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A Slip could be a Hospital Trip

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Statement of the problem: Senior citizens prefer receiving health care in the comfort of their own home setting. However, the home environment, being uncontrolled, pose a lot of safety hazards for the elderly population with fall being the most common risk in this age group. According to Pynoos, Steinman and Nguyen (2016), almost 78% of falls in elderly occur in their home, resulting in significant morbidity and mortality. The Aga Khan University Hospital Home health services indicator data of 2019-2021 showed five incidences of fall, and on investigation, we found that the causes were easily preventable through minor home modifications. Fall prevention is also one of the International Patient Safety Goals (IPSG), and hence, interventions must be done to avoid and reduce the incidences of fall. Effective fall risk assessment through home safety assessment checklist at the initiation of service will identify contributing factors towards patient's fall and will help design efficient mitigation strategies to reduce its occurrence in home setting. However, it is evident that home safety assessment and modification help control extrinsic and preventable causes of fall at home (Pynoos, Steinman and Nguyen, 2010). Through this checklist, we can perform a thorough assessment of all areas of a patient's home and identify hazardous items or surfaces that can increase the chances of patient's injury related to fall. This intervention is equally beneficial for elderly as well as children and/or people with limited functional capacity at home. Simple interventions like modifying room décor, installation of handrails and side bars, use of non-slippery mats and fixing of uneven surfaces may require some expenditure, but will hardly be a 10-20% of what a fall with injury can cost to a patient, apart from psychological suffering and disturbed family dynamics. The checklist will be made part of the patient's medical record. The family will be counselled for the necessary home modifications through an information booklet, specifically developed on home safety assessment and modification.

Biography

Gulshan Amin Mohammad is working as a nurse navigator, Rozina Rashid as clinical nurse instructor and Nadia Mulji as a nurse manager in Home Health Service department. The fall assessment tool is made on safety which is based on the factors leading to fall in home setup and the strategies to prevent fall.