

Stable, Able and Strong was a national program sponsored by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists and the University of Ottawa, Occupational Therapy Program and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada.



National Coordinator: Mary Lou Boudreau

Stable, Able and Strong ~ The National Picture

Stable, Able and Strong was a support program for older adults who experienced a fall. The goal of the program was to enable older adults to maintain or resume engagement in meaningful activities at home and in the community. Stable, Able and Strong addressed fear of falling, personal, environmental and activity-related risk factors for subsequent falls, and strategies to safely resume daily occupations.

Stable, Able and Strong (SAS) trained local older adult volunteers to become peer mentors. These mentors then worked with older adults who had fallen to help them identify their fall risks and set goals to resume meaningful activities. The peer mentors enabled older adults to connect with existing health, social, and community services to help meet their goals. If gaps in local services were identified, the local Site Coordinator and peer mentors accessed a collection of resources to meet clients' needs. During the last months of the project implementation, the Site Coordinators worked towards establishing a solid foundation for the peer mentors by identifying local post-fall resources, and developing and piloting modules or education sessions on fear of falling, maintaining independence in daily activities, and other topics.

Stable, Able and Strong is proud to present the SAS Resource Database

The SAS Resource Database contains information that can help older adults and caregivers deal with injuries or fears after a fall, ways to prevent future falls and maintain activities that are important to people. Resources are available in English and French. The development of the Database has been ongoing over the past 1.5 years.

What information can be found in the SAS Resource Database?

There are two kinds of information listed in the Database:

- General information on risks for falls, home safety, assistive devices like grab bars and bath seats, nutrition, safe medication use, and many other areas
- Local information about programs and resources that are available in Charlottetown, Gatineau and Calgary. These were the 3 sites in which Stable, Able and Strong was piloted. Exercise programs, home care services and other local health care and social services are also listed.

Examples of the kinds of questions you can ask



"I know I should exercise more, but I'm not sure what might be available in my area. What kinds of activities are offered locally?"

Click on the key word "exercise" and the geographical area for your city. Find information on Tai Chi, walking clubs, skating and biking, swimming, and more!



"I'm worried about my mother's nutrition. Since my Dad died, she doesn't always eat right, and she seems to feel faint sometimes"

Click on the key work "nutrition" and find websites with information on nutrition for seniors and ideas for cooking for one.



"I would like information on bathtub grab bars to give to the clients I work with."

Click on the key word "assistive devices" and find a printable brochure that you can give out to your clients.



"I'm interested in learning about the risk factors for falls so I can make myself safer."

Click on the key word "risk factors" and find several good websites that list risk factors that can be altered to reduce the risk of falls.

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Where can I find the SAS Resource Database?

The Database can be accessed through the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists' website: www.otworks.ca Click on the link in the description of the Stable, Able and Strong project.

If you have any questions or comments about the SAS Resource Database please contact **Mary Lou Boudreau** (boudreauml@cogeco.ca) at **(613) 384-6633**.

Calgary, Alberta – Site Coordinator Margaret Usherwood

Stable, Able and Strong was hosted at the Confederation Park Seniors' Centre in Calgary.

Each month the Stable, Able and Strong display had a specific focus. For July-August the theme was "Falls and Osteoarthritis" and for September the theme was "Falls and Hearing and Reduced Vision."

Over the summer and fall, the Site Coordinator Margaret Usherwood presented a series of three sessions on Fear of Falling at the Bow Valley Seniors' Centre. They contained information, discussion and some simple balance exercises. The participants were enthusiastic. Presentations were also done for the Confederation Park Senior Centre, and for the occupational therapists, physiotherapists and rehabilitation aides at the Peter Lougheed Hospital's Rehabilitation department.

The Site Coordinator was interviewed for an article on fall prevention in a Mature Living section in the Calgary Herald.

Gatineau, Quebec – Site Coordinator Una Choi

In Gatineau, Stable, Able and Strong was hosted at the Centre des aînés de Gatineau.

Over the past few months, SAS concentrated on submission of entries for the SAS Resource Database, presentations to various groups of older adults in the community; and development of plans to ensure the sustainability of the project. The staff and volunteers at le Centre des aînés de Gatineau were very supportive.

A presentation for family members and care-givers was planned for September 26, 2007 at le Centre des aînés de Gatineau to discuss issues around older adults still living at home who have experienced a fall. Falls prevention, use of functional aids and medications were discussed.

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Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island – Site Coordinator Marie Brine

In Charlottetown, the program was hosted at the Seniors Active Living Centre. The Centre will be continuing to offer the Stable, Able and Strong program as part of its “Be Strong, Be Safe” initiative.

Marie Brine and Debbie Hood (coordinator of Be Smart, Be Safe) ran a workshop to provide more information on fall risks, how fall can affect people, and services that may be needed for 16 Seniors Active Living Centre (SALC) volunteers. At the end of the day, they invited people who were interested in being peer mentors to attend two further sessions. They now have 5 peer mentors who are ready to assist older adults who have fallen and their family members.

At the SALC open house, 50 people participated in a game of “Seniors’ Feud”, with questions focusing on falls and fall safety. The winning team received prizes, and all of the participants parted with more information on how to keep themselves safe and independent.

For more information contact Seniors Active Living Centre, CARI Facility Centre, 550 University Ave, Charlottetown, PE C1A 4P3 Telephone: (902) 628-8388.



Marie Brine and Debbie Hood with the new peer mentors from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island