

Occupational therapist led environmental assessment and modification to prevent falls: Review of current practice in an Australian rural health service district

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Background

- Effectiveness of OT led **environmental assessment and modification** (EAM)
- Incorporated into national and international falls prevention guidelines
- Not being implemented in practice

Aim

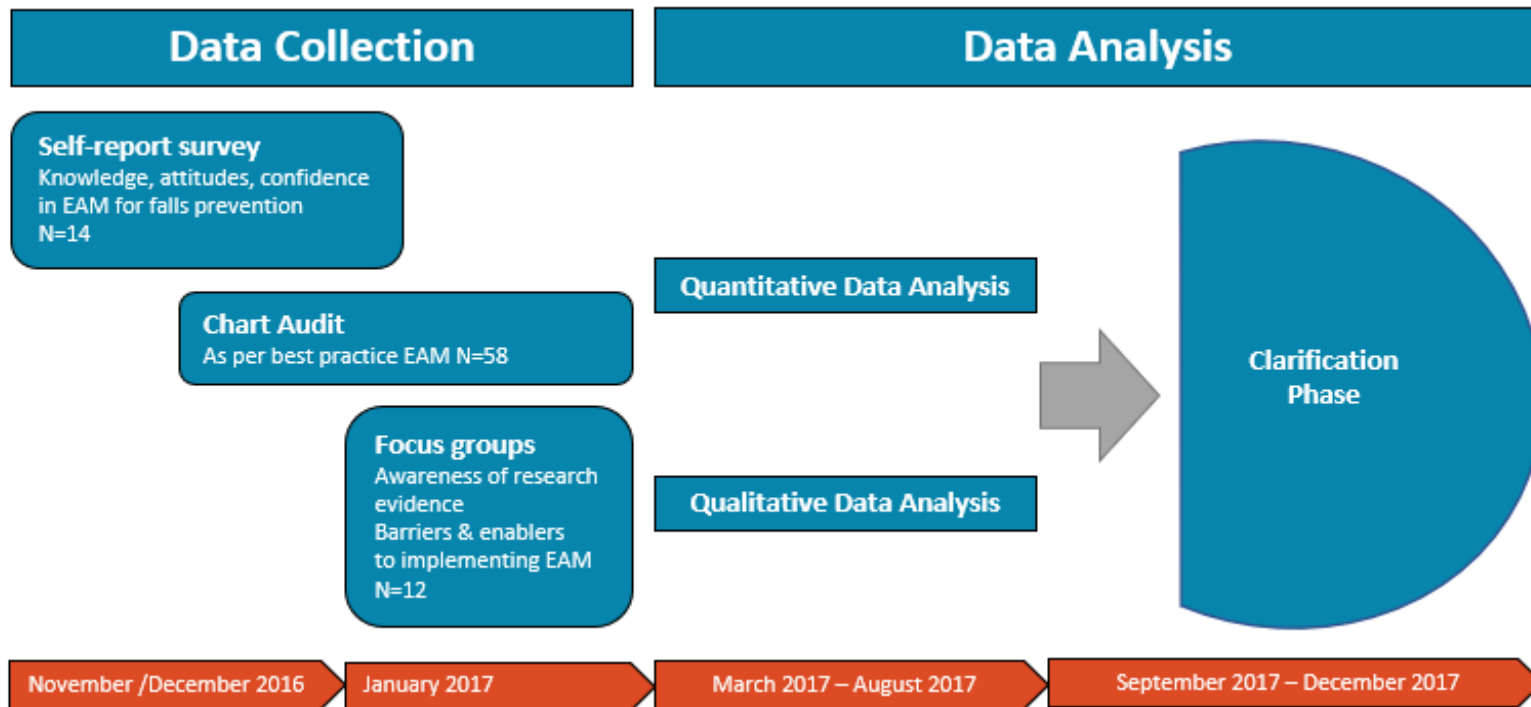
- To identify factors that support the local adoption of best practice EAM within a regional / rural health service

Research Question:

What is current occupational therapy practice for falls prevention and what are the barriers and enablers for the adoption of best practice EAM within a regional and rural health service?

Methods

- Concurrent mixed methods approach
- iPARIHS framework



Focus Groups ...

... I think there isn't a lot of research yet. . . So many variable[s] that impact on falls prevention. . .

It's (EAM) part of our core skills and core business, really, because no one else - no other professions do that to the extent that we do it.

I'd say we've got a really good core group of experienced occupational therapists who do this (EAM) as their day-to-day business.

Results

- **Survey:** OTs aware of, confident in, and experienced with EAM
- **Audit:** None of the patients received a high intensity intervention for falls prevention
- **FG themes:** Confidence in, and awareness of evidence; knowledge and support from colleagues, referrers, patients and the organisation; time, cost and resources

Conclusion

- OTs reported that they carried out best practice EAM for falls prevention but the medical chart audit provided no evidence of this happening in practice

What next?

- TRIP-OT EAM research project in 2 regional / rural HHSs commencing August 2019

References:

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2. Clemson, L., Mackenzie, L., Ballinger, C., Close, J., & Cumming, R. G. (2008). Environmental interventions to prevent falls in community-dwelling older people: A meta-analysis of randomized trials. *Journal of Ageing and Health*, 20(8), 954-971. doi:10.1177/0898264308324672