

Consistent Messaging for Fall Prevention Education Outreach Toolkit

Consistent messaging is a **guiding principle** of the NC Falls Prevention Coalition (NCFPC) 2021-2025 [Action Plan](#). Consistent messaging ensures that resources shared by NCFPC members include appropriate, accurate, clear, positive, encouraging, inclusive, and empowering fall prevention language across the continuum of care.

This toolkit provides an overview of consistent messaging as well as guidance and resources for outreach to providers, advocates, caregivers and the general public.

NCFPC 2021-2025 Action Plan Guiding Principles

As we create resources to share with various communities and populations about fall prevention, we want to ensure that we are adhering to the Action Plan's [Guiding Principles](#).

Checklist for Consistent Messaging Guidelines:

Answer these questions and use the Guiding Principles checklist to create your materials to meet consistent messaging guidelines:

- Does your resource use positive messaging to focus on what can be done to prevent falls?
- Is the content accessible?
- Does your resource use plain language?

All materials created by the NCFPC will use a standardized format.

Consistent Messaging for the General Public

NCFPC recommends using fall prevention language from reliable agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Council on Aging (NCOA), as well as the Healthy Aging NC website (healthyagingnc.com).

The NCFPC recommends positive messaging, such as:

- Falls are not a natural part of aging;
- Fall risk is identifiable;
- Falls are preventable;
- There are simple steps you can take to keep yourself from falling and to stay healthy and independent longer.

Credit to the South Dakota Falls Coalition for inspiring the positive messaging statements and to the NCFPC Marketing and Communications Work Group for creating this document.

Consistent Messaging for Providers

Tips When Talking to Providers

- Emphasize their role & their impact.
- Focus on the role and capacity that providers have – for example, “You have a trusted voice.”
- Include the use of statistics. For example: the impact of falls on the healthcare system.
- Empower the providers you work with, let them know that their involvement has an impact in the work you are doing.

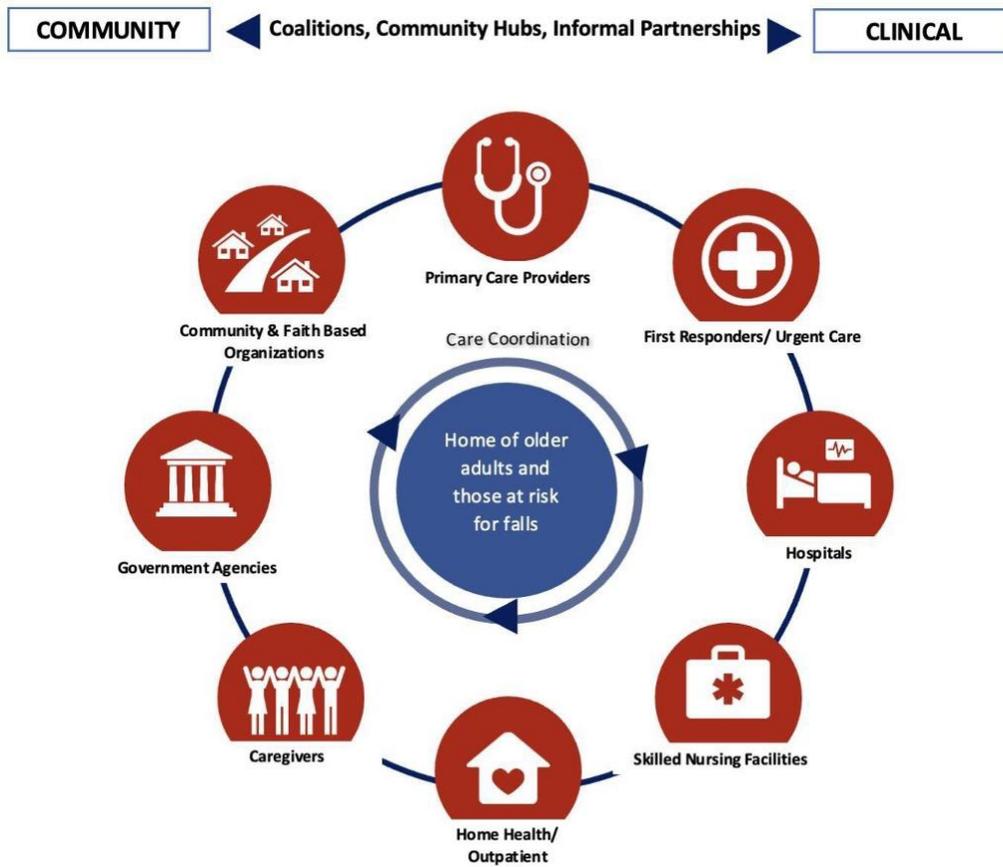
Examples of Messaging:

- Refer to the General Public messaging examples above to see consistent falls prevention messaging.
- Check out the resources at the end of this document for a full list of places to look with credible and verified fall prevention education resources.
- Example of Provider Messaging:
 - “Falls are a common and serious health threat to adults 65 and older. Every year, more than 1 in 4 older adults falls, but more than half of those who fall don’t tell their healthcare provider.”

Things to consider when starting a conversation with a provider:

- [Health Communications Toolkit](#)
- Consider this narrative when crafting messaging for Providers:
 - Who are the people involved?
 - What goals are they working towards?
 - What problems are standing in the way?
 - How will public health solutions benefit individuals and communities?
- Help providers recognize that older adults are a diverse population from all walks of life. Use consistent messaging to help providers recognize the need for fall prevention education in various communities/populations/older adults.
- When you want to discuss “virtual provider communication tools?”
 - Patient portal: remember that some older adults **do** and some **don’t** use virtual technology, more and more older adults are becoming tech savvy!
 - Encourage providers to take advantage of easy virtual resources and to find unique ways to communicate with older adults.
- When communicating with providers, remember to keep ideas concise, easily available & accessible, keeping with the workflow of providers.

Use this Continuum of Care Graphic from the NC Falls Prevention Action Plan Guiding Principles to identify types of providers for falls prevention outreach.



Consistent Messaging for Advocates

- [What is a Health Advocate?](#)
 - o “In the medical profession, activities related to ensuring access to care, navigating the system, mobilizing resources, addressing health inequities, influencing health policy and creating system change are known as health advocacy. Foundational concepts in health advocacy include social determinants of health and health inequities.”

Advocate Audience:

- Anybody can be an advocate!
- Senior Tar Heel Legislature
- NC Coalition on Aging
- Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging

Messaging for Advocates

- Check out this toolkit titled, “[Framing the Foundation of Community Health](#),” for insights on how to promote cross-sector collaboration.
- If possible, include personal success stories from your community.
- Discuss the general quality and value of life within older adults, the contributions of older adults, and why we should take care of seniors.
- Check out data for your messaging or presentation, you can look here at [NC Detect](#), or use data from a national platform data, such as the CDC (See “Facts About Falls” above).

Consistent Messaging for Caregivers

If you have an aging parent, grandparent, or neighbor in your life, helping them reduce their risk of falling is a great way to help them stay healthy and independent for as long as possible.

Resources:

- [Falls Prevention Conversation Guide for Caregivers](#)
- [Social Isolation and Loneliness for Caregivers](#)
- [CDC Caregiver Brochure in Spanish](#)
- [6 Falls Prevention Steps to Help Your Older Loved Ones](#)

Messaging Examples:

- Talk to your loved one's healthcare provider about fall risks and prevention. Get suggestions for programs or services that may assist your them. **Encourage your loved one to speak openly with you and their healthcare provider about their concerns about falling.**
- Make your loved one's home environment safe. **Most falls occur in the home.**
- Watch for and take notice of any changes in your loved one.
 - Do they seem to hold onto walls or furniture more?
 - Do they complain about new dizziness or trouble seeing?
- This could mean changes in health condition or perhaps a side effect of medications. Be careful NOT to confuse signs of depression as "normal" signs of aging.
- If you do not live near your loved one, be sure to check in daily or arrange for someone who can. Stay updated on their medical information. Consider keeping your own copy of their health records and insurance information.
- Nearly 15 million Americans provide unpaid care to an older adult. Caregivers who provide substantial care are more likely to have physical and emotional health problems. [Take care of yourself.](#) It is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver.
- Discuss financial planning and Power of Attorney options.

Resources for Reference:

We advise using these resources for examples and for inspiration for the most up-to-date falls prevention related information when integrating falls prevention

education into your resources and communication efforts.

Websites

- [NCFPC Fall Prevention Website](#)
- [My Mobility Tool](#)
- [Falls Prevention: National, State, and Local Solutions to Better Support Seniors](#)
- [CDC STEADI: Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths & Injuries](#)
- [CDC: Still Going Strong, Learn How You Can Age Without Injury](#)
- [CDC STEADI: Patient and Caregiver Resources](#)
- [CDC: Medicines Risk Factor Sheet](#)
- [CDC Fall Prevention Resources](#)
- [National Council on Aging \(NCOA\)](#) (a lot of printable resources)
- [CDC: Health Communication- Using a Health Equity Lens](#)

Brochures:

- [CDC STEADI: Stay Independent: Learn More about Fall Prevention](#)
- [CDC STEADI: Caregiver Brochure](#)
- [CDC STEADI: Check for Safety – A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults](#)
- [CDC STEADI: What YOU Can Do to Prevent Falls](#)
- [NC Falls Prevention Programs Brochure](#)

If you have any questions about consistent messaging, please contact the NC Falls Prevention Coalition through this contact form <https://ncfallsprevention.org/contact/>