

Program Overview

Background

Evidence indicates that fewer than 20% of hip fracture patients currently undergo diagnosis or adequate treatment for osteoporosis, and 80% of patients with a history of osteoporosis are not provided with therapeutic interventions. This increases the risk of subsequent hip fractures by approximately half. Research conducted in Alberta has demonstrated that interventions and follow-up markedly increase appropriate osteoporosis therapy for patients following a hip fracture.

The Program

The Fracture Liaison Service (FLS) provides dedicated personnel to help close this care gap and improve care for hip fracture patients. Alberta has eight FLS sites in operation across four zones with full provincial implementation expected over the next few years. Each of Alberta's FLS sites operate a 3i model as defined below:

- **Identification:** All men and women ≥ 50 years of age who present with a hip fracture will be identified in the inpatient setting.
- **Investigation:** As per 2010 Osteoporosis Canada Guidelines, those at risk will undergo appropriate investigations.
- **Initiation:** Where appropriate, osteoporosis treatment will be initiated by the FLS to assist in preventing future fractures and improving health outcomes.

The FLS program provides dedicated case management by a registered nurse and a physician (or team of physicians) with special interest in care of the elderly who assess patients for appropriate osteoporosis treatment and refer to appropriate fall prevention resources. The FLS monitors hip fracture patients for up to one year to assess any barriers with adherence to medication and to ensure they are connected to the community services they need. The FLS liaises with primary care providers so they stay informed about the patient and their therapy.

The Outcome

More than 3,100 Albertans have participated in the Fracture Liaison Service since 2015. An evaluation of the program demonstrated that per 1,000 participants enrolled, 37 future fractures are prevented including 12 hip fractures.

The Team

The Fracture Liaison Service was developed by Alberta Health Services' Bone and Joint Health Strategic Clinical Network in conjunction with the Alberta Bone and Joint Health Institute. It fits under the provincial Fragility and Stability program and is one of several initiatives aimed at improving the bone health of Albertans, along with Catch a Break and the Acute and Restorative Care Clinical Hip Fracture Pathways.