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New paper highlights opportunities to improve falls prevention in Gippsland

Gippsland Primary Health Network (PHN) has released a new *Health Insights: Preventing Falls* paper, highlighting the growing impact of falls across the region and the need for targeted prevention efforts to support older people to stay safe and independent.

Falls are one of the leading causes of injury and death in Australia, with older people most affected. In Gippsland, the impact is even more significant, with the region recording the highest rate of accidental fall-related deaths among all PHN regions nationally.

Across Australia, around one in three people aged over 65 experiences at least one fall each year, and falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospital admissions for older Australians. These figures reinforce the importance of proactive prevention and early intervention.

Key insights:

- Gippsland recorded the highest rate of falls causing death in Australia (16.7 per 100,000 people compared with 10.5 nationally)
- 1 in 3 people aged 65+ experience a fall each year
- Gippsland has an older-than-average population, with 24.8% aged 65+ (compared to ~16% nationally), expected to grow significantly by 2030
- Falls place significant pressure on the health system:
 - 39% of fall-related emergency department presentations are people aged 65+
 - 11% of all emergency department presentations for older people involve a fall
- Falls account for 43% of injury hospitalisations and deaths in Australia
- Fall injuries cost the health system over \$5 billion annually
- Around 50% of residential aged care residents fall each year, with higher rates for those living with dementia

Gippsland PHN continues to work with health professionals, service providers and the community to strengthen falls prevention efforts and improve outcomes for older people.

Key initiatives include:

- Regular falls risk screening and assessment
- Strength and balance exercises to improve mobility
- Medication reviews to reduce side effects and overprescribing
- Management of chronic conditions such as dizziness and frailty

- Home safety assessments to reduce hazards
- Multidisciplinary care involving GPs, allied health professionals and pharmacists
- Ongoing support after a fall to prevent recurrence

The paper also highlights a range of services and supports available to support older people to stay safe and independent including [early intervention programs](#), [Care Finder](#) services, [My Aged Care](#) and [Victorian Government falls prevention resources](#).

Health Insights: Preventing Falls draws on local and national data, alongside consultation with health professionals and community members in Gippsland, to better understand the scale of the issue and opportunities for action.

Gippsland PHN Chief Executive Office, Amanda Proposch, said preventing falls is critical to supporting healthy ageing in the region.

“Falls can have devastating consequences for older people, often leading to serious injury, loss of confidence and reduced independence,” said Ms Proposch.

“Many falls are preventable with the right support and early intervention. By identifying risk early and connecting people with appropriate services, we can significantly reduce both the likelihood and severity of falls.”

To view a copy of *Health Insights: Preventing Falls*, head to the [publications section of the Gippsland PHN website](#).

To learn more about falls prevention and the services Gippsland PHN provides to support healthy ageing, visit the [aged care section of our website](#).

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Media contact

Natalie Kuczer

Communications Officer

Gippsland PHN

03 5175 5481

natalie.kuczer@gphn.org.au