



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Taskforce marks National Falls Prevention Awareness Day with free event

Knoxville, Tenn. – The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) and the Knoxville-Knox County Senior Safety Task Force will celebrate National Falls Prevention Awareness Day with a free, educational event on **Friday, Sept. 22 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the John T. O'Connor Senior Center**, 611 Winona Street.

“Falls continue to be a major health threat for older adults. They often result in injuries and can even reduce their ability to remain independent,” said KCHD Public Health Educator Rachel Frazier. “But there are proven ways to reduce falls. And that’s just what we plan to share with seniors, their caretakers and adult children at this event.”

Attendees will have the opportunity to talk with a pharmacist about their medications and receive balance screenings, vision checks and information about home safety. Speakers at the event include Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett and KCHD Director Dr. Martha Buchanan.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2.8 million adults aged 65 and older are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries each year and more than 800,000 are hospitalized. One out of five falls causes a serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury. The direct medical costs of falls, adjusted for inflation, are \$31 billion annually. Locally, in 2014, falls were the primary reason Knox County adults aged 65 years or older went to the hospital.

Sponsored by the National Council on Aging for the past ten years, National Falls Prevention Awareness Day seeks to unite professionals, older adults, caregivers and family members to raise awareness and prevent falls in the older adult population. Partners in the local Sept. 22 event include BenchMark Physical Therapy, AAAD/ETHRA, AARP, Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office on Aging, Covenant Health, Genesis Rehab Services, Humana, Lions Club International, Praise 96.3 FM, Riggs Drug and SCHAS. KCHD convened the Knoxville-Knox County Senior Safety Task Force in 2008 to address concerns about falls in the older population. More information is available by calling KCHD Public Health Educator Rachel Frazier at 865-215-5175.

About Knox County Health Department:

The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is a governmental agency dedicated to making every person a healthy person. As the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, KCHD’s mission is to encourage, promote and assure the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices. The organization conducts disease surveillance, prevention and control; emergency preparedness; nutrition and physical activity promotion; tobacco use prevention; health equity promotion; immunizations; and much more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

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