H&H Care SA Pty Ltd

Falls Prevention and Safe Mobility

A Practical Guide for H&H Care SA Support Workers

This guide helps H&H Care SA support workers provide safe, respectful support to participants at risk of falls. It explains how to assist with daily activities and prescribed exercises, recognise changes that need reporting, and write clear case notes to ensure consistent care and follow-up.

1. Our Role in Preventing Falls

Falls can cause injury, reduce confidence and affect independence. A participant may be at risk because of weakness, poor balance, vision changes, dizziness, fatigue, medication effects or hazards in the environment. Several factors may contribute to one fall.

H&H Care SA support workers should help participants remain active and involved in everyday life while following their individual support plans.

Before assisting, know the participant's usual abilities, required equipment and level of support.

2. Check the Support Plan Before Starting

Read the current mobility and manual handling instructions. Confirm:

- Whether the participant requires supervision, one worker or two workers.
- Which walking aid, wheelchair, hoist or sling is prescribed.
- How to assist with standing, walking and transfers.
- Any restrictions or precautions.
- Which exercises have been prescribed.
- What to do if the participant falls or becomes unwell.

A **transfer** means moving between surfaces, such as from a bed to a chair or from a wheelchair to a toilet.

Only use equipment and techniques you are trained and assessed as competent to use. If two workers are required, do not attempt the activity alone.

If instructions are unclear or the participant's ability has changed, pause and contact the H&H Care SA manager or clinical lead for guidance.

3. Respect the Participant's Choices

Explain the activity and ask permission before touching or assisting the participant.

Use clear, simple instructions and allow time for them to respond. Use their preferred language and communication method. Difficulty speaking does not necessarily mean difficulty understanding.

Encourage the participant to do the parts they can manage safely. Avoid rushing or taking over unnecessarily.

If they decline assistance, listen to their reasons, explain the specific concern and offer alternatives. Document and report unresolved risks respectfully.

4. Prepare a Safe Environment



Before supporting movement, check the surroundings.

Area	What workers should check
Walking routes	Clear clutter, cords and other trip hazards, with permission.
Floors	Check for spills, loose mats and uneven surfaces.
Lighting	Ensure pathways and bathrooms are well lit.
Seating	Use stable chairs suitable for the participant's needs.

Area	What workers should check
Bathroom	Keep floors dry and prescribed equipment accessible.
Footwear	Encourage secure, well-fitting shoes with gripping soles.
Equipment	Check for visible damage and follow operating instructions.

Keep frequently used items within reach. Do not rearrange the participant's belongings without discussing it with them.

Report equipment faults and hazards that cannot be safely resolved. Walking aids and home modifications should be assessed by an appropriate professional.

5. Assist With Daily Activities Safely



Walking and transfers

Before moving, ask whether the participant feels dizzy, tired, sore or unwell. Prepare the route, destination, equipment and required workers.

During the activity:

- Follow the assessed technique.
- Give one instruction at a time.
- Use the prescribed assistance and equipment.
- Allow rest breaks.
- Stop if the participant's ability changes or the activity becomes unsafe.

Do not pull the participant by their arms or lift them under their armpits. For participants affected by stroke, follow professional instructions to protect the affected shoulder and arm.

Dressing and personal care

Support seated dressing where appropriate. Keep clothing and toiletries within reach. Avoid activities that require unsupported balancing or overreaching.

Toileting and showering

Offer timely assistance to reduce rushing. Maintain privacy while providing the supervision specified in the plan. Check bathroom equipment before use.

Community access

Plan for uneven paths, kerbs, crowds, distances and rest opportunities. Follow the participant's assessed instructions for steps and vehicle transfers.

6. Support Prescribed Exercises

Support workers may assist with exercises prescribed by a physiotherapist or other treating professional, within their training and role.

Check the current instructions for:

- Exercise technique.
- Repetitions or duration.
- Required equipment and assistance.
- Rest breaks and precautions.

Encourage participation without pressure. Do not add exercises, increase resistance or introduce balance challenges independently. Changes should be discussed with the treating professional.

Stop the activity if the participant develops pain, dizziness, unusual breathlessness, marked fatigue or feels unwell. Follow the escalation plan.

Record what was completed, the assistance provided and the participant's response.

7. Recognise and Report Changes

Report changes from the participant's usual presentation, including:

- Increased stumbling, falls or near misses.
- Needing more assistance than usual.
- New difficulty standing or walking.

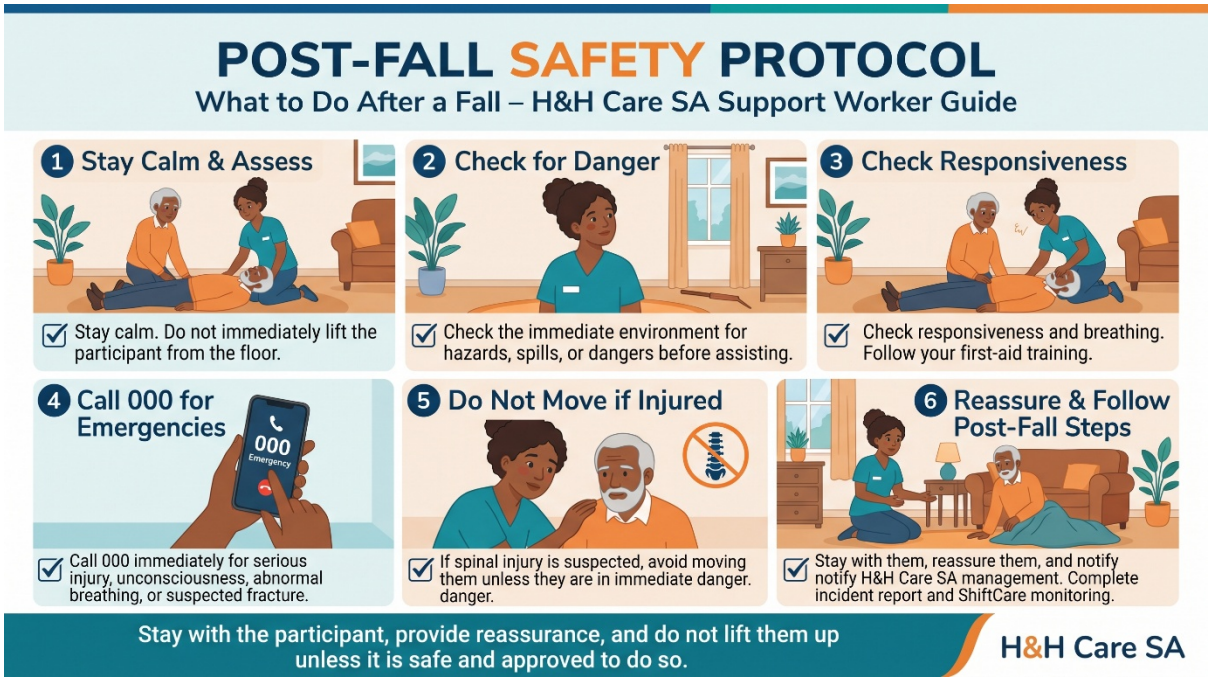
- Dizziness, unusual drowsiness or confusion.
- New pain, swelling or bruising.
- Reduced tolerance for activity.
- Fear of falling that limits participation.
- Equipment that appears unsafe or unsuitable.

Contact the H&H Care SA manager or clinical lead promptly according to the participant's plan and organisational procedures. Explain what changed, when it started and what action you took.

Do not wait until the end of the shift to report an urgent concern.

Call **000** for a medical emergency, including serious injury, collapse with abnormal breathing or suspected stroke. New facial drooping, arm weakness or speech difficulty needs immediate action, even if symptoms improve.

8. What to Do After a Fall



Stay calm. Do not immediately lift the participant from the floor.

1. Check for danger.
2. Check responsiveness and breathing.
3. Follow your first-aid training.
4. Call **000** for serious injury, unconsciousness, abnormal breathing, severe pain or suspected fracture.

5. If a spinal injury is suspected, avoid moving the participant unless they are in immediate danger or movement is necessary for lifesaving first aid.
6. Stay with them, provide reassurance and follow emergency instructions.

If there are no obvious emergency signs, follow the post-fall procedure and obtain appropriate advice before assisting the participant up. Use the approved recovery method, correct equipment and required workers.

Notify H&H Care SA management, complete the required incident report and document the event in ShiftCare. Arrange clinical review and monitoring as directed. Injuries may not be immediately obvious after a fall.

9. Write Clear Case Notes in ShiftCare

Record factual information promptly, including:

- Date, time and location.
- The activity being completed.
- What you observed.
- What the participant or family reported.
- Equipment and assistance provided.
- The participant's response.
- Who you notified, when and what advice was received.
- Any outstanding follow-up.

Avoid vague statements such as "walking badly" or "fine after fall." Describe exactly what happened. If an event was unwitnessed, state this clearly.

The examples below are illustrations only. Record only what actually occurred.

Routine mobility support

At 9:30 am, supported the participant to walk from the bedroom to the dining area using their prescribed walking frame and supervision outlined in the mobility plan. The participant requested one seated rest before continuing. They reported no pain or dizziness during the activity.

Change requiring reporting

At 11:00 am, the participant reported dizziness while preparing to stand. The transfer was paused, and the participant remained seated safely. The H&H Care SA manager was notified at 11:05 am. Advice received and subsequent actions: [details].

Near miss

At 2:20 pm, observed the participant's foot catch on a loose mat while walking towards the bathroom. The participant regained balance without reaching the floor. With their consent, the mat was removed from the route. The near miss was reported to [name/role] at [time].

Prescribed exercise support

Supported the participant with [exercise] according to their current physiotherapy plan. Completed [repetitions/duration] with [assistance]. The participant reported [response]. Any difficulty, reporting and follow-up: [details].

A case note does not replace an incident report when one is required.

10. Ensure Consistent Follow-Up

At handover, communicate changes in mobility, falls, near misses, equipment concerns and professional advice. Confirm who will arrange further assessment or review the support plan.

H&H Care SA workers should observe carefully, support respectfully, report promptly and document accurately.

Use this guide alongside each participant's current support plan, professional instructions, practical training and H&H Care SA procedures.