team of 2-3 professionals from a municipality committed to offering STS attends together. More details and a registration link will be shared after the meeting.

### **VI. Title III-D Funding**

Angela Vázquez shared about a funding opportunity for evidence-based falls prevention programs, such as A Matter of Balance, Tai Ji Quan Moving for Better Balance, and Bingocize. Each year, CT's five Area Agencies on Aging receive federal Title III-D funding through the Older Americans Act to offer evidence-based health promotion programs. Community agencies and organizations are invited to apply for Title III-D funding at the start of every year. If Falls Free CT participants are looking for support to help sustain or offer a new falls prevention program, please contact an Area Agency on Aging to find out more information about the RFP process. For more information about the towns covered by each Area Agency on Aging visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/aginganddisability/content-pages/topics-a-z/area-agencies-on-aging>. For more information about Title III-D visit this link to the Administration on Community Living's website: <https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/disease-prevention>.

### **VII. 2025 Meeting Dates & Times**

Monday, March 10 at 1pm

Tuesday, June 10 at 11am

Monday, September 8 at 1pm

Tuesday, December 9 at 11am