PREVENTING ELDERLY FALLS IN SARATOGA, WYOMING HANNAH PHILLIPS, MS2 – RUOP 2014 UWSOM

Purpose:

Educate seniors (age 65+) on fall prevention by:

- Changing the physical layout and making alterations to their home
- Encouraging physical activity for strength

Background:

- •1,700 year-round residents
- Large senior population
- No options for assisted living
- Very limited in home care options
- •Many single senior females living alone into their 80's and 90's

Methods:

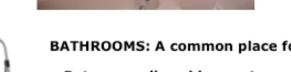
- Observing the senior patients in the clinic and nursing home
- •Literature review indicated need for multiple approaches, ie. Physical intervention with exercise
- Partnered with the Senior Center



- STAIRS AND STEPS: both inside and outside your home
 - Keep objects, papers, shoes, and books off of the stairs.
 - Fix broken or uneven stairs and handrails
 - Make sure your stairs are well lit! If you can, have a light switch at both ends of the stairs.

 Make sure carpet is firmly secured to the stairs.

Making Your Home a Safe Place to Live



- Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower for extra stability.
- Have grab bars installed inside the next to the toilet.

Results:

- Presentation at Saratoga Senior Center discussing fall prevention and exercise options in this community
- •25 people attended
- Large print handouts were distributed
- Many were aware of interventions, some were not

Discussion:

- Multifactorial approach -- home modification and exercise)
- Many seniors are aware of fall risk
- The handouts were received well
- Offering fitness classes at the senior center (yoga, Tai Chi) may be an option later
- •There is a need for increased involvement of non-profits in town who are able to assist seniors with obtaining equipment. Ie. Toilet extenders, walkers, canes, etc



Making house calls.