



# Stepping On: Moving forwards with Falls Prevention

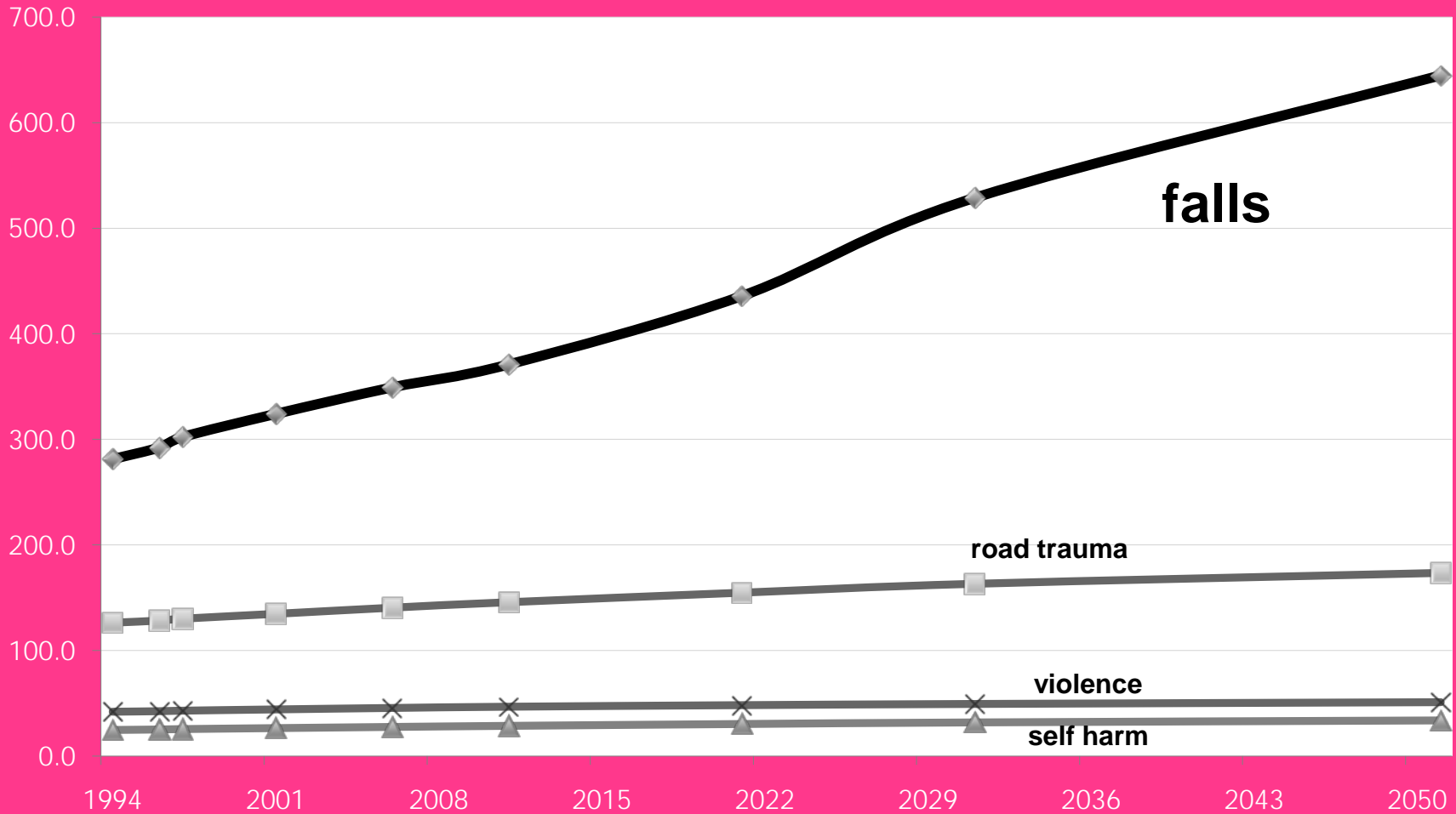
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# Background

- ◉ 1 in 3 people aged >65 fall each year
- ◉ In Australia, 18% of hospital presentations are a direct result of falls.
- ◉ Of these fallers, 43% are D/C directly home from ED without follow-up, or referral to relevant falls prevention programs
- ◉ More than half of fallers who present to hospital will have another fall in the following year.
- ◉ Falls are preventable!
- ◉ Falls prevention is a core issue for those working with older people.

# NSW Health Projected Costs 1994-2050

Cost \$millions

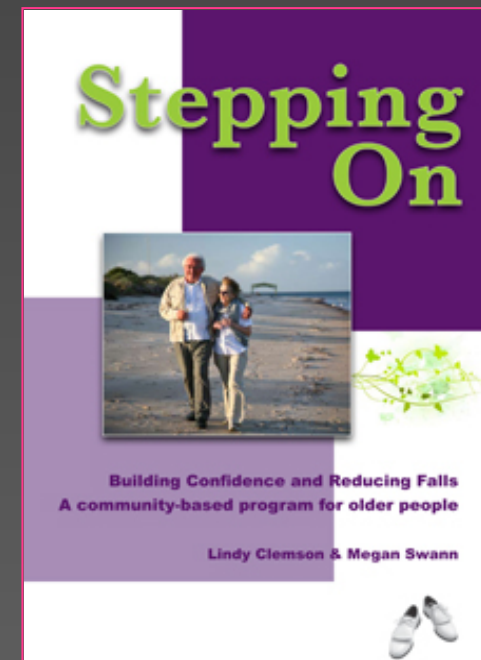


# Aim of the project

- ◉ Establish a sustainable model of care at POWH for older patients who have fallen, are at risk of falling, or are fearful of falling.
- ◉ Enable high risk older patients to access evidence-based falls prevention programs in a timely manner

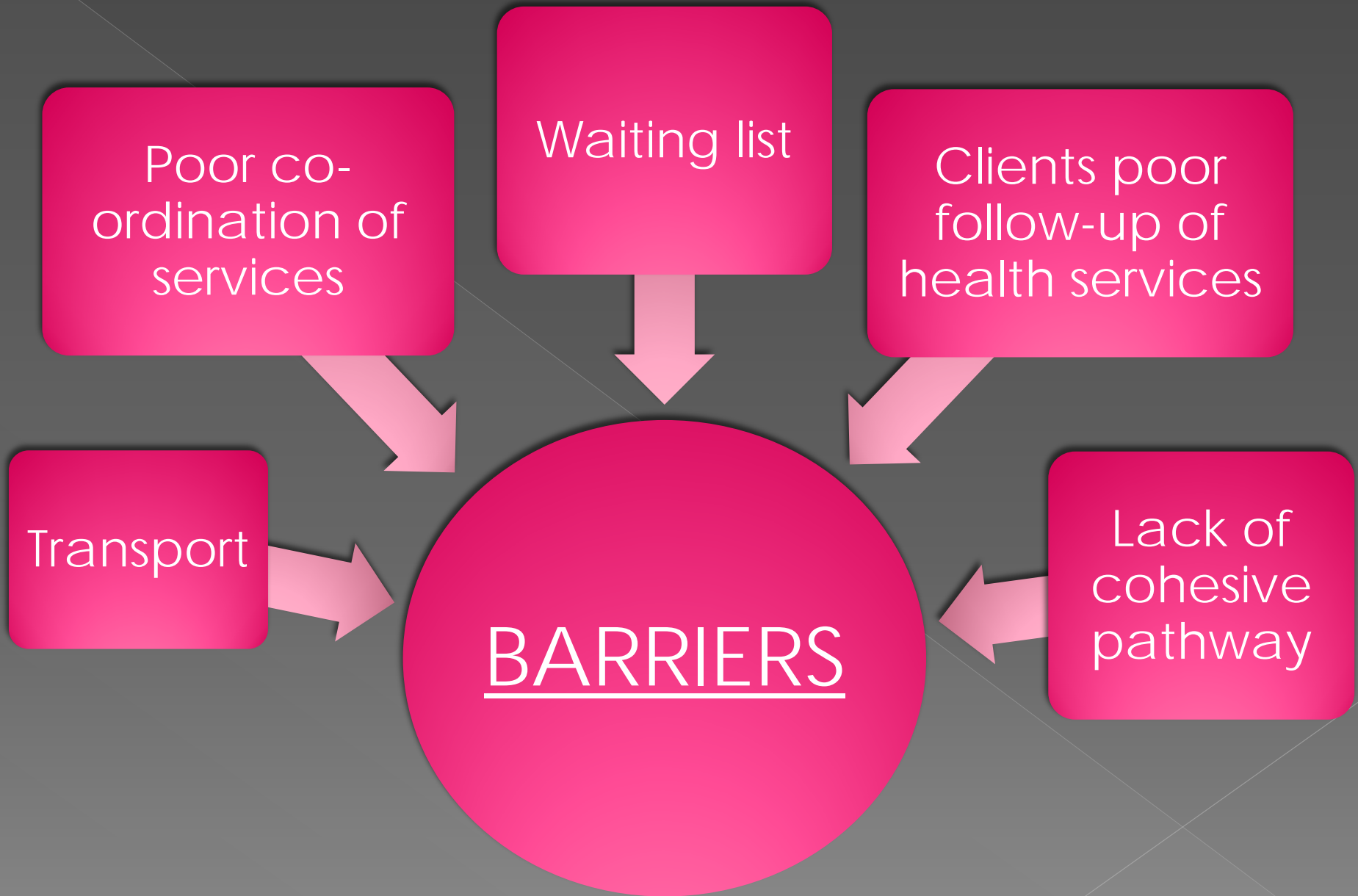
# Problem?

- ◉ High demand of the Stepping On program
- ◉ Increased referrals from various care providers
- ◉ Extensive waiting times
- ◉ Patients not being seen in a timely manner
- ◉ Barriers to accessing the program
- ◉ Demand exceeding supply for limited resources
- ◉ HIGH RISK PATIENT GROUP



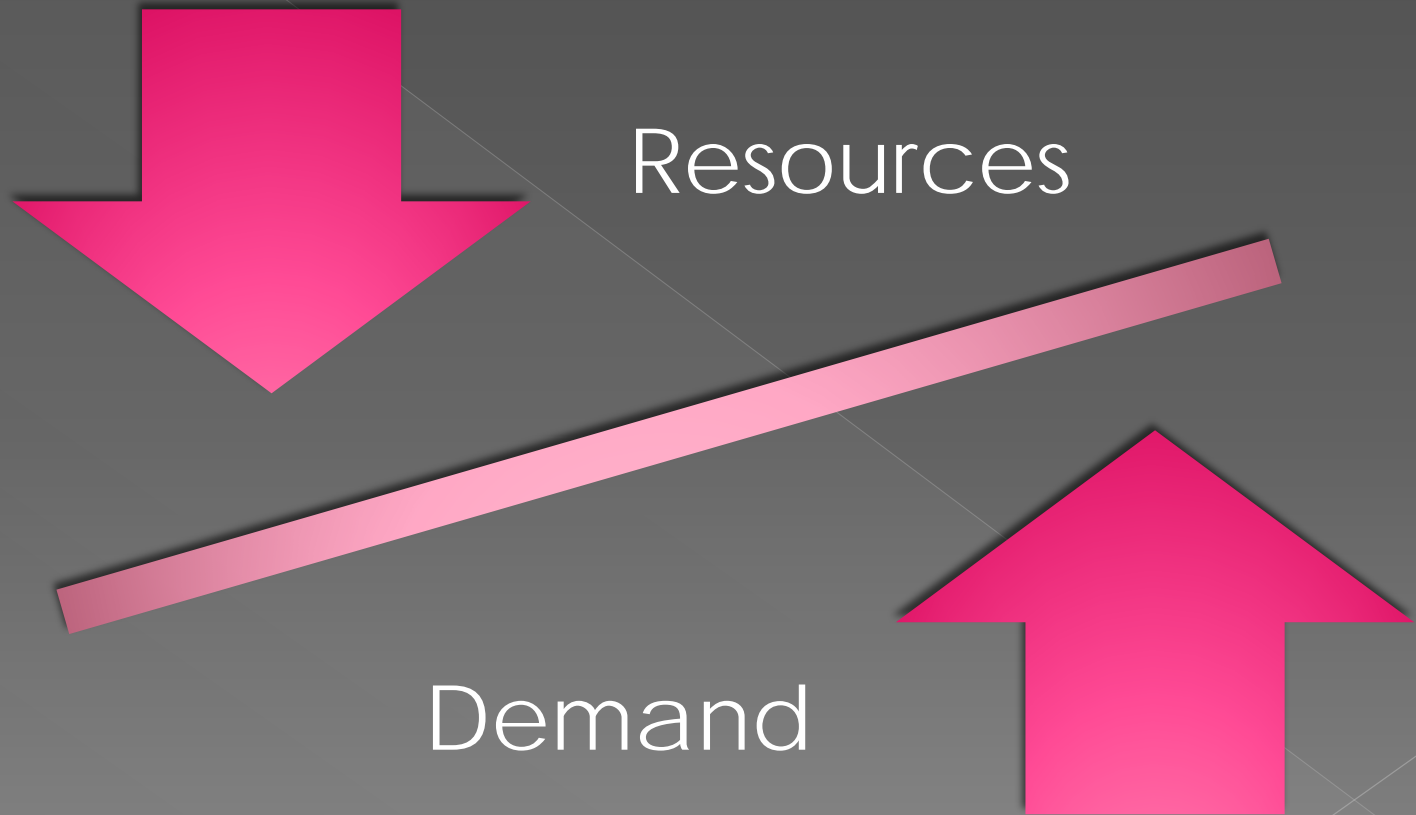
# Increased referrals...







# Demand exceeding supply!



# Consequences

- ◉ By the time a place in the group became available, often clients had:
  - Already fallen
  - Lost their confidence
  - Experienced medical issues preventing them from participating
  - Didn't understand the reason for referral or didn't know about the referral
  - Placed into residential care

- High risk patients at a higher risk of falls & hospitalisation due to lack of access to our health service in a timely manner



# What was the solution?

- Development of a sustainable referral pathway for older fallers

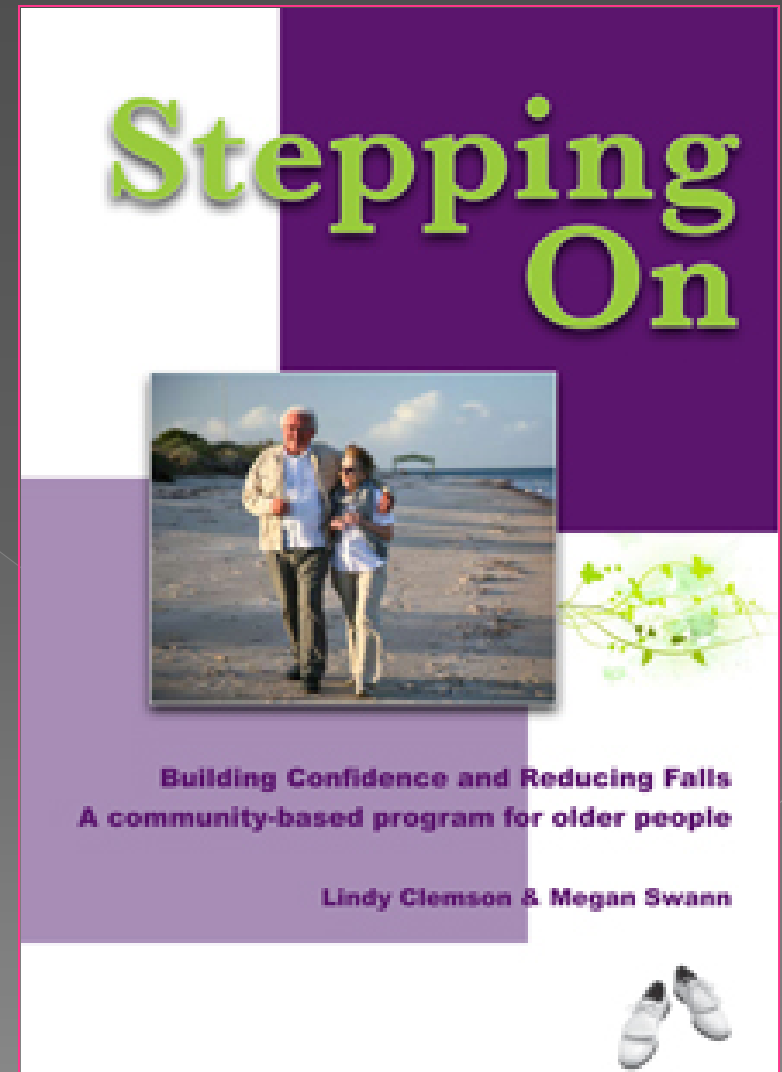


# Development of the pathway

- ◉ Stepping On started at POWH in early 2006
- ◉ In order to establish the program, therapists worked out-of-hours and found time in their existing work-load
- ◉ Support from the geriatrician-led falls, balance and bone health clinic
- ◉ Support from allied health management
- ◉ Extra funding as the program developed

# 0.4 FTE Occupational Therapist

- OT position created at end of 2006 to facilitate Stepping On
- POWH very lucky to have the co-author of the program on staff.



# 0.4 FTE Physiotherapist

- COAG funding to establish a part-time “falls prevention” physio in 2011
- Physio participation in Stepping On, maintenance exercise group & falls clinic





# Ministry of Health Funding



- Stepping On now endorsed by NSW Health, with funded programs being rolled out across the state
- Addition of MOH funding from 2011 to facilitate running costs of Stepping On
- Extra funding secured from MOH to pilot a community-based Stepping On program in Little Bay
- Recent addition of MOH funding for Stepping On administrative position



# POWH Falls Prevention Pathway

Referral to Falls Prevention group



7-week Stepping On program



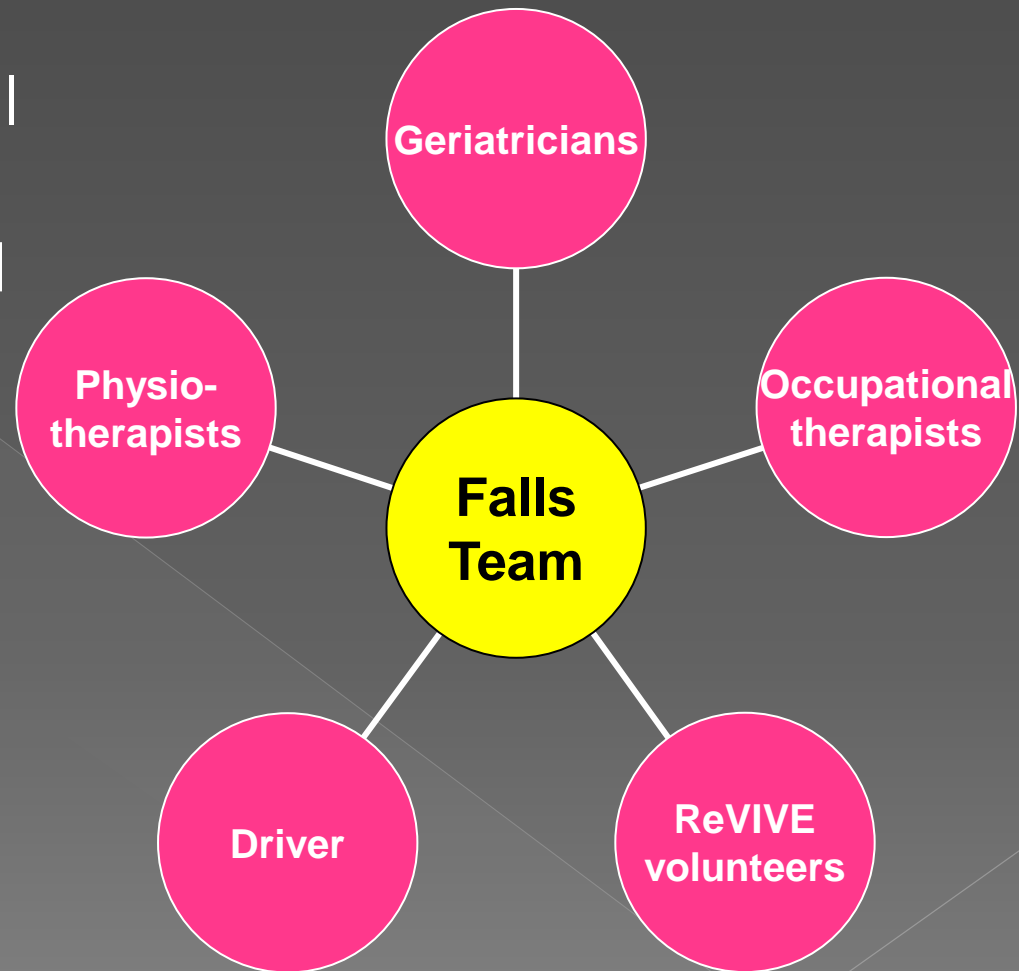
12-week strength & balance  
maintenance group



Referred to community-  
based exercise group

# Teamwork

- Teamwork is essential in the smooth running of the POWH falls prevention pathway
- We are lucky to have a dedicated team of health professionals
- Consistent, passionate staff



# Improving access

- ◉ Improved our system of organising & prioritising the waiting list
- ◉ Wait list cut down from 6 months to 10 weeks
- ◉ PT/OT working to co-ordinate & facilitate the Stepping On program
- ◉ Re-organisation of referrals and all paperwork
- ◉ Extra programs offered to clear backlog of referrals

# What have we achieved?

- ◉ Over 40 Stepping On groups have been run at POWH since 2006
- ◉ Since January 2012, we have run 7 Stepping On groups
- ◉ Currently running 3 maintenance exercise groups, with over 2180 individual attendances in a 12-month period

# Sustaining change

- ◉ POWH falls pathway is a successful and sustainable model of care for falls risk minimisation
- ◉ Currently functioning effectively in our local community
- ◉ Pathway is smooth, simply and easy to manage
- ◉ Transferrable to other hospitals
- ◉ Our experiences can assist other health districts to establish a similar model of care

# Future Scope



# Case Studies



# Mrs SW

- ◉ 83yo female
- ◉ Multiple falls, referred to falls clinic by GP
- ◉ Seen by geriatrician & physio in falls clinic, referred to Stepping On program
- ◉ Attended 7-week Stepping On program
- ◉ Attended 12-week maintenance exercise program
- ◉ Finishing maintenance program this week, referred to A.I.M program in Maroubra
- ◉ Keen to attend A.I.M with friend Mrs JD



# Mr BH

- ◉ 86yo male
- ◉ Lives with niece in Randwick
- ◉ Very frail and depressed, experiencing multiple falls. Mostly housebound.
- ◉ Very caring niece felt Mr OH likely needed residential care
- ◉ Had a fall, and presented to ED. D/C home that day, but referred to Stepping On by ASET team
- ◉ Attended 7 week Stepping On program, and ongoing maintenance program.
- ◉ Vastly improved confidence and QOL

# Questions??



# References

- ◉ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2012. "Report Profile: Hospitalisation due to falls by older people 2006-07 to 2008-09". Accessed June 19.  
[www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=10737421921](http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=10737421921)
- ◉ Clemson, Cumming, Kendig, Swann, Head, Taylor. 2004. "The effectiveness of a community-based program for reducing the incidence of falls in the elderly: a randomized trial". *The Journal of American Geriatrics Society*, 52 (9): 1487-1492.
- ◉ Russell, Hill, Blackberry, Dharmage, Day. Falls risk and functional decline in older fallers discharged from Emergency Departments. 2006. *The Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences*, 61(10):1090-5.