

## Report by Head of Health and Community Care

Council Meeting: 22 December 2021

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**Subject: Update on numbers of people experiencing a fall which required hospital treatment – Motion from Council Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present an update on West Dunbartonshire statistics relating to people experiencing a fall during the winter months, which resulted in a visit to hospital. This report was requested in the context of the additional resources allocated by the Council for additional footway gritting actions in January 2020.

### 2. Recommendations

#### 2.1 Members are asked to:

- (a) Note the information provided on Falls in West Dunbartonshire

### 3. Background

**3.1** Council passed a motion on 27 November 2019 requesting a report setting out proposals to deliver additional footway gritting actions outwith normal working hours. The measures implemented were considered and approved at the Council meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

**3.2** Additional footway treatment was implemented during the period January to March 2020 (12 week period). This included footway treatment working outwith normal working hours as weather conditions required. A further report was requested to detail the financial impact and evaluation of the measures undertaken. This was presented to Council on 30 September 2020.

**3.3** The Council also passed the undernoted motion:

“The Council welcomes the additional resource allocated to dealing with adverse weather.

Council also acknowledges that many falls occur throughout the winter months, resulting in attendances at the emergency department, and, in some cases, admission to hospital.

Disabled and elderly people are more likely to have a fall resulting in emergency room attendance or hospital admission. During December 2018 to February 2019, there were 227 falls by over-65s resulting in 51 hospital

admissions. HSCP staff estimate that 16% of these falls occurred outdoors.

A fall by an elderly person, as well as being traumatic to the individual, costs the HSCP £3,452 per hospital admission. This does not include surgery or the costs of social work etc.

Therefore, this Council, using its power of wellbeing, further agrees that a report should be brought to the next Council meeting detailing how treatment of pavements and footpaths can be extended to reduce falls by elderly and disabled citizens.”

#### 4. Main Issues

- 4.1 The table below show the number of falls recorded for the West Dunbartonshire population, which resulted in attendance at hospital over the last 3 winters.

##### Winter Months (Dec- Feb)

	18/19	19/20	20/21
<b>All Ages</b>			
A&E Attendances	734	707	364
Hospital Admission	73	55	41
<b>Age 65+ *</b>			
A&E Attendances	227	192	104
Hospital Admission	51	36	27

\*excludes residents of care homes

- 4.2 There has been a clear and significant reduction in people requiring hospital treatment as a result of a fall in the winter of 20/21. There was a 49% decrease in the number of attendances at A&E as a result of a fall by people of all ages in Winter 20/21 when compared with Winter 19/20. This was significantly higher than the 4% decrease between Winter 18/19 and 19/20.
- 4.3 For people aged 65+ ( not resident in a care home) the decrease in Winter 20/21 was 46%. When comparing Winter 19/20 to the previous year there was a 25% decrease which may evidence the higher impact of safer pavements for people in this age group.
- 4.4 The Covid pandemic will undoubtedly have been a factor and will obviously have influenced people’s behaviours. However, looking at a similar period in 2020 and 2021, outwith the winter months, when some level of restrictions remained in place, overall numbers of attendance did not vary significantly across the time periods in the two years.

**A&E attendances as a result of a fall**

	<b>All ages</b>		<b>65+ excluding care home residents</b>	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Apr	76	185	13	44
May	118	137	32	41
Jun	101	150	18	42
Jul	152	166	20	36
Aug	257	150	51	41
Sep	270	143	54	25
Oct	151	61	36	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>3145</b>	<b>3013</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>247</b>
		<b>-4%</b>		<b>+10%</b>

**4.5** This would suggest that a change in behaviour due to covid is not the reason for the significant improvement evident.

**5. Governance Arrangements**

Not Applicable

**6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

Not Applicable

**7. Risk Analysis**

Where an older person had a fall that results in a hospital visit, they are referred to the HSCP's Older People's Team for a full assessment.

**8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

**8.1** No equalities impact assessment was required in relation to this report.

**9. Consultation**

**9.1** Not Applicable

**10. Strategic Assessment**

**10.1** Not Applicable

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**Wards Affected:** All