



Jennifer Vollett-Krech RN, PT, our lead staff member on Falls No More, walks with a patient.

Falls No More

Christ House continues to strive for excellence through a new falls prevention initiative.

Over Christ House's nearly 34 years of operation, much has changed in the landscape of health care for homeless individuals. Health technology has advanced, hospitals are discharging patients sooner, and the homeless population continues to age. In light of these developments, we continually explore ways to adapt our practices. With every change, we remain focused on our main goal: providing the best care possible for our patients. One of our latest clinical improvement projects is Falls No More, a new falls prevention initiative.

The Dangers of Falls

Falls No More strengthens our falls prevention practices and allows us to meet national standards for medical respite facilities set forth by the National Health Care for the Homeless Council. Preventing falls is essential to keeping our patients safe. Especially for elderly patients and patients recovering from surgeries, falls pose a



The mission of Christ House is to provide comprehensive and compassionate health care to sick and homeless men from the District of Columbia, and to assist them in addressing the critical issues to help them break the cycle of homelessness.

Continued

significant danger. Falls can cause serious harm such as fractures, internal injuries, and traumatic brain injuries. As the homeless population ages, the need to prevent falls among Christ House patients has become an increasing concern.

Fortunately, patient falls are not common at Christ House. In 2018, 92 percent of all Christ House patients remained fall-free during their stay. Nonetheless, we remain dedicated to improving. One of our main goals this year is for more than 95 percent of patients to remain fall-free.

The Basics of Falls Prevention

Falls prevention starts on the first day of a patient's stay. Upon admission, every patient receives

a pair of sturdy shoes with strong traction and any walking aids, if needed. We also evaluate all patients on several aspects of patient safety, such as their assistance needs while using the bathroom or shower. Our nurses use a standard assessment tool to categorize each patient as low, moderate, or high risk for falling. Patients categorized as high risk are given yellow wristbands, which allow our staff to easily identify them. We aim for patients to move to a lower fall risk category over the course of their stay, as reducing patients' overall risk of falling is another goal of the initiative.

Our nurses also provide falls prevention education so that patients can take steps to protect themselves. These lessons cover topics such as

“There are always ways that we can improve the care that we give to our patients.”

-Melissa Jantzi, RN

using walking aids safely or lessening one's fall risk while transitioning from laying down to standing.

Throughout a patient's stay, we perform reassessments, track any falls, and make adjustments accordingly. Different patients may benefit from different assistive devices that range from raised toilet seats to a pair of glasses. In the tradition of Christ House, falls prevention is tailored to each individual patient.

Never Finished

We've seen promising progress since we first implemented Falls No More in April 2019. Early data shows that 94 percent of our patients have remained fall-free. We are continuing to work towards our goal of 95 percent. Yet even once we meet that goal, the work of Christ House is never finished.

“There are always ways that we can improve the care that we give to our patients,” says Melissa Jantzi, RN.

Your support gives us the resources to implement initiatives like Falls No More. Thank you for working with us to keep our patients fall-free while they heal at Christ House.

Help Keep Our Patients Fall-Free!

We are constantly in need of high quality footwear. Unlike t-shirts or sweatpants, the sneakers and shower shoes our patients wear must be **new**. It is also important for patients to wear shoes that fit well, and each patient has different needs for sizing.



Why must shoes be new?

- Wearing even slightly worn out shoes can worsen health issues, and can also increase the risk of patients slipping and falling.
- Falls can seriously harm patients and sometimes even result in hospitalizations.

Want to donate a pair of shoes? It's easy! Just go to our Amazon Wish List via www.christhouse.org.

Already have a pair? We recommend calling ahead at 202-328-1100 to check that your shoes are acceptable and to find out information on sizes for current patients.

Still unsure? You can always make a financial contribution, which we can use to order the exact shoes our patients need. See how at www.christhouse.org/donate.

Donors Leverage the Power of Social Media through Facebook Fundraisers

Christ House first made it possible for supporters to make donations through Facebook on GivingTuesday last November. Since then, donors have raised over \$4,700 for Christ House in celebration of birthdays or special occasions through Facebook fundraisers.

Facebook fundraisers give supporters an easy way to raise money and spread awareness for Christ House. Regardless of whether a campaign raises \$150 or \$2,000, we deeply appreciate the efforts donors make on our behalf. Facebook fundraisers are especially valuable because they spread awareness to donors' social networks, allowing us to reach individuals who may not otherwise encounter Christ House.

Derek Hills, a neighborhood supporter, raised \$715 for Christ

House on GivingTuesday last year. Impressively, he exceeded his goal of \$500.

"I've lived in Adams Morgan for over twenty years and feel



Derek Hills raised \$715 for Christ House last GivingTuesday with a Facebook fundraiser.

deeply attached to institutions like Christ House that reflect the neighborhood's inclusive and compassionate image," says Hills. "I walk by the facility nearly every day and I'm touched by

its commitment to providing ongoing care to its residents, as well as its mission to serve a population that's too often overlooked. For me, that makes Christ House among the worthiest local charities I can think of supporting."

The success of his fundraiser led Hills to realize the power of social media to rapidly inspire many others.

"I decided to multiply my annual contribution by using social media to inspire several of my friends to contribute to Christ House as well. I was happy and surprised that so many people chipped in for such a great organization."

Go to www.facebook.com/fundraisers to see how you can start a Facebook fundraiser for Christ House!

Fun and Games

The Patient Activities Program enriches the lives of Christ House patients. Check out all the fun they've been having lately!



Cooking lessons from our Executive Chef



End of Summer party



Neighborhood walk



Trip to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Have tickets to a DC event that you'd like to donate? Contact us at development@christhouse.org.



Early Start Campers drop off their clothing donation to our Shower Program Coordinator.

Early Start Campers Raise Money with Popsicles



Young change-makers at Jubilee Housing's Early Start Summer Camp raised money and collected clothing for Christ House patients through a popsicle stand and clothing drive. We're grateful that these campers chose Christ House for their service project and feel inspired by their hard work!

Interested in setting up an in-kind drive for Christ House? Contact us at volunteers@christhouse.org.

Fall Matching Challenge ends in just **2 Weeks!**

Our Fall Matching Challenge is underway and ends on **October 31st!** A generous group of Christ House partners matches every donation dollar-for-dollar during this challenge. We're aiming to raise **\$225,000**, which is our highest goal yet! Help us make it to \$225,000 and take advantage of this chance to **double the impact** of your gift!

Give today at www.christhouse.org/donate!



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