

R044: Assessing the rates and reasons behind falls and fractures of people with dementia in Northern Ireland - QUB

Dementia is a term used to describe a broad group of conditions that affect the brain and causes a progressive cognitive decline in the ability to think, learn and remember. At present there is no cure for dementia, nor a way to slow down its progress. The occurrence of dementia, together with the major health and social care burden associated with it, is predicted to increase considerably with our ageing population (*Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland, 2011*). Falls in the elderly have several consequences affecting the individual, their carer and the healthcare system (*Peach et al., 2017*). These consequences involve stress, pain, reduced independence, increased anxiety and negative impact on quality of life. The costs of falls in all elderly over 65 years old in the United Kingdom exceed £2 billion annually (*Peach et al., 2017*). Dementia is associated with an increased risk of falls and fractures because of the decline in cognitive abilities, such as memory and executive functioning. The most common causes of falls for people with dementia are instability, medication and environmental hazards (*Shaw, 2002*). This study will assess the frequency of and factors associated with falls and fractures causing hospital admissions for people with dementia. Moreover, we aim to provide valuable information to improve policy surrounding the prevention of falls in people with dementia.

Primary objective: To investigate the number of falls and fractures which occur among people with dementia in Northern Ireland.

Secondary objective: To assess the most common reasons why falls and fractures occur among people with dementia in Northern Ireland in comparison to people without dementia.