



### **Falls Free CT Quarterly Meeting**

**Date/Time:** June 10, 2025, 11:00am – 12:00pm

**Location:** Zoom

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

**Attendees:** Amy Emmanuel, Amy Mirizzi, Amy Watkins, Anne Bernick, Bonnie Meyers, Carissa Caserta, Cathy, Christine Ross, Connie, D. Blackmer, Daniel Beem, Diamaris, Eliza Little, Ellen Ryan, Erin Estey, Julie Bruno, Keren Paquette, Kevin, Kizzy Hernandez-Bigos, Kristeen Owens, Lisa McMahon, Lydia Barakat, Meg Haffner, Meghan Brady, Melissa Marquis, Michael D’Elia, Michael Zacchera, Michelle Saunders, Michelle Silva, Nancy Perrotta, Nora Hartnett, Renee King, Robin Crogan, Ronda Doherty, S. Strumpf, Shannon Spaulding, Stephanie Schillat, Steven Katz, Susan Yuraseveczs, The Kennedy Collective Mobility Services Department Representative, Theresa Heier, Tyler Carmen

### **I. Welcome & Introductions**

Robin welcomed everyone to the meeting, shared about the Falls Free CT Coalition, and reviewed the meeting agenda.

### **II. Steps to Safety Training Overview & Grantees**

Angela shared about the March 19<sup>th</sup> Steps to Safety training, offered in partnership with the National Fire Protection Association. There were 55 people in attendance representing 33 different municipalities, along with several community presenters and guests, including the State Fire Marshal. After the training, attendees were offered the opportunity to receive funding to support a Steps to Safety Program in their community. There were 6 attendees that applied and were approved for funding: Chesprocott Health District, Town of Brookfield, Town of East Hartford, Town of Wallingford, Town of West Hartford, Town of Windham.

### **III. University of Hartford Screening Event Recap**

Christy Ross from the University of Hartford shared about the outcomes and preliminary research findings of the falls risk screening event held at the university in March. See PowerPoint slides for more details.

### **IV. NCOA Grant & Age+Action Conference**

Angela shared that Falls Free CT was selected for a grant award from the National Council on Aging. The Bureau of Aging will receive nearly \$125,000 in grant funds on behalf of Falls Free CT to support the development of the coalition. This will include strategic planning; developing Older Adult Advisory Councils to give older adults and caregivers a greater voice in the work of the coalition; a more formal membership process; the creation of an educational outreach campaign that will be developed in partnership with Odonnell Company; and more falls prevention program training opportunities.



As part of this grant, two representatives were sent to the Age+Action conference. Robin shared some highlights from her experience at the conference. More information about the conference and presentations from the educational breakout sessions can be viewed here:

<https://connect.ncoa.org/age-action-2025-presentations>

## **V. Bingocize**

Kristeen Owens, the Vice President of Bingocize, provided an introduction to the program and a program demonstration.

In response to questions asked, Kristeen noted that the ideal Bingocize leader should be enthusiastic and charismatic, high-energy, and able to follow along with the Bingocize instructions while keeping participants engaged. Also noted that the program has an average 80% completion rate, and that self-reported data is collected from participants. Additionally, Bingocize provides regular technical assistance to program sites.

Angela shared that Falls Free CT will be covering the cost of the license, leader trainings, and start up supplies for five new Bingocize sites. Full details about this opportunity will be shared in an announcement that will be emailed to Falls Free CT participants.

## **VI. Wrap Up Announcements**

Robin reminded attendees about Falls Prevention Awareness Week (September 22-26) and outlined some of the resources available to promote the event.

Angela noted that the coalition Working Groups continue to meet monthly to work on strategic action items and encouraged coalition participants to contribute to these groups. Many of these groups seek feedback from coalition participants through the quarterly coalition survey. The following Working Groups updates were not read during the meeting due to lack of time, but are included here for informational purposes:

### Community-Based Programming & Screenings

- This working group is developing a train-the-trainer event on how to administer falls risk screening tools. This training will equip community-based service providers to conduct falls risk screenings with confidence and accuracy. Save the date of Friday, July 25, if interested in this opportunity.

### Community Awareness & Education

- Members of this group have been instrumental in developing a Falls Prevention Awareness Week social media campaign and providing feedback about the educational outreach campaign to be developed by Odonnell Company.



#### Data Collection & Surveillance

- There is a lot of data on falls in CT, and this group has been diving into discussions around what to do with all the data that we have, gaps in our datasets, and also opportunities to look at falls data at the local level. This group would value any feedback about local sources of falls data.

#### Home Safety Modifications & Falls Prevention Technology

- Two guest presenters recently spoke to this group about increasing access to technology among older adults, and specifically covered the CT Tech Act Project and Bridging the Digital Divide Program. There is a great amount of information and resource sharing happening in this group, and participants are considering opportunities to share this information with the larger coalition.

#### Workforce Development & Training

- This group recently developed a survey for higher education institutions and technical schools to better understand what information about falls prevention is covered in the curriculum of programs across the state and how the upcoming workforce is being educated on the topic of falls prevention. This survey will be finalized and distributed in the coming months.

Attendees were encouraged to complete the coalition's quarterly survey.

Meghan Brady from the Bureau of Aging will be filling in during Angela's maternity leave. Please contact Meghan and Robin with any questions or requests for assistance during Angela's leave.

#### **VII. Next Meeting**

Monday, September 8 at 1:00pm