Falls Prevention Inquiry



Call for written evidence

1 Birmingham Health & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny

- 1.1 Scrutiny Committees are made up of ten City Councillors. Each Committee looks at decisions and ways of working to make sure that they are fair, are value for money and deliver the best possible outcomes for the people of Birmingham. For more information about the different Scrutiny Committees in Birmingham, you may wish to go to www.birmingham.gov.uk/scrutiny.
- 1.2 The Health and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Chaired by Cllr Susan Barnett, are undertaking an in-depth inquiry examining Falls Prevention. Committee Members want to explore how agencies are working together to reduce the risk of older people falling in their own homes, in the community, in hospitals and in care homes in Birmingham.

2 The impact of falling

- 2.1 The Department for Work and Pensions estimates that falls affect a third of those aged 65 years and over, rising to over forty percent of those aged 80 years and above. Falls are the most frequent and serious type of accident in people aged 65 and over and they are the main cause of disability and death from injury among people aged over 75.
- 2.2 Falls not only cause physical injury but also have a significant impact on people's lifestyles as mobility may be restricted as a result of injury or a fear of falling and people can become more isolated, depressed and dependent on support to meet their daily needs.
- 2.3 Falls also have a financial impact on services as they result in multiple A&E attendances, inpatient stays and increased demand on adult social care. The National Institute for Clinical Effectiveness (NICE) estimates that it costs medical and social care £2 billion every year to treat UK hip fracture cases alone.

3 Committee's key lines of inquiry

- 3.1 The 2012 Joint Strategic Summary Needs Analysis reported that Birmingham has higher rates of falls related admissions to hospital than the national average. The Committee wishes to explore innovative ways in which these numbers can be reduced to improve outcomes for individuals and reduce the cost to the public purse. Key lines of inquiry include;
 - How can partners work together to provide Falls Prevention services?
 - What innovative ways are there to reduce the number of falls in care homes and hospitals?
 - How do partners work together to minimise the negative impact of a fall on an older person and reduce the risk of future falls?



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- How are national guidelines being applied?
- What more could be done in Birmingham to reverse the rising numbers of older people falling each year?

4 Submitting evidence

- 4.1 The Committee would welcome written evidence and views on any of the above points. The deadline for written submissions is **12 noon on Friday 1st February 2013**. Written evidence should include:
 - A brief introduction about the individual or organisation submitting the evidence;
 - An explanation of any acronyms used.
 - Any factual information which might be useful to the Inquiry written in plain English;
 - Any recommendations for the City Council which could be usefully considered;
 - No comments on matters which are currently before a court of law;
- 4.2 Please note that the majority of Scrutiny Inquiries are held in public, so written submissions are used as public evidence. Ideally evidence should be no longer than four pages of A4 to ensure that it is concise and easily digestible for those that read it.
- Submissions can be sent to the Scrutiny Office by posting it to The Scrutiny Office, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham, B1 1BB or by emailing it to: louise.e.barnett@birmingham.gov.uk & rose.kiely@birmingham.gov.uk

5 What Happens to your Written Evidence

- On the 13th February 2013, at 11am, the Committee will be meeting in the Council House to discuss with invited witnesses falls prevention work in the City. You are most welcome to attend this meeting to observe the discussion. Five working days before the meeting your evidence will be put on the Democracy in Birmingham website and circulated to the Committee for their consideration and made available for the press and public to download.
- Written submissions will support discussions at the meeting and assist Committee Members in identifying key lines of inquiry.
- 5.3 The Committee will use all evidence to reach some conclusions at the end of its investigation. The group will then produce a final report which may contain some recommendations for change.
- 5.4 The Scrutiny Office will keep those who submitted evidence up to date with the Inquiry's progress and the final public report will be made available.
- Presentation slots will be limited on the 13th February, however we are keen to hear off organisations that would like to contribute in anyway to this inquiry as it is recognised that the inquiry will only be as good as the evidence that it receives. If you would like to discuss how you can get involved please contact louise.e.barnett@birmingham.gov.uk / 0121 464 7457.