

Delaware General Health District

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NEWS RELEASE

HEALTH DISTRICT PROGRAM HELPS SENIORS AVOID FALLING

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact Jesse Carter, public information officer, at 740-203-2085.

DELAWARE, Oh., May 21, 2009 – The Delaware General Health District’s next session of “A Matter of Balance,” the fall prevention program for seniors, will start on July 6.

Delaware County residents aged 60 and older are encouraged to take advantage of this program, which can provide services worth hundreds or thousands of dollars for free. And getting over the fear of falling might be priceless.

The Fall Prevention Program is an innovative partnership between the Delaware General Health District, the Delaware County Council for Older Adults, and Delaware Creative Housing.

Falls cause more deaths and hospitalizations among older people than any other injury, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2004, 14,900 people 65 and older died from injuries from unintentional falls. That same year, 1.8 million Americans 65 and older were treated in emergency rooms for falls, and more than 433,000 were hospitalized.

The Delaware Fall Prevention Program will send experts into the homes of older residents to assist them in preventing falls. A Health District nurse will check on the residents’ medical conditions and medications to help assess individuals’ fall risks. A registered sanitarian from the Health District will assess tripping and falling hazards inside the home.

If home improvements such as grab bars or handrails are determined to be needed, Delaware Creative Housing can install them. The services are being funded by the COA, and in many cases there will be no expense to clients.

The fear of falling is a very real issue. To address that, clients who receive home assessments also will be asked to participate in a program entitled “A Matter of Balance”.

The course provides information and important exercises which will assist participants in improving their balance and therefore decrease the likelihood of falling.

“In the sessions we have conducted since last year, we have seen people whose activities were previously limited by the fear of falling. They were able to take control over risk factors and gain more confidence to go about their daily lives without that fear,” said Susan Sutherland R.S. of the Health District staff.

To sign up for the Fall Prevention Program, contact Connie Frambes R.N. at the Delaware General Health District at 740-203-2040.