# Love your independence – working together to improve falls and fracture outcomes

*Professor Matthew Parsons*

We expected life expectancy to plateau about 10 to 20 years ago. It hasn't, it's continuing to go up, every day we live a little bit longer, that's important, it must be celebrated. However, old age has some challenges. One of them is obviously falls.

*00.26 Woman’s voice*

For ACC, falls are the most significant and costly cause of injury for those over the age of 65. We know that a fall can mean loss of confidence and potentially a loss of independence. For some people it can be catastrophic.

*Professor Matthew Parsons*

Around 30% of people over 65 fall over at least once a year. As you grow older – over 75, this doubles to 60%. So, given we will have a significant increase in the number of older people over the next 20 years and particularly a tripling of people over 75, this begins to have an impact.

*01.01 Woman’s voice*

Unless we do something to support people to live well in their own homes and remain physically active, the demands on the health system, including ACC, will be significant.

The fall and fracture system is where all parties focus on a common agenda, reducing falls and fractures and their impact. It's where we all carry out mutually reinforcing activities that bring together, or integrate primary prevention, secondary prevention and rehabilitation and measure the outcomes collectively.

That's what's going to make a real difference for older New Zealanders.

*Nan Robinson*

We're trained in what to do. What are the dangers that are there for you and how you can counteract them and become aware of them and get confidence, so whatever you do you are in control.

*Professor Matthew Parsons*

To stop people falling over or to reduce the risk of people falling over in later life needs not just one discipline, not just one person, but a community and a range of health services. It's complex and it needs to be complex in order to be successful.

*Dr Phil Wood*

We need to share the models of care so there is consistency of quality and that makes it easy for clinicians to do the right thing. We need to be prepared to share information better and learn from that.

*Dr Shankar Sankaran*

As clinicians, we need to drive this programme. We need to work with the management team to get these programmes underway.

*Benedict Hefford*

If we join forces we can reach more of those older people sooner to prevent some of those catastrophic events and help them stay well at home. We can definitely go further, faster together.

*Carolyn Gullery*

And it makes a difference not only for our older people, but it uses our resources in the health system much better and it also makes a big difference for society.

**ENDS.**