

Fall Prevention Matters:

INSIGHTS FROM THE EMAS TEAM AT THE OLDER PEOPLE DAY CELEBRATION

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The Elderly Medication and Safety (EMAS) Research Interest Group from the Faculty of Pharmacy, UiTM Puncak Alam participated in the Older People Day Celebration 2024 on October 19 at Dato' Hormat Hall in Tanjong Karang, Selangor. The event, themed "Usia Emas Membahagiakan," or "Ageing is Happiness," featured various



health initiatives, including screenings for non-communicable diseases, cancer, and cognitive function, as well as informative health talks. The EMAS team, under the leadership of Associate Professor Dr. Mohd Shahezwan Abd Wahab, along with his team members from the faculty namely Mr. Muhammad 'Izzuddin Zamery from the Department of Pharmaceutical Technology, Dr. Janattul Ain Jamal from the Department of Pharmacy Practice and Clinical Pharmacy, and Dr. Aida Azlina Ali from the Department of Pharmacology and Life Sciences, were tasked with delivering essential fall prevention education to attendees.

Utilising standardised educational materials, the EMAS team informed participants about falls, associated risk factors, and potential complications. The sessions emphasised the importance of regular physical activity for maintaining balance and mobility while raising awareness of orthostatic hypotension as a significant fall risk. Participants also learnt about the importance of bone health in preventing falls and fractures, including nutritional strategies that support bone strength. Furthermore, the education covered how certain medications can increase fall risk and suggested effective management strategies.



Practical fall prevention strategies were highlighted, including the necessity of regular eye and foot examinations, appropriate footwear, and home safety measures to minimise risk. To assess fall risk, the EMAS team employed the STEADI (Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries) framework, utilising the “Three Key Questions” (3KQ) developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These questions—whether participants had fallen in the past year, felt unsteady when standing or walking, or worried about falling—helped identify those at elevated risk of falls.

The EMAS team provided education to 22 older individuals, aged 54 to 79 years, during sessions that lasted approximately 20 minutes each. Among the participants, 68.2% reported a history of falls, 31.8% experienced feelings of instability, and 40.9% reported dizziness when transitioning from sitting or lying to a standing position. Based on responses to the STEADI 3KQ, 86.4% of the participants were classified as being at risk of falling. These findings underscore the high prevalence of falls within the older population and indicate that many individuals are at risk. This highlights the urgent need for increased engagement from faculty members to identify fall risks and educate older adults on strategies to minimise their risk of falling.

The EMAS team's participation in the program made a positive impact on the community by raising awareness about fall prevention strategies for older adults. By focusing on the specific concerns and risks this group faces, the team provided participants with practical knowledge to help reduce their fall risk. This initiative not only improved participants' understanding of fall-related issues but also encouraged collaboration between healthcare providers and the community to promote healthy aging. With their encouraging tagline, “Be Ready, Be Steady,” the EMAS team hopes to inspire individuals to take proactive steps toward fall prevention.