Did You Know?

Falls and the Enviroment

Recently DDS conducted a survey with providers regarding Emergency Room (ER) or urgent care visits. One of the questions asked what were the most common reasons for ER visits. The response indicated that follow up after a fall accounted for 52% of all ER visits. In 2010, DDS provided statewide training on fall prevention that showed the significant impact that direct care staff could have on reducing injuries caused by falls and even the actual number of falls in programs when given the tools and information to effect change.. direct care staff continue to play that vital role today.

In the hospital setting, most of the attention is given to recovering from the fall related injury and perhaps the individual’s physical limitations such as strength or balance issues through physical therapy and even surgical intervention. But often, only the staff are aware of what challenges the physical environment may present to the individual either all of the time or perhaps, seasonally. Please take a moment to review the Environmental Assessment Checklist and complete it after each fall or near fall in order to help you identify and appropriately report a possible overlooked risk to an individual who is likely to fall.

For more falls prevention information go to: http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/disability-services/services-by-type/intellectual-disability/provider-support/health-promotion/falls-prevention-campaign.html