

Mangar Health



Simon Claridge, CEO

Mangar Health is working with ambulance trusts, CCGs, health boards and care homes to improve official guidelines around falls. Empowering care homes with the right guidance and equipment to lift fallen residents safely will safeguard lives and save the NHS more than £50 million annually. Falls are a common and serious problem for older people. Indeed, people aged 65 and older have the highest risk of falling, with 30 per cent of people older than 65 and 50 per cent of people older than 80 falling at least once a year. As the UK population continues to age, falls will remain an everyday challenge for healthcare professionals. People living with conditions such as dementia, MS, Parkinson's and arthritis have a high propensity to fall, and it is estimated that more than 1,000 people a day living in a care home or assisted-living facility will fall. This is why inflatable moving and handling and bathing equipment are necessary – products which Mangar Health provides, and which its CEO, Simon Claridge, discusses further in the following piece.

FACTS ABOUT MANGAR HEALTH

- » CEO: Simon Claridge
- » Established in 1981
- » Based in Presteigne, Powys
- » Services: Design, manufacture and supply of inflatable lifting devices
- » No. of employees: Over 60
- » Every emergency NHS ambulance in the UK carries a Mangar ELK lifting cushion
- » www.mangarhealth.com

The nature and extent of the problem

CQC guidelines currently include comprehensive information regarding falls prevention. However, falls still happen, and reacting to them once they have occurred is the crucial stage. Care homes regularly call on the ambulance service to lift their fallen residents, even though more than 45 per cent are uninjured

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and do not require transportation to hospital. Pressurised ambulance trusts, charged with reaching high-priority calls within eight minutes, are routinely put in the position of needing to classify uninjured fallen residents in care homes as low priority. This means residents are frequently on the floor for up to four hours or more while waiting for an ambulance to attend. Concern has been growing across ambulance services, CCGs, health boards and care homes, as leaving someone on the floor for more than an hour is associated with complications such as hypothermia, pressure ulcers and kidney failure. Ultimately, remaining on the floor for more than an hour after

a fall is associated with high mortality rates among people aged over 65. Twenty per cent of patients admitted to hospital as a result of a fall have been on the ground for an hour or more, and 50 per cent of these will die within six months.

In addition, the financial impact of calling an ambulance to uninjured fallen residents is felt in the ambulance service and A & E departments. It is estimated that inappropriate ambulance call-outs to long-term care facilities are currently costing the NHS more than £50 million annually.

Our role in resolving the issue

Mangar Health launched the #UpLiftingCare campaign last year after ambulance trusts reported an unprecedented demand on their services to lift uninjured residents living in care homes. Mangar Health manufactures innovative inflatable manual handling equipment which is designed to support carers and healthcare professionals to lift fallen people safely.

The Mangar ELK and Mangar Camel are currently used by every ambulance trust in the UK and are designed to gently lift a person from the floor, while reducing the risk of injury to both the carer and the resident who has fallen. Using the appropriate lifting equipment, in conjunction with following advice issued by the ambulance service on when to lift a fallen resident, empowers care homes to lift their fallen residents and improve falls care.

West Midlands Ambulance Service created an algorithm called ISTUMBLE, which gives care staff clear instructions on what to do before lifting a fallen resident. It provides carers with the confidence to make good decisions around lifting. Dr Sue West-Jones, a

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Ambulances are regularly called to lift uninjured fallen residents

consultant in emergency medicine, fully endorses ISTUMBLE, saying: “ISTUMBLE represents a genuinely impressive attempt to address morbidity and mortality increases associated with falls. This is a groundbreaking practice and should be encouraged across all providers of elderly care.”

At Mangar Health we have partnered with CCGs, ambulance services and care homes on a pilot project to safeguard fallen residents, while reducing the cost of falls to the NHS. Pilot projects work with care homes to combine ISTUMBLE training with the use of lifting equipment, with the objective of improving resident care, at the same time reducing ambulance and A & E admission costs. So far, pilot projects in Manchester and south Wales have already proven to be incredibly successful.

Proof of success

Sophie Wallington, representing North Manchester CCG at the Pennine Acute Hospitals Trust, was one of the first to trial the Camel lifting cushion in care homes in the region. Sophie said: “It has been extremely well received by all the homes and they all report that the piece of equipment has reduced their calls to 999 for fallers.”

Daniel Kelly, manager at Chestnut House Care Home in Manchester, explained: “This equipment is an absolute godsend. We’ve used it 20 times at least, preventing 999 on every occasion. Residents are happier, families are much happier and the staff find it easy and safe to use.”

Another trial in south Wales has seen ambulance call-outs to a Bridgend care home reduce by 55 per cent in just two months. By working in partnership with CCGs, ambulance trusts and care homes, we can deliver a safer and more dignified standard of care for residents living in care homes. Of the over seven million ambulance call-outs across the UK every year, 10 per cent are to fallen people, and around 150,000 of these are to care home residents. Residents are generally reluctant to be admitted to hospital, as admission often results in distress, confusion and anxiety, particularly for anyone living with dementia.

It is now vital that CQC guidelines are updated to stress how important it is for care homes to use appropriate falls policies. Supported by our trade body, the BHTA (British Healthcare Trades Association), we are calling on the CQC to include clear direction on a falls policy that safeguards residents and reduces the impact on and cost to NHS services.

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