It is estimated that one-third of elderly people fall each year, with general agreement that there are many associated factors. A retrospective audit of inpatient falls at the Gold Coast Hospital was conducted in August 1996. From the first audit a number of high risk patient groups, activities, and ward environments were identified and a falls prevention program implemented. A second audit conducted two years later demonstrated a decrease in falls and related injuries. The outcomes revealed that fewer people were falling, and when they did fall, fewer injuries were reported. Incident reporting by staff was used to determine rates of falls, and may underrepresent the true rate of falls.

To reduce patient falls, use high standards for equipment to enable patients to mobilize within a safe environment and gain mobility and strength.