The true cost of falls

Smart strategies for
long-term care facilities

MatrixCare®
by ResMed

It's no secret, minimizing falls helps your residents and facility

Falls are one of the most significant challenges in long-term care. **They're the leading cause of injury among adults ages 65 and over[1],** and every year they impact thousands of residents and leave long-term care facilities like yours facing increased costs, limited resources, strained staff, and disrupted operations.

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But it doesn't have to be this way. Understanding the true impacts of falls and practical strategies to overcome them can help protect your residents, your staff, and your bottom line.

1 Older adult fall prevention CDC's Injury Center uses data ..., September 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/falls/pdf/CDC-DIP_At-a-Glance_Falls_508.pdf.

Why falls are so common— and costly

Every fall that occurs affects more than just a resident—it impacts their family, your staff, and even your facility's reputation. When the stakes are this high, understanding the full picture of falls becomes crucial.

For residents in long-term care, falls are the leading cause of injury. Each year, 1 in 4 adults aged 65 and older experiences a fall.[2] This translates to millions of older adults suffering falls annually and makes this age group more vulnerable to injury.

More than that, falls can reduce residents' confidence and mobility, which can increase their reliance on staff and lead to more intensive care needs. These additional demands not only impact residents and staffing, but also facility's resources and occupancy levels.

ANNUALLY

25% of adults aged 65 and older experience a fall

2 Older adult fall prevention CDC's Injury Center uses data …, September 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/falls/pdf/CDC-DIP_At-a-Glance_Falls_508.pdf.

The impact of falls on your bottom line

The average direct annual cost of falls per location is up to

$380,000

meaning for operators with 20 or more locations,

that number can reach up to **$7.6 million** each year.[3]

The costs associated with falls are often greater than they initially appear to be. Each incident goes beyond immediate care and has ripple effects on revenue, staff workload, and operational flow.

Falls can result in hospitalizations or extended medical care, which can lead to temporary or even permanent resident move-outs. Each unoccupied bed represents lost revenue, as the facility incurs fixed costs without receiving resident fees. For some facilities, even brief resident absences can be financially challenging.

Administrative tasks related to resident discharges and readmissions also add to the burden. Coordinating these transitions requires extra staff time and resources that might otherwise be directed toward resident care.

3 Bonvissuto, Kimberly. "Resident Falls Cost Providers $380,000 per Year, on Average: Report." McKnight's Senior Living, September 28, 2022. https://www.mcknightsseniorliving.com/news/resident-falls-cost-providers-380000-per-year-on-average-report/.

The impact of falls on your daily operations

When a fall occurs, the consequences go beyond finances. Staff are immediately affected as well, from additional care duties to handling administrative work, all of which can increase workload and strain.

Increased workload on staff

Every fall means additional duties for caregivers and administrators alike. Staff must respond quickly, provide follow-up care, monitor residents more frequently, and manage documentation and care planning. These added responsibilities reduce the time available for other essential tasks and can contribute to burnout, impacting both morale and retention.

Quality metrics and financial repercussions

Increased fall rates can affect facility quality ratings, which play a crucial role in public perception and reimbursement rates. Frequent falls can lead to reduced reimbursements, putting further financial strain on facilities. **Falls among older adults result in about $80 billion in annual medical costs, with Medicare covering two-thirds of these expenses**[4] — highlighting the impact falls can have on healthcare systems and underscores the need for proactive prevention strategies.

4 Older adult fall prevention CDC's Injury Center uses data ..., September 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/falls/pdf/CDC-DIP_At-a-Glance_Falls_508.pdf.

Moving toward safer solutions

While the impacts may seem daunting, there is hope. Through improved care environments, enhanced staff training, and advanced data-driven tools, facilities can take a more proactive approach to care.

Let's explore actionable strategies you can implement now to help reduce falls and minimize their impact.

1

Create a safer environment for residents

With thoughtful planning and regular adjustments, facilities can create a safer, more supportive environment for residents and staff. Making strategic adjustments within your facility can be a simple but highly effective step in supporting efforts to help reduce falls.

Practical adjustments that make a difference include:

> Improve lighting throughout the facility

> Install non-slip flooring

> Install handrails in hallways and grab bars in bathrooms

> Keep pathways clear

> Provide appropriate mobility aids

> Conduct regular assessments

2 Empower your staff with proper training

Investing in a culture that prioritizes resident safety can help facilities minimize the likelihood of falls and improve overall care quality. A proactive, well-informed team is key to creating a safe and supportive atmosphere for residents and staff alike.

Training and proactive culture

Thorough training enables staff to identify fall risks and respond appropriately. Regular meetings and onboarding processes can help ensure staff understand safety protocols and available tools, stay proactive through open communication, and identify which residents are at higher risk. Engaging residents and families also helps reinforce fall mitigation strategies and encourages participation.

Learning from previous incidents

Reviewing past falls and identifying trends allows staff to implement targeted interventions that can help reduce future incidents. This might include increased supervision during high-risk times, like transitions to meals or during bathroom visits.

3

Leverage data and AI for proactive care

Advanced data insights and AI technology are changing the way facilities can mitigate falls. These tools can help identify trends and address potential risks in real time, giving staff the information they need to respond proactively. Integrating these solutions allows facilities to prioritize resident care, helping improve the overall safety and efficiency of care delivery.

Proactive alerts and trend recognition
Alerts staff to changes in a resident's condition, allowing them to make informed decisions to help reduce the occurrence of an incident.
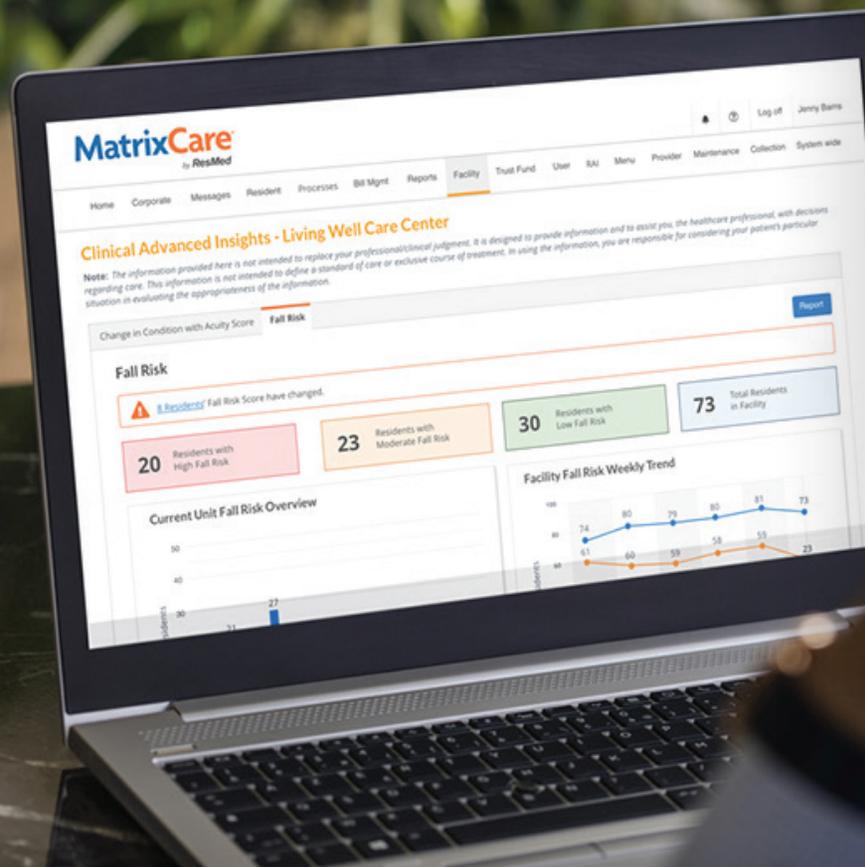
Streamlined monitoring
Offers access and insights into resident risk factors, helping to make it easier for staff to track changes and stay informed—especially for new or rotating staff who need quick access to resident information.

Targeted resource allocationg
Can help identify which residents are at a higher risk for falls, allowing staff to focus their attention where it's needed most.

A proactive approach through advanced technology

These actionable strategies offer long-term care facilities a proactive approach that can help reduce falls and minimize the impacts to their operations, creating safer, more efficient care environments.

And MatrixCare's Clinical Advanced Insights is a tool that can help make it easier. This advanced technology analyzes resident data to help teams monitor changing risk factors in real time, supporting efforts to reduce falls and rehospitalizations by empowering staff to make timely and informed care decisions.

Facilities using this data-driven solution have seen a 9% greater reduction in major falls compared to those using traditional EHRs alone, and there was a 22% greater reduction in the number of residents needing assistance with daily activities.[5]

The path to safer, more cost-effective care starts here. Contact us at **866.469.3766** or visit **matrixcare.com** to learn more about the power of data-driven technology in helping to reduce falls.

FACILITIES USING THIS DATA-DRIVEN SOLUTION-

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greater reduction in major falls compared to those using traditional EHRs alone

22%
greater reduction in the number of residents needing assistance with daily activities[5]

5 In an analysis conducted by MatrixCare of 218 nursing homes—94 using EHR with Clinical Advanced Insights and 124 using EHR alone.

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