

For Immediate Release

Date: September 20, 2017

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South Heartland marks Falls Prevention Awareness Day

Hastings, NE (Sept. 20, 2017) – Falls are not a normal part of aging, but they are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older Americans. That’s why South Heartland District Health Department (SHDHD) is partnering with the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and the Falls Free® Coalition to celebrate Falls Prevention Awareness Day on September 22.

The coordinated *Ten Years Standing Together to Prevent Falls* anniversary celebrations brings together older adults and their loved ones, health and aging professionals, and community leaders in support of fall prevention. Across the country, partners are hosting classes and seminars, performing thousands of falls risk screenings, and educating older adults about evidence-based falls programs.

“Falls prevention education can be life-changing, not just for the older adults that participate in these events, but for their loved ones, and even our community,” said Liz Chamberlain – SHDHD Falls Prevention Coordinator. “We are proud to support NCOA’s Falls Prevention Awareness Day efforts as part of our year-round commitment to supporting older adults in our health district.”

“Falls prevention is a team effort that takes a balance of education, intervention, and community support,” said Kathleen Cameron, Senior Director of NCOA’s National Falls Prevention Resource Center. “This annual coordinated celebration is an opportunity to look at the world around us, be aware of falls hazards, and take action to stay safe from falls.”

SHDHD’s Falls Prevention program consists of ‘Tai Chi – Moving for Better Balance’ classes and ‘Stepping On’ workshops. The 12-week Tai Chi classes help older adults improve their balance and reduce the likelihood of falling. “Research has shown that people who complete the program are half as likely to fall and are less fearful about falling,” Chamberlain explained.

The Stepping On workshops are nationally proven to reduce the risk of falls by up to 50%. “In just 7 weeks, workshop participants can be stronger and steadier wherever they go, and they can keep doing the things they want to do,” Chamberlain said.

In recognition of Falls Prevention Awareness Day, SHDHD is encouraging older adults to sign up for a class or workshop today. For more information about Stepping On workshops and Tai Chi classes offered in Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties, contact SHDHD at 1-877-238-7595 and ask for Liz.

To find out more about coordinated nationwide events marking the 10th anniversary of Falls Prevention Awareness Day, and NOCA’s work to prevent falls, go to www.ncoa.org/FallsPrevention.