

## **September 21st - 25th Fall Prevention Awareness Week**

**Monday, September 14, 2009**

One out of three senior citizens will fall this year. Falls are the major contributing factor to 40% of all nursing home admissions. Falls cost our nation \$19 billion dollars annually and this doesn't reflect the emotional, psychological and catastrophic events that are imposed on family and caregivers. About 50% of those senior citizens who fall will fall again. In Texas, fall related hospital charges account for over \$508 million dollars. Statewide the most common cause of hospitalization was a specified fall (trip, slip, or stumble).



Because of these startling statistics, Governor Rick Perry signed House Bill 703 into law, creating Fall Prevention Awareness Week to be held September 21 - 25. The bill recommends programs and policies be developed to promote reduction of falls and create an increase in fall prevention awareness.

The Texas Falls Prevention Coalition (TFPC) has been coordinating and planning statewide events to promote fall prevention awareness to inform all Texans about this important issue. TFPC, founded in 2007, is comprised of the Area Agencies on Aging, community partners, hospitals, and other statewide stakeholders utilizing the fall prevention model, A Matter of Balance.

This program consists of eight interactive sessions which are offered at no cost to older adults. The classes can take place in various settings such as, senior centers, recreation centers, adult living facilities, and clinics. The program is aimed at helping older adults to conquer the fear of falling, increase their physical activity, and reduce fall hazards in their home.

The Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area has partner with several businesses to offer opportunities to the community to learn about falls and fall prevention. Ballet Austin Butler Community School is offering free classes the month of September called "Ballet Fit Basic". It is a perfect class for the older adult, individuals with balance or mobility challenges, and those recovering from injury! Curves on South Lamar is opening their doors from 10-12 pm on Monday September 21 2009 offering free tours, fit assessments and plans, and free gifts.

Fall Prevention Awareness carries out the message of Keeping Texans Standing Tall. The goal is to increase awareness of the importance of preventing falls among older adults by engaging in health promotion and disease prevention activities. Each day of Fall Prevention Week will focus on proven methods to reduce falls. These methods include: Physical Activity, Home Safety, Medication Management and review, and family awareness. Representative Patrick Rose will hold a kick-off press conference from the Capital September 21, 2009 at 10:00 am. There will also be a Tai Chi demonstration on the steps of the Capital following the press conference.

This is a great opportunity to age well and continue to be independent. For more information about the classes or events, please contact: Reuben Parrish at 512-916-6182 or by email to [rparrish@capcog.org](mailto:rparrish@capcog.org).