Fall Prevention interventions should be tailored to specific care settings and resident populations; healthcare workers need to be properly educated to ensure faithful and consistent implementation of these interventions.

Decision makers should ensure that any planned interventions can be feasibly delivered with available human resources, including OTs, PTs, and pharmacists.

The construction of new LTC facilities in various parts of the province provides an opportunity for decision makers to assess how the design and organizational layout of older facilities may have heightened, or failed to reduce, the risk of falls, and to apply any lessons learned to the design of new facilities.

Established care processes need to be examined (e.g., safe patient-handling protocols, least-restraint policies, and the prescription of behavior-changing drugs) to ascertain their impacts on the risk of client falls, and to take steps to harmonize any new fall-prevention initiatives with existing practices.

Client feedback, when regularly collected and analyzed, can help improve the success of interventions like hip protectors that require a high degree of client acceptance and adherence in order to be effective.

Given the confusion and mixed messages surrounding the safety and effectiveness of vitamin D and calcium, decision makers who wish to expand the use of these supplements may need to further educate clinicians and build consensus on their health effects.

Certain forms of balance training demonstrate real promise in preventing falls among LTC residents; decision makers may wish to stay abreast of the research in this area in the event that new and more affordable modalities emerge.

Given the groundwork that has already been laid in this area, decision makers should focus on ensuring that existing fall-prevention policies are carried out consistently across their respective regions, in part by continuing to foster a sense of accountability among providers, senior healthcare managers, and decision makers.

Read the full report here: http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/CHRSP/