

2003-2007 Elder Falls Issue Brief

Two-thirds of NH residents over age 65 who suffer fall-related injuries are female. Within this elder age group, fatal falls occur most frequently in those 85 years old and older. Among hospital discharges, the 75-84 year old age group comprises about 40% of the elder fall related injuries.

Total Falls, NH Residents age 65 and up, by Gender, Year 2007

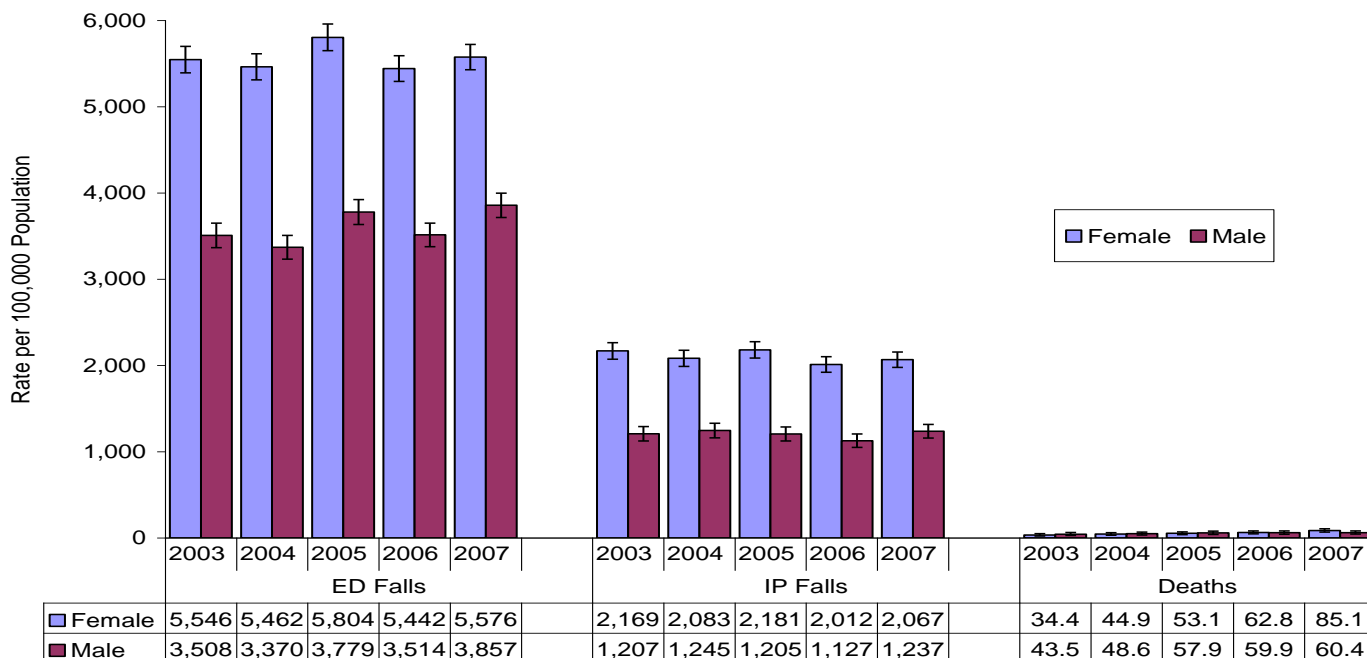
Gender	Death Certificate Data	Emergency Department Discharges	Inpatient Hospital Discharges
FEMALE	84 (65%)	5,026 (66%)	1,714 (71%)
MALE	45 (35%)	2,560 (34%)	692 (29%)
TOTAL	129 (100%)	7586 (100%)	2406 (100%)

Total Falls, NH Residents age 65 and up, by Elder Age Groups, Year 2007

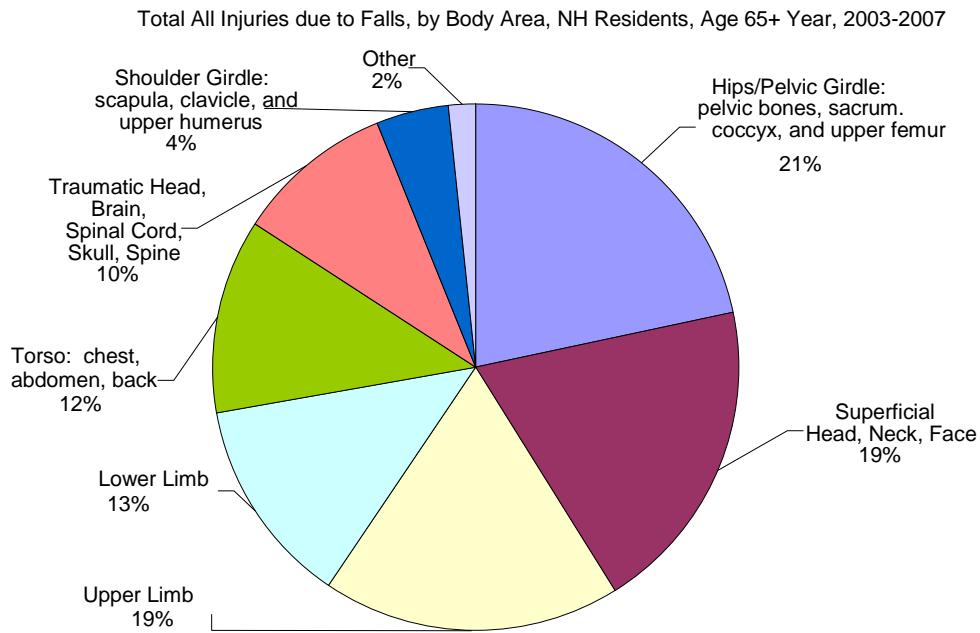
Age Group	Death Certificate Data	Emergency Department Discharges	Inpatient Hospital Discharges
65 To 74	18 (14%)	2,458 (32%)	513 (21%)
75 To 84	37 (29%)	3,000 (40%)	978 (41%)
85 Plus	74 (57%)	2,128 (28%)	915 (38%)
TOTAL	129 (100%)	7586 (100%)	2406 (100%)

Between 2003 and 2007, rates for fall-related emergency department visits increased significantly for NH male residents over 65 years old. There were no statistically significant changes in inpatient hospital discharge rates. Death rates due to falls increased significantly in the 65 and over female between 2003 and 2007.

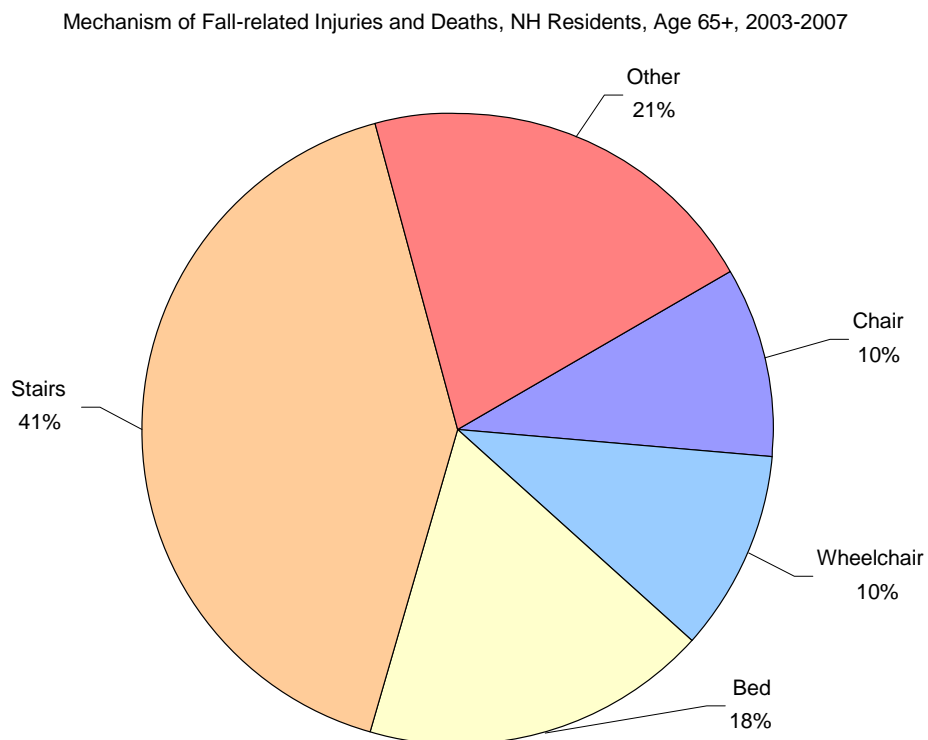
Age-Specific Rate of Falls, NH Residents, Age 65 and up, by Year and Gender



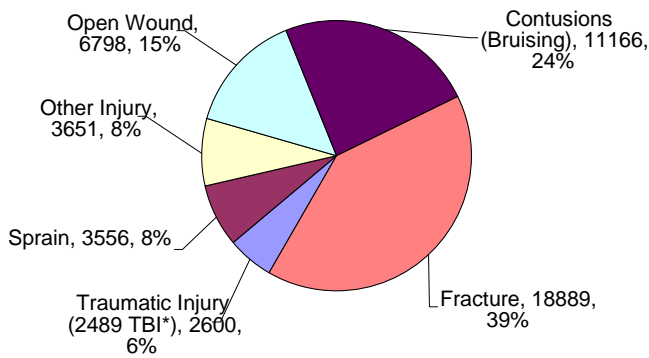
The most common area of the body injured during a fall on NH residents over 65 years old was the hip area, including the pelvic bones and upper leg at the hip joint. (The data for this pie chart includes all fall events from inpatient and emergency department discharges, and death certificate data.)



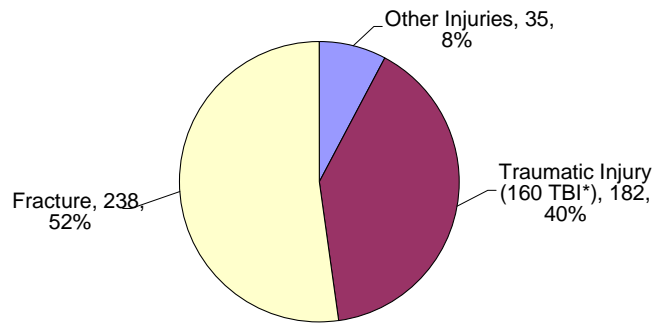
Eighty percent of the combined data sets, years 2003-2007, did not have detailed information on where the fall occurred. Of the remaining 20% (n=9231) with this information, 40% (n=3805) were on stairs, 18% (n=1,652) were falls from bed, 10% from wheelchairs (n=937), and 10% from chairs (n=908). The remaining 21%, comprised of much smaller categories, include falls from ladders, toilets or commodes, and while participating in sports, to name a few.



Fall-related Injuries, NH Residents, Age 65+, by Type of Injury, 2003-2007
(Includes Emergency Department and Inpatient Data)



Fall-related Deaths, Age 65+, 2003-2007

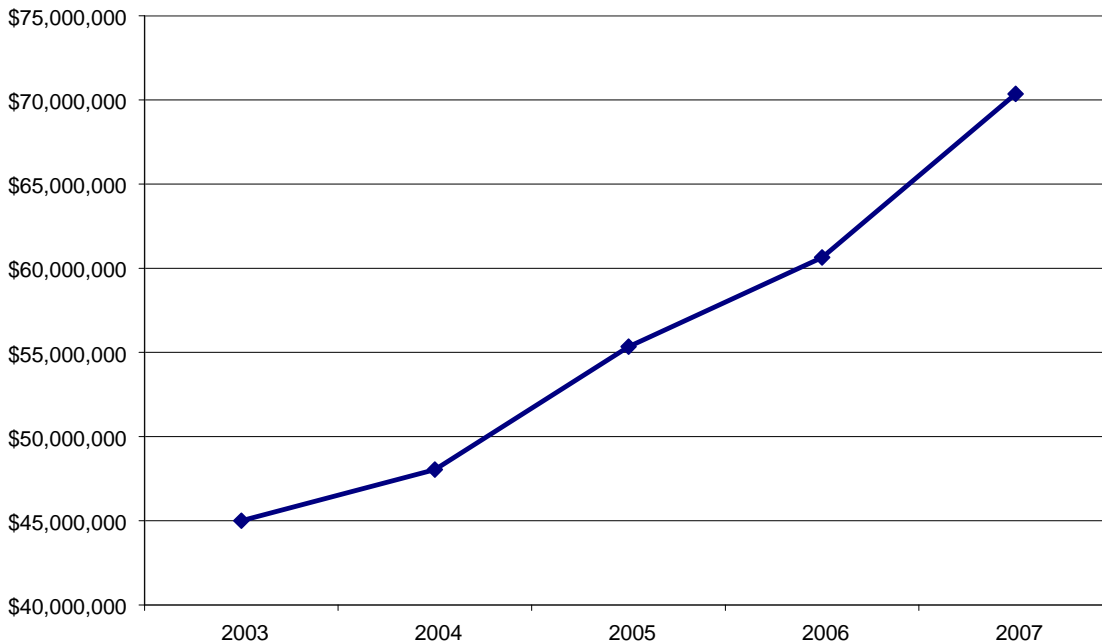


*TBI: Traumatic Head, Brain, or Spinal Cord Injury

The most frequent reason for fall-related hospitalizations of elders is because of a fractured bone (39%), followed by bruising (24%). Of the 2600 traumatic injuries, 96% were to the head, brain, or spinal cord. Fatal falls included 52% fractures, and 40% traumatic injuries. Of the 182 fatal traumatic injuries, 88% were to the head, brain, or spinal cord.

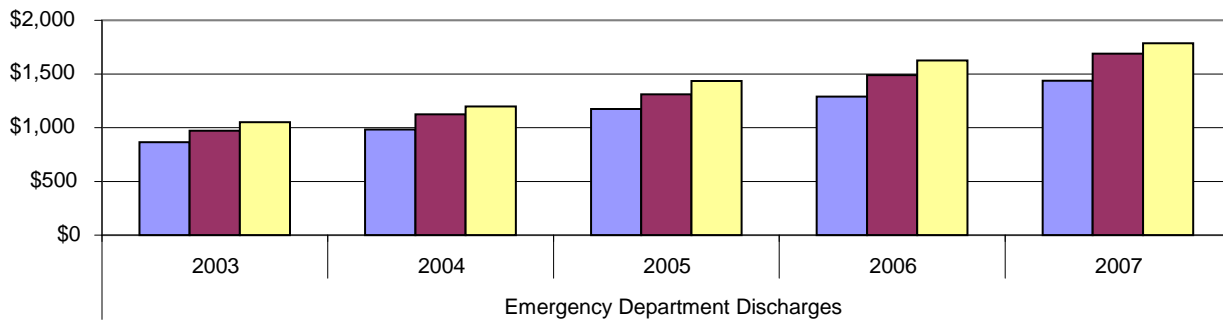
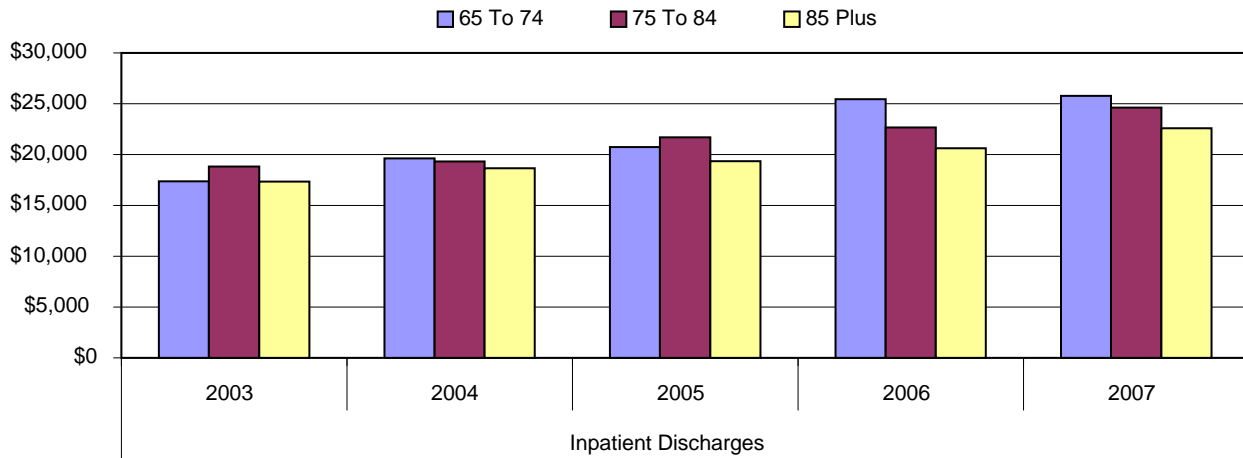
Total approximate costs for New Hampshire hospitalizations (inpatient and emergency dept.) in 2007 were \$70.4 million dollars. There is an average percent increase in charges from year to year of 1.12 percent. Between 2003 and 2007, the average charge for an emergency department visit for NH residents age 65 and older were about \$1,300. Average charges for an inpatient stay were about \$20,928. It is important to keep in mind that these hospital fees may include treatment for other chronic diseases, like diabetes or heart disease, which may have been the precipitator to the fall.

Total Cost of Inpatient and Emergency Department Discharges for Fall-related Injuries, NH Residents, Age 65+. 2003-2007



Other

Average Hospital Cost per Discharge, Fall-related Injuries,
NH Residents, Age 65+ by Age Group, 2003-2007



An interesting pattern is noted when reviewing these data by age groups. In the inpatient data, the 85+ age group charges are lower than the other age groups, and in the emergency department data, the 85+ age group charges are higher than the other age groups. With the increase in age, fall injury patients are more likely to be transferred to a rehabilitation or skilled nursing facility. While the inpatient hospital charges appear to go down for the 85+ age group, about 70% of these patient are incurring further charges by being discharged for further care elsewhere, rather than to home.

Data Source: New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), Bureau of Public Health Statistics and Informatics (BPHSI), Health Statistics and Data Management Section (HSDM), and the Bureau of Data and Systems Management (BDSM), Office of Medicaid Business and Policy (OMBP), New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), with assistance from a DHHS contractor, [2003-2007]. For more information contact: JoAnne Miles, MPH, joanne.e.miles@dhhs.state.nh.us, 603-271-0584 or Rhonda Siegel, MEd, rsiegel@dhhs.state.nh.us, 603-271-4700.

