

## **Project Title**

Characteristics and Circumstances of Falls among Community-dwelling Older Adults:  
A Cross-Sectional Study

## **Project Lead and Members**

Project lead: Chunyan, WANG

Project members: Jacqueline Giovanna, DE ROZA; Shu Yun, TAN; David, NG;  
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## **Organisation(s) Involved**

National Healthcare Group Polyclinics

## **Healthcare Family Group(s) Involved in this Project**

Medical, Nursing, Physiotherapist

## **Applicable Specialty or Discipline**

Primary Care, Community Nursing, Physiotherapy

## **Project Period**

Start date: Jan 2022

Completed date: July 2023

## **Aims**

To explore the characteristics and circumstances of falls among community-dwelling older adults in Singapore

## Background

The prevalence of falls in older adults in Singapore is high; one in three people over 65 experience a fall each year. Falls among older adults are associated with potential serious complications and long-term sequelae.

## Methods

This descriptive cross-sectional study recruited adults aged 65 and above with fear of falling (FoF) in seven primary care clinics since January 2022. Demographic data and falls characteristics including number of falls in past six months, location of falls, reason for falls and injuries sustained were obtained using survey. Validated Falls Efficacy Scale-International (FES-I) was used to measure FoF. Data was reported using descriptive statistics.

## Results

Of 94 participants recruited, mean age was 75.9, majority (92.6%) Chinese and 61.7% females. 27.7% (n=26) participants fell in the past 6 months. Among the fallers, 65.4% (n=17) fell once and 34.6% (n=9) had more than one fall. Falls most commonly occurred due to trip or slip (60%) followed by loss of balance (23.1%). 69.2% sustained injuries due to falls. 53.8% fell outdoors and 19.2% in bathroom. The most common activities in FES-I for which participants reported FoF were going up and down stairs (85.1%) and walking up and down slopes (81.9%).

## Conclusion

Most falls occurred outdoors which corresponded with FoF most commonly reported for outdoor activities such as stairs and slopes. These common characteristics and circumstances of falls among older adults are useful for guiding future fall prevention strategies.

### **Additional Information**

Small sample size as it is interim review. Planned sample size is 420. This project only captured most recent fall history for multiple fallers Details of injury sustained such as type of injury and severity need to be analysed.

Singapore Health & Biomedical Congress (SHBC) 2022: Singapore Primary Care Award (Posters category)– (Bronze Award)

### **Project Category**

Care Continuum

Preventive Care, Health Promotion (Fall)

### **Keywords**

Falls, Community-Dwelling, Older Adults

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# Characteristics and Circumstances of Falls among Community-dwelling Older Adults: A cross-sectional study

National Healthcare Group  
POLYCLINICS

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## INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of falls in older adults in Singapore is high; one in three people over 65 experience a fall each year. Falls among older adults are associated with potential serious complications and long-term sequelae.

## OBJECTIVE

This study aimed to explore the characteristics and circumstances of falls among community-dwelling older adults in Singapore.

## METHODOLOGY

**Design:** Cross-sectional study

**Sample:** adults aged 65 and above with fear of falling (FoF) in seven primary care clinics since January 2022

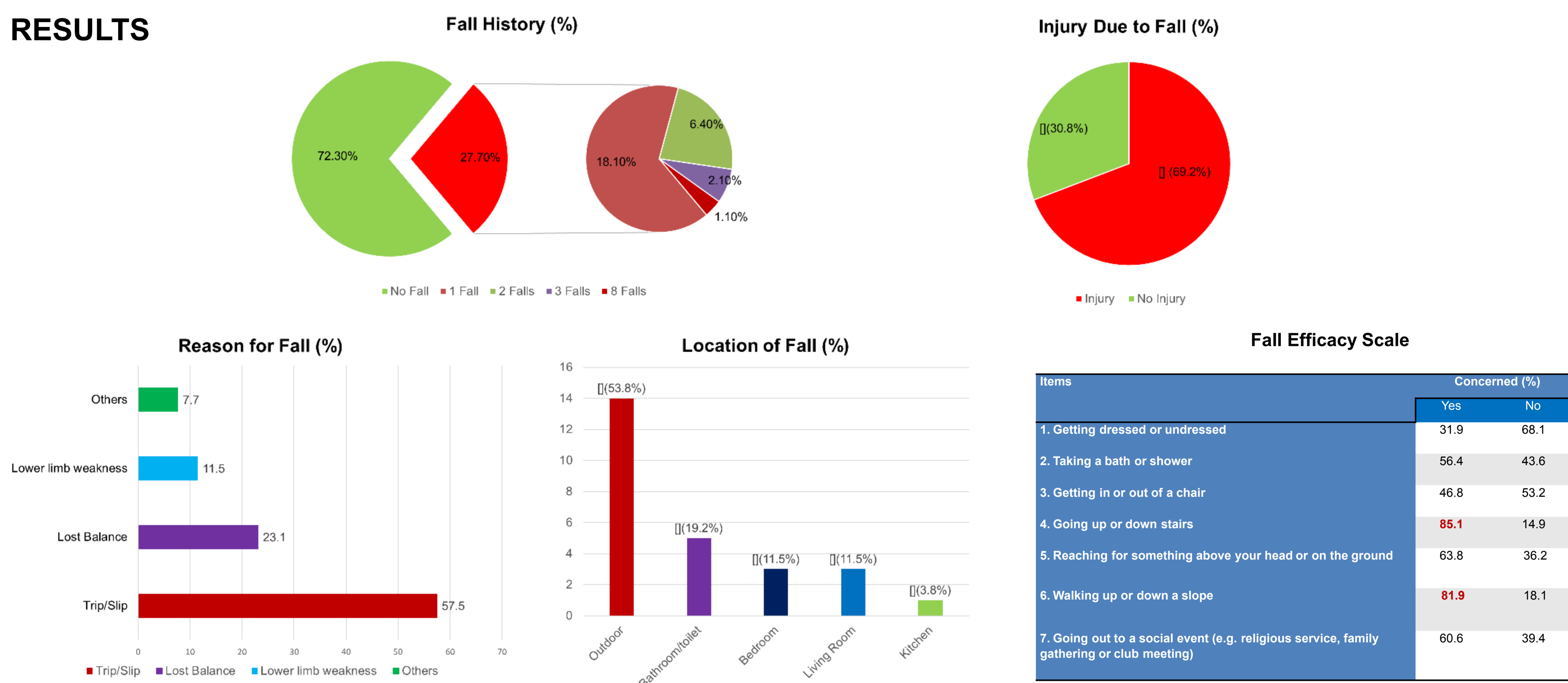
**Data collection:** Recruited during routine chronic follow-up visits from Jan 2022 to June 2022 and survey questionnaire administered

**Questionnaire:**

- 1) Demographic data: age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, living arrangements
- 2) Falls history: number of falls in past six months, location of falls, reason for falls and injuries sustained
- 3) Fear of fall (FoF) measurement: Validated Falls Efficacy Scale-International (FES-I)

**Data analysis:** Descriptive statistics: demographic variables, falls history, FES-I

## RESULTS



Of 94 participants recruited, mean age was 75.9, majority (92.6%) Chinese and 61.7% females. 27.7% (n=26) participants fell in the past 6 months. Among the fallers, 65.4% (n=17) fell once and 34.6% (n=9) had more than one fall. Falls most commonly occurred due to trip or slip (60%) followed by loss of balance (23.1%). 69.2% sustained injuries due to falls. 53.8% fell outdoors and 19.2% in bathroom. The most common activities in FES-I for which participants reported FoF were going up and down stairs (85.1%) and walking up and down slopes (81.9%).

## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Most falls occurred outdoors which corresponded with FoF most commonly reported for outdoor activities such as stairs and slopes. These common characteristics and circumstances of falls among older adults are useful for guiding future fall prevention strategies.

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