

A decorative graphic at the top of the page features a horizontal band of blue and green hexagons. Within these hexagons are various white medical icons: a clipboard with a checkmark, a pill bottle, a heart rate line, a DNA helix, a laptop with a plus sign, a microscope, a syringe, a pair of hands holding a heart, a first aid kit, a truck with a plus sign, a stethoscope, and a thermometer. Scattered around and overlapping the hexagons are various geometric shapes in shades of blue, green, and red, including triangles, diamonds, and circles.

# Falls Boot Camp Implementation Toolkit

Preventing Falls Through Team-Style Activity Sessions

July 2020

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

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# What is Falls Boot Camp?

# WHAT IS FALLS BOOT CAMP?

**Falls Boot Camp** is an activity-based program designed to reduce the risk of falls among susceptible Veterans. It is an interdisciplinary approach, involving occupational, physical, and music therapy. The program consists of several consecutive training sessions designed to improve Veterans' power, gait, balance, and cognition. Veterans also receive an at-home program so they can continue to work towards personal goals on their own time.

## How it works?

Falls Boot Camp is an 8-week activity program which can be implemented within an inpatient or outpatient setting. The program consists of 8, hour-long group training sessions held once or twice a week. During each session, a small group of Veterans works one-on-one with staff as they move through a variety of stations. Fall risk is assessed during the first and last training sessions using outcomes from a series of tests. A 3-month follow-up assessment is also conducted to determine whether improvements in participant scores are maintained.

## The Four Stations

Each facility can determine what equipment to use at their stations, but they all target 4 key subjects:

- Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation (Walking to the beat of the music)
- Balance (Nintendo Wii)
- Power and Multi-Tasking (Cognition, Obstacle Course, Boxing)
- Tai Chi





# Why Should You Implement Falls Boot Camp?

# WHY SHOULD YOU IMPLEMENT FALLS BOOT CAMP?

## The Challenge

Over 800,000 patients a year are hospitalized because of a fall injury. Although some falls do not result in serious injury, they can still have a detrimental effect on a person's daily life and make it difficult for them to get around, do everyday activities, or live independently. A fall injury not only affects the individual who falls but it also negatively affects the lives of their caregivers and family members.

Individuals who suffer a fall may be saddled with costly hospital bills. On average, the hospitalization cost for a fall injury is \$34,294. Falls affect all parties involved, so we must help our Veterans prevent them.

## Veteran Value

Falls Boot Camp directly benefits Veterans and their caregivers by reducing the risk of falls. **VA Central Iowa Health Care System** conducted assessments prior to Falls Boot Camp which indicated the participants were at increased risk of falls and needed assistance with activities of daily living. However, assessments conducted during the final session of Falls Boot Camp demonstrated a significant reduction in fall risk, as well as an increased ability to engage in activities of daily living without assistance. Participants were able to maintain these improved scores 3-months after completing the program. **No participants suffered a fall at home during this time period.**



The goals of this program are to **increase participant's awareness of current fall risk**, increase strength, increase balance, and **decrease risk of falls.**



# Implementation Steps



# IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

## Phase 1

- **Step 1:** Identify a Practice Champion and Interdisciplinary Team
- **Step 2:** Set Project Scope and Develop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- **Step 3:** Engage All Relevant Stakeholders

## Phase 2

- **Step 4:** Secure Resources
- **Step 5:** Customize Materials
- **Step 6:** Train Staff

## Phase 3

- **Step 7:** Conduct Veteran Outreach
- **Step 8:** Set-up Room and Equipment
- **Step 9:** Develop a Data Collection Plan for Monitoring Feedback Metrics

## Phase 4

- **Step 10:** Go Live!
- **Step 11:** Interpret Data
- **Step 12:** Share Success with Stakeholders and Celebrate!



From start to finish, you can expect the implementation of Falls Boot Camp to take approximately 1 - 4 months. However, this can vary significantly at each facility. Facilities that already have available staff and resources might only need a couple of weeks, whereas other facilities might need longer than 4 months. Falls Boot Camp can be implemented in both **in-patient** and **out-patient** settings and this can also affect the implementation timeline.



# **Step 1: Identify a Practice Champion and Interdisciplinary Team**

# IDENTIFY A PRACTICE CHAMPION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM

Identify a Practice Champion who will engage staff to be leaders of implementation. The Practice Champion should be someone closely associated with the Practice, can educate staff, advocate for the Practice, and address challenges associated with implementation.

The Interdisciplinary Team should be comprised of the Practice Champion and individuals who are crucial players in the success of implementation. They represent the “core team”.

The primary duties of the **Practice Champion** include:

- Managing the implementation, coordination, tracking, and evaluation of the Falls Boot Camp Practice
- Promoting the value of the Practice among staff and leadership
- Serving as a coach to facilitate implementation

The **Interdisciplinary Team** should be made up of:

- Practice Champion
- Physical Therapist (PT) or Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Recreational Therapist
- Geriatrician
- Neurologist
- Other specialists as necessary

Determine a cadence for how often you will need to meet with your Interdisciplinary Team and be sure to communicate this with them. We suggest a 5 minute “hot wash” session at the end of each treatment session with the staff participating in Falls Boot Camp that day. Once the 8-week Falls Boot Camp is completed, we suggest a larger more comprehensive meeting with the core team.



## **Step 2: Set Project Scope and Develop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

# SET PROJECT SCOPE AND DEVELOP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Falls Boot Camp can be modified to fit the needs of your medical center. Certain aspects of the Practice are flexible and should be discussed with the Interdisciplinary Team and documented in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In your MOU and/or proposal you should determine and outline how the practice will flow at your facility and whether you are implementing in a **in-patient** or **out-patient** setting.

For example, the following bullets highlight some of the flexible components of Falls Boot Camp:

- Modify exercise stations
- Adjust class materials
- Shorten or lengthen the class time
- In-patient or Out-patient setting

The **MOU** will serve as a guide for implementing this Practice. It is used to show leadership what will be accomplished with the Practice, and it serves as an implementation agreement between the Practice Champion and the facility. It will include:

- General project description
- Scope of implementing this Practice
- Problem/opportunity statement to be addressed by implementing the Practice
- Facility goals for implementation
- Facility timeline for implementation
- Resources your facility will need to obtain
- Team members and leadership who will support implementation (see **Step 1**), and their respective time commitments



Proposal Example



## **Step 3: Engage All Relevant Stakeholders**

# ENGAGE ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

Implementation of this Practice requires actions from several different departments or service lines. Refer to the following table for a list of the commonly involved stakeholder groups. When you initially engage these groups for implementation at your site, consider how you can best communicate with them to get the response you need.

Stakeholders	Dependencies
<b>Executive Level Support (ex. Director and/or manager)</b>	Buy-in and budget approval for resources
<b>Quality Manager</b>	Tracks falls and risks. Reports to senior leadership
<b>Therapy Supervisor</b>	Coordinates the schedules for PT and OT
<b>Registered Nurse (RN) Manager</b>	If implemented as an in-patient practice, conducts baseline assessment and recommends patients
<b>Whole Health and Wellness Advocate</b>	Practice awareness and promotion

**Remember:** Your stakeholder list may look different depending on if you are for implementing **in-patient** or **out-patient**. Your facility might have additional stakeholders that you need to engage, so be sure to tailor this list to fit your facility needs!

Once you determined the stakeholder groups and individuals to engage, you may want to host a meeting with your team members and leadership to present the MOU and provide background on the Practice and what the implementation process will look like. Leadership may also be able to provide information and support around addressing potential challenges and obtaining resources.



## Step 4: Secure Resources



# SECURE RESOURCES

Below is a list of recommended resources to set up and conduct classes. As the Interdisciplinary Team reviews the class materials, they should determine how they want the class to be structured. You may need different resources if you are implementing in a out-patient or in-patient setting. You may have already made a list of resources necessary for this class in your MOU during **Step 2**, use the list below to cross check against your list.

## Falls Boot Camp Resources

### Out-Patient Resources

.03 - .05 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for PT

.03 - .05 FTE for OT

Space for Class

2 Metronomes

Boxing Structure

Data Instruments

Nintendo Wii – Optional

### In-Patient Recourses

.06 - .1 FTE for PT

.06 - .1 FTE for OT

Space for Class

2 Metronomes

Boxing Structure

Data Instruments

Nintendo Wii – Optional



**Tip:** Utilize equipment available in your local physical therapy gym (i.e. foam mats, inflatable hoops and balls, chairs, and/or foam balance bars). Resources from the gym can be used for balance course and dual tasking stations.




**Remember:** You may not need all the resources listed to host your own class! Many of these have alternatives or even can be considered “extra”.



## Step 5: Customize Materials

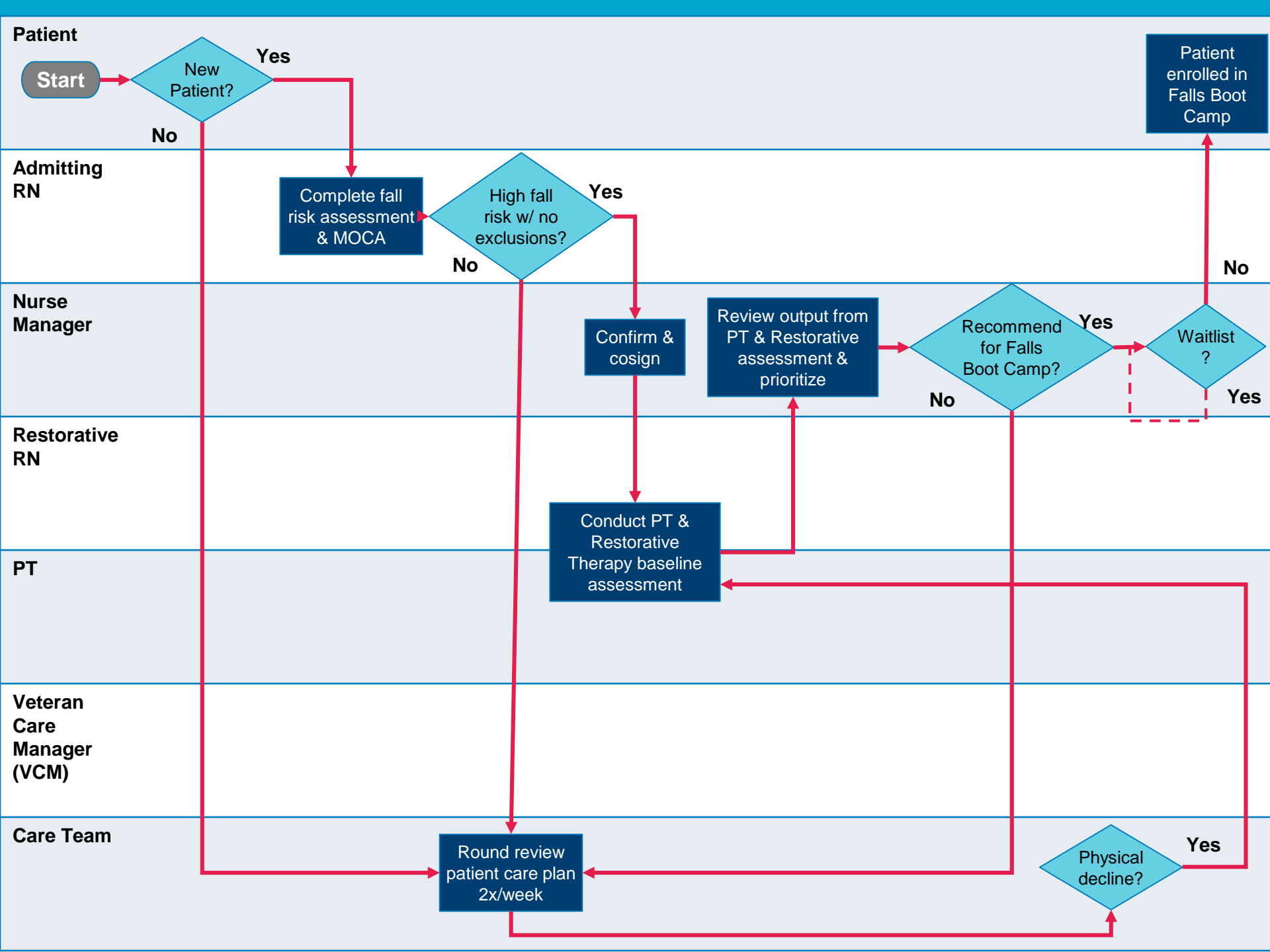
# CUSTOMIZE MATERIALS

In this step, the Interdisciplinary Team will begin to customize Falls Boot Camp materials for their facility. The following materials can be used and edited to enable implementation of the Practice:

Evaluation Templates	 FBC EVAL and REEVAL TEMPLATE
Patient Brochure	 Patient Brochure
Provider-facing One-pager	 Provider One-Pager
In-patient Process Map	In-patient process map example provided on slide 20
Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)	Coming soon



Note, not every facility's materials will not be the same. The templates and examples provided are to be used as a guide and materials should be updated per your facility's resources and availability of staff.





## Step 6: Train Staff

# TRAIN STAFF

Developing and executing the training for this Practice is a simple process. It is important to discuss and document how the workflow of interdisciplinary team involved in implementation will change. Consider using the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and/or other comparable document or presentation that can be shared with stakeholders and participating staff).



The originating facility at VA Central Iowa Health Care System hosts a “train the trainer” mentorship for facilities implementing Falls Boot Camp. The mentorship pairs staff from discipline to discipline to share experience and expertise while implementing Falls Boot Camp.

If your facility is interested in the mentorship please email Rebecca Hayden, PT ([Rebecca.Hayden2@va.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Hayden2@va.gov)).



# Step 7: Veteran Outreach

# VETERAN OUTREACH

Be sure to use marketing materials at your facility to spread the word to encourage enrollment in the first cohort. **These materials may need to be approved by your facility, so be sure to provide them for review far enough in advance.**

Make sure nursing, PT, and OT staff, who are responsible for the initial falls risk assessments, are aware of the program and have a plan to refer Veterans to Falls Boot Camp at your facility. Also, notify your facility's designated Medical Support Assistant (MSA) and/or scheduling department for PT and OT to help with scheduling Veterans for Falls Boot Camp. Other tips that you can do to bring awareness to the program and gain provider referrals are the following:

- Presentation to Primary Care for out-patient outreach
- Engage Interdisciplinary Team meetings for inpatient outreach
- Host brief shift trainings for nursing staff



Tip: Utilize materials you customized in **Step 5**, such as the patient brochure, as tool to promote Falls Boot Camp to patients that come into your facility.





# Step 8: Set-up Space and Equipment

# SET-UP SPACE AND EQUIPMENT

Prior to this step, you secured all resources for Falls Boot Camp and identified a designated space for the class. Due to the changing nature of the stations during each class, be sure to allot sufficient set-up time for you and your staff.

## Space Set-up

You may set up the room according to the four key subjects of Falls Boot Camp which include:

- Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation (Walking to the beat of the music)
- Balance (Nintendo Wii)
- Power and Multi-Tasking (Cognition, Obstacle Course, Boxing) **\*\*rotating station\*\***/changes each class
- Tai Chi

## Equipment Set-up

Setting up the equipment for each station should be simple. Follow the instructions that come with the equipment for guidance on proper set up. If you need support for technical equipment like the Nintendo Wii, please contact your facility's IT Department.

Also be sure to engage your facility's BioMed Department to review all technology that will be used for the class.

**Remember:** Organize the room and equipment according to your facilities space. Consider social distancing measures to give Veterans and staff enough space to move around during class.



# **Step 9: Develop a Data Collection Plan for Monitoring Feedback Metrics**

# DEVELOP A DATA COLLECTION PLAN FOR MONITORING FEEDBACK METRICS

Implementing new practices into preexisting workflows can be challenging. Therefore, monitoring and collecting feedback is critical to

- 1) Ensure implementation is working
- 2) Identify problems during implementation
- 3) Promote continuous improvement

Implementation can be assessed through both **process measures** and **outcome measures**. We recommend using process measures to assess how the implementation is going for your team. We also recommend the use of outcome measures to assess the success of the program from the Veteran perspective.

## Ideas for process measures:

- Number of Veterans who completed the course
- Average treatment time

## Ideas for outcome measures:

- Percentage of Veterans who positively responded to survey for Falls Boot Camp
- Decreased number of falls in Veterans who completed the course



Attached is a sample of documentation used at the VA Central Iowa Health Care System used to monitor feedback metrics.



Example  
Evaluation Metrics



# Step 10: Go Live!

# GO LIVE!

After staff is trained, the materials are finalized, and the room is set-up, your facility is ready to roll out Falls Boot Camp!

All the stakeholders involved in implementation should be a part of the go live date to kick off Falls Boot Camp for the first cohort of Veterans.



Tip: The Practice Champion should host a “hot wash” after the first class to debrief what went right, what went wrong, and what can be modified. This pattern, of hosting a class and hosting a “hot wash”, should take place consistently for the first several classes.



# Step 11: Interpret Data

# INTERPRET DATA

Facility-level patient experience data (e.g., SHEP, SAIL) is only reported quarterly, so monitoring the process measures chosen in **Step 9** will help you understand the effects of the program in real time.

Establishing your baseline data (i.e. where your facility is prior to implementation) for the process measures you chose. This will ensure you can detect changes as a result of implementing this program.

Based on the data plan developed in **Step 9**, create a progress tracking system that will work for you and your staff.







# **Step 12: Share Success with Stakeholders and Celebrate!**

# SHARE SUCCESS WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND CELEBRATE!

Be sure to share your success with leadership and other stakeholders to gain their continued support.

The celebration is of course an optional step, but after successfully launching Falls Boot Camp at your facility, you and your team deserve some recognition and celebration!

Regardless of the format you choose, it is important to celebrate the hard work put forth and the outcomes accomplished because this Practice directly enhances the experience of the Veterans that visit your facility.



Some examples to show pride for your facility is to make shirts, coins, share information at facility wide meetings, and present your facility's success in the community.



# Questions?

# QUESTIONS?

Do you have questions or need advice about implementing Falls Boot Camp at your facility?

Check out the [Falls Boot Camp Diffusion Marketplace page](#)!

Or contact:

- Rebecca Hayden, PT, [Rebecca.Hayden2@va.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Hayden2@va.gov)



# Acronym Key

# ACRONYM KEY

Acronym	Definition
VA	Veterans Affairs
PT	Physical Therapist
OT	Occupational Therapist
ACNE	Associate Chief Nurse Executive
RN	Registered Nurse
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure



# Acknowledgements

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