



ProFouND: Prevention of Falls Network for Dissemination

DELIVERABLE D 8.4

Interim Stakeholder Open Meeting

Document Type:	Deliverable
Dissemination Level:	PU
Editor:	EuroSafe
Document state:	Final
Document version:	1.
Contributing Partners:	UNIMAN, GCU
Contributing WPs:	WP8
Estimated P/M (if applicable):	1.00
Date of Completion:	03/12/2014
Date of Delivery to EC:	03/12/2014
Number of Pages:	4

Report on the meeting of the European Stakeholders Alliance for Active Ageing through Falls Prevention, Campanile Hotel, Glasgow, Thursday 20 November, 2014.

1. Opening and introductions

The meeting was attended by 18 participants, including twelve participants representing eleven EU-level organisations (see list of attendees in annex 1). The chairman of the meeting (Wim Rogmans) welcomed all participants. He passed apologies on behalf of three partner organisations (AGE/ EuroHealthNet/ EUPHA), all of them having expressed their continued support to the initiative and the proposed declaration. He also passed apologies on behalf of Chris Todd who is currently spending his sabbatical in Australia, and in this meeting was represented by Dawn Skelton.

In a round table, participants briefly presented themselves, their organisations and current activities of their organisations in the fields of cure, care and social services delivered to older people. It was concluded that the diversity of participating stakeholder organisations reflects well the wide range of professions that are relevant for enhancing safety of older people and falls prevention. A special word of welcome was addressed to the organisations of informal carers and of mutual benefit societies (insurers) who were not able to attend the first meeting in Brussels.

The meeting made a few additional suggestions for organisations to invite such as the European Patients' Forum (EPF), European Health Futures Forum (EHFF), European Network for Action on Ageing and Physical Activity (EUNAAPA), European Academy for Medicine of Ageing (EAMA), European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE), the Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC) and the European Union of General Practitioners (UEMO). It was also suggested to look for representation from the fields of gerontechnology, in particular design of consumer products, home environment and mobility assistive devices. It was also suggested to liaise with EU-level networks of nurse practitioners or community nurses (check whether these groups are sufficiently covered by EFPC). As time does not allow a further consultation process, these organisations will be approached as soon as the final version is ready with an invitation to co-sign the Declaration.

Referring to the Seminar on Falls Prevention held on 19th of November, participants complimented the organisers for its excellent programme of speakers and the quality of discussions. Half of the stakeholder organisations present had attended the seminar, and are of the opinion that it provided an excellent opportunity for interdisciplinary exchange and networking on the issue. It is suggested to hold future Stakeholder-meeting preferably in conjunction with other events organised by ProFouND.

2. Highlights of ProFouND activities so far.

The round table was followed by brief presentations by the ProFouND-team covering the main products and services that the ProFouND project is in process of delivering soon. In the discussions that followed, participants welcomed the tools that will become available by the end of this year, in particular the ProFouND Falls Prevention Application (*PFPA*). The tool will be of great help to non-geriatric professionals in particular who have little experience in fall risk assessment and prevention. The *PFPA* will be available in January 2015 and officially launched at the EU-Falls festival, 24th to 25th March 2015.

In addition to this, great interest was expressed in the cascade model training programme that will create a cadre of accredited exercise trainers across Europe to implement exercise regimens that have been proven to reduce falls amongst older people. As to the falls data collection component in the ProFouND project, the importance of better data was underlined, as well as a better understanding of the differences in health systems in Europe and opportunities to enhance the comparability of data between countries and over time.

3. Actions initiated by the Stakeholder organisations

The representatives from each of the organisations represented in the meeting gave a brief overview of actions initiated since the first meeting in Brussels, in February this year, in particular related to:

- Discussions on the issue to be initiated with own board members;
- Actions undertaken in response to Campaign package 2014;
- Possible initiatives to establish a coordination group on falls prevention within the umbrella organisation;
- Awareness of national or regional activities of members of the EU-professional organisation and possible contribution to resource identification; and
- Initiatives to identify opportunities for enhancing fall awareness in existing training curricula.

Almost all partners reported that they have informed the members of the Executive Board of their respective associations about the joint initiative and the proposal to issue a Declaration on behalf of the entire group. All expressed a strong interest in the initiative and some supported immediate actions such as, taking the issue as a priority theme for one of the existing working groups or establishing a newly created coordination group for developing the falls prevention issue within their association. Such coordination groups should facilitate the dissemination of information and action models to the level of their national members.

Additional initiatives taken by a number of stakeholder organisations over the past months include; the dissemination of information provided by ProFouND through the associations' web sites; newsletters; translations of guidance documents for the national members; pre-conference seminars and conference workshops being organised on the falls prevention issue in conjunction with upcoming conference events.

The ProFouND-team is invited by the stakeholder organisations to assist in the development of tailor-made information packages for the relevant professional groups in the EU-level network, as these divergent target audiences need to be given direct access to guidance and tools that are directly relevant. This especially for community nurses whilst for informal carers there is an additional need for basic information materials and guidance. All groups might also benefit from a well conceived set of webinars for training purposes.

Other actions stakeholder organisations are considering relate to; surveying the current level of activities on falls prevention among member organisations; encouraging publications in journals; ascertaining falls prevention to be included in (under)graduate training; and/or seeking opportunities for accrediting (or 'approval tagging') Otago trainers.

The chairman concluded that significant progress has been made since the last meeting. Thirteen of the fourteen stakeholder organisations, including the three not present, have taken up the issue on the agenda of their Executive Board which led in all cases to most supportive feedback from these Boards. Nine of the fourteen organisations have already assigned a dedicated group within their association to develop a plan of action for falls awareness and prevention within their association.

4. Joint declaration

The chairman opened the discussion on the draft Declaration by presenting the purpose of the document, the main target groups and the six action lines that the partners are invited to commit themselves to.

The purpose of the declaration is to express a joint commitment to create a breakthrough in attitudes of resignation among professionals and their uncertainties as for what really works in preventing falls. Therefore the signatories of the Declaration want to:

- Increase the visibility of the impact of fall injuries among senior citizens in terms health and social care expenditures as well as loss in quality of life and societal engagement;
- Advocate for long term EU, national, regional and local level facilitated community programmes for promoting active lifestyles and fall prevention among senior citizens;
- Support our national member organisations in integrating appropriate education and training modules within existing curricula for professional development and vocational training;

- Expand and further develop Fall Awareness Campaigns at national and European level.

Before opening the discussion on the document, the chairman invited for comments on the proposed title of the document and the name and acronym of the network. After ample consideration the meeting agreed on:

- Title: Active ageing through falls prevention;
- Name for network: European Stakeholders Alliance for Active Ageing through Falls Prevention
- Acronym: ESA-on-Falls

As for the main document, a number of changes and amendments were recommended:

- delete country comparison of mortality rates as evidence of prevention potential (variations are importantly due to differences in medical-sanitary performances and information gathering reporting routines between countries and to a lesser extent due to differences in prevention policies);
- include a call upon governments (and WHO/EC) to improve current mortality and morbidity reporting systems for monitoring falls and to promote the availability of more in-depth information on the circumstances leading to fall related injuries/ fatalities;
- delete a specific reference to the need to set up 'task forces' (better: 'coordination groups');
- add a few sentences on ageing, quality of life and falls prevention
- include a comparison with other diseases ('falls are more common than strokes')
- include falls as an indicator of frailty and as one of the geriatric giants;
- add an action point on monitoring progress of implementation of actions by stakeholders through annual reporting by the Alliance partners

It is proposed that the section with statistics will be downsized in the Declaration. However work on making the magnitude of the issue visible, will continue and it is envisaged to produce in the first quarter of 2015 a factsheet (and/or infographic) on the burden of fall injuries and fatalities within the EU/EFTA region. This will be hopefully ready for a launch at the EU-Falls Festival, late March 2015.

5. Next steps

All Alliance partners will receive within 2 weeks the next version of the Declaration, including all amendments proposed in the meeting. They will be invited to seek formal endorsement by the Executive Board of the association they represent in our European Stakeholders Alliance for Active Ageing through Falls Prevention.

We will welcome to receive the confirmation of formal endorsement by a formal letter from these Boards before the end of February. This allows the ProFouND team sufficient time to prepare the launch of the declaration at the EU-Falls Festival, late March 2015.

In the meantime, the chairman will contact each partner of the Alliance with the aim to assist in the planning of actions and identifying additional support that the ProFouND team might be able to supply.

As for the next meeting, all Alliance partners will be invited to attend the EU-Falls Festival, 24th and 25th March 2015 (at own travel and accommodation expenses). It will be explored whether it is feasible to organise a half day fringe meeting with Alliance partners the morning after the event.

It is also envisaged to have full day meeting with the Alliance partners by the end of 2015 in order to exchange progress of work and priorities for 2016. As the seminar and meeting in Glasgow drained the financial resources, it is uncertain to what extent that meeting late 2015 can be co-financed by the ProFouND budget but all partners will be informed well in advance.

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Annex to report on meeting, 20 November, 2014

List of participants EU-level Summit meeting on Fall Prevention in Older People, Second meeting of the ProFouND EU-level Support Group for Actions on Fall Prevention, Campanile Hotel, Glasgow, Thursday 20 November, 2014.

- Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME)
Jacques van der Vliet javandervliet@upcmail.nl
- European Forum for Primary Care (EFPC)
Sanne Snoeijs s.snoeijs@nivel.nl
- European Union Geriatric Medicine Society (EUGMS)
Hubert Blain h-blain@chu-montpellier.fr
- Geriatric medicine section UEMS;
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Stefan Krajcik stefan.krajcik@szu.sk
- European Fed. of National Associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology (EFORT)
Karl-Göran Thorngren karl-goran.thorngren@med.lu.se
- European Ass. for Directors and Providers of Long-Term Care Services for the Elderly (EDE)
Jean-Louis Zufferey jl.zufferey@odysse.ch
- European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (ER-WCPT);
Natalie Beswetherick beswetherickn@csp.org.uk
- HEPA Europe (European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity);
Ellen Freiburger ellen.freiburger@fau.de
- European Society for Quality in Health care;
David Somekh david.somekh@ehff.eu
- AIM, Association Internationale de la Mutualité
Erich Koch Erich.Koch@svlfg.de
- EuroCarers
Frank Goodwin goodwinfp@gmail.com

- ProFouND Team:
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 - Helen Hawley-Hague helen.hawley-hague@manchester.ac.uk

Observer(s) from EU-seminar participants:

- Tischa van der Cammen t.vandercammen@erasmusmc.nl

Apologies received from the following stakeholder organisations:

- EuroHealthNet
- European Platform of European Elderly (AGE)
- European Public Health Association (EUPHA)