



APRIL FALLS MONTH FALLS PREVENTION PROJECT

**Falls by older Australians is a little known, daily national tragedy.
Research shows falls can be prevented - and we want to help tell Australians how.**

The Rotary Club of Lismore West, with support from NSW Health and international experts, is leading the Rotary Falls Prevention project.

Twenty percent of Clubs in District 9640 (11 Clubs) hosted a community information table on Falls Prevention during 'April Falls Month' 2024. The Clubs were involved at short notice and held 14 awareness tables (one more still to be held in June).

The tables were held at locations including Bunnings, Shopping Centres, a Retirement Village and outdoor community markets. Clubs either acted alone or joined with other clubs.

Each table had signage, flyers, falls prevention products, night lights and a free raffle of the products. Where possible they had a balance check and attendance from health professionals and St John's Ambulance.



The goal is to spread a very important message: **Falls can be prevented and here's how!**

A balance check with the Rotary Club of Iluka-Woombah



SURVEY FINDINGS AND GOING FORWARD

We conducted a survey to get feedback on the project and how this can continue to improve. A summary of the main findings are:

- When asked **‘how important do you believe it is to speak to the public about preventing falls’**, 98% of participants responded either ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’
- 87.5% of **participants believed that Rotary should champion this message** and 91.6% said **their club was very likely or likely to host an awareness table again**.
- 100% of participants found **the supporting materials either extremely or very useful**.
- 91.6% of **participants reported interacting with people aged 60 years and over**.
- When asked **‘what worked well on the day’**, some participants said
 - *Community was very impressed with the chance to talk to a health professional and have a basic assessment (balance check) on the spot*
 - *Getting out in front of the stand and approaching people, with the brochures in hand, explaining who we were and what we were doing, worked well.*
- When asked **‘what didn’t work so well’**, participants said
 - *People thought we were trying to sell them something (a third of respondents)*
 - *Require a bigger sign so patrons are aware of what the stand is about*
- We also asked **‘what else do you think the committee could do/provide to help Rotarians prepare for hosting an April Falls Month awareness table?’** and were told
 - *Need to start early with the programme to educate the Rotarians first..*
 - *More publicity in the media before and after to raise awareness of these information stands will help us to engage with the public.*
 - *Pre display training*



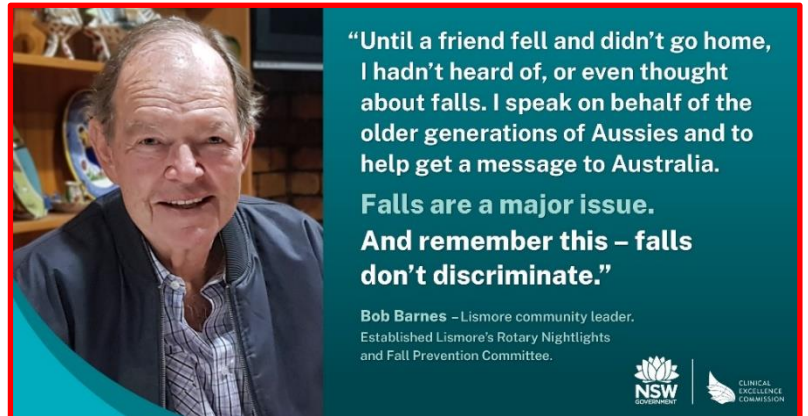


Burleigh



Ballina on Richmond & Ballina Satellite

Lismore Networking & Lismore Sunrise



This project involves working with leaders in falls prevention such as the Australia New Zealand Falls Prevention Society and NSW Health's Clinical Excellence Commission. Going forward, we will ask the Society for feedback, with a view to formal endorsement. We will also present the falls prevention project to Rotary's Regional Council to seek Rotary national endorsement. These steps are very significant for the development and direction of the project.

Ultimately, we want State and Federal governments to fund a major falls prevention awareness campaign. We hope a nation-wide campaign led by Rotary and involving local parliamentary members and media, will make enough noise to make this happen.

I am proud of our District's willingness to get behind the project at short notice and test the approach.

Please keep future falls prevention action in mind when doing your planning for next year.

As our population ages, promoting falls prevention is such a simple measure to support individuals, families and the community.

Yours in Rotary,

G. Hargreaves

Graeme Hargreaves

President, Rotary Club of Lismore West

Dave Harmon

District Governor for District 9640

IT'S BETTER TO PUT A FENCE AT THE TOP OF THE CLIFF THAN AN AMBULANCE AT THE BOTTOM