



Injury Prevention: Unintentional Falls among Older Adults

Falls are not a normal part of aging, but falls disproportionately affect persons aged 65 years and older. Falls may result in injuries that require medical care; some may result in death. In fact, falls are a leading cause of death and hospitalization among older adults. Older adult falls are a preventable public health concern.

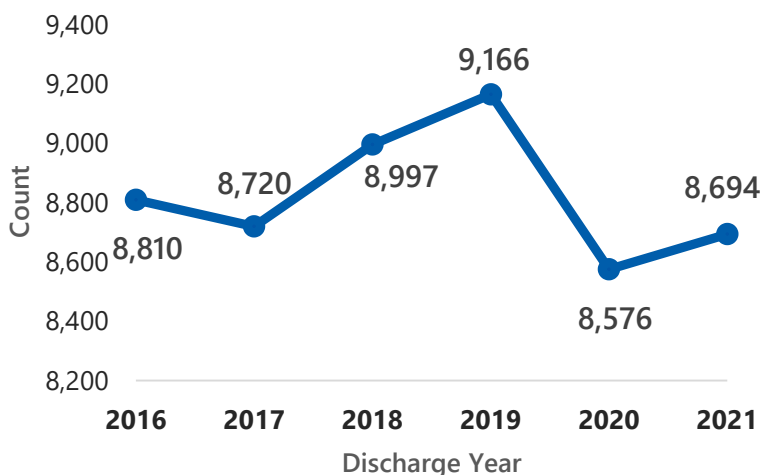
There were **52,963 inpatient hospitalizations**¹ for fall-related injuries among older adults² in Kentucky from 2016–2021³.

During that time, **1,701** older adults died from a fall-related injury. Deaths increased as age increased.

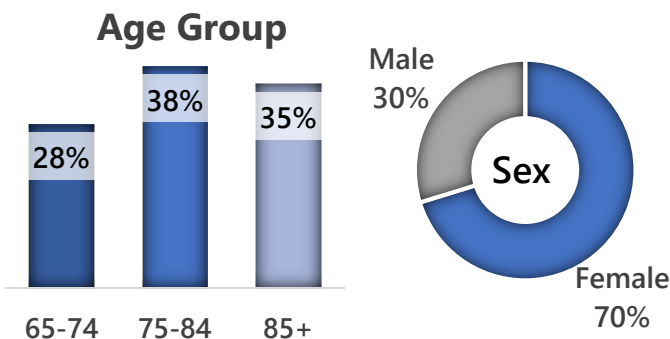
Did you know?

Older adults are those aged 65 years and older.

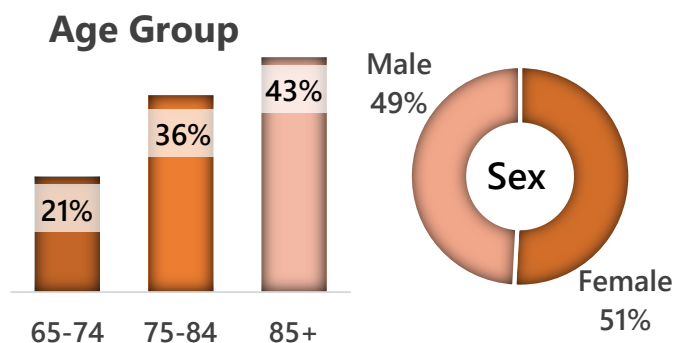
Unintentional Fall-Related Inpatient Hospitalizations among Kentucky Older Adults² by Discharge Year, 2016–2021³



Unintentional Fall-Related Inpatient Hospitalizations among Kentucky Older Adults² by Age and Sex, 2016–2021³



Unintentional Fall-Related Deaths among Kentucky Older Adults² by Age and Sex, 2016–2021³



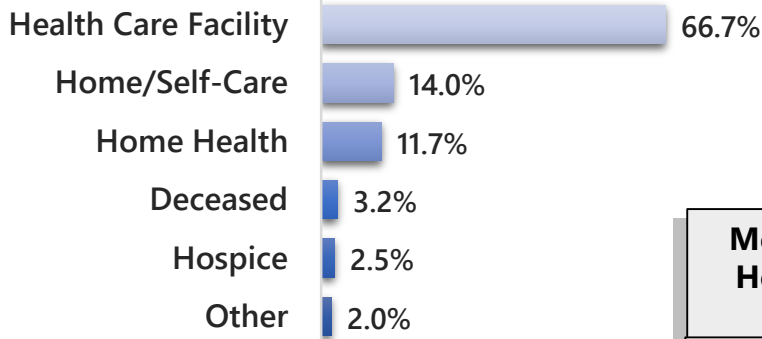
Of the 2016–2021 older adult **fall-related inpatient hospitalizations**,

- Race: 97% White, 2% Black, and 1% Other Race
- 47% resulted in a hip fracture



¹Inpatient hospitalizations represent encounters of care and could be greater than the number of individual patients treated at an acute care facility. ²Older adults are Kentucky residents 65 years and older. ³The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that started in 2020 should be considered when interpreting data and trend analyses. Data sources: Kentucky inpatient hospitalization claim files, Office of Health Data and Analytics; Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. October 2022. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Unintentional Fall-Related Inpatient Hospitalizations among Kentucky Older Adults² by Discharge Status, 2016–2021³

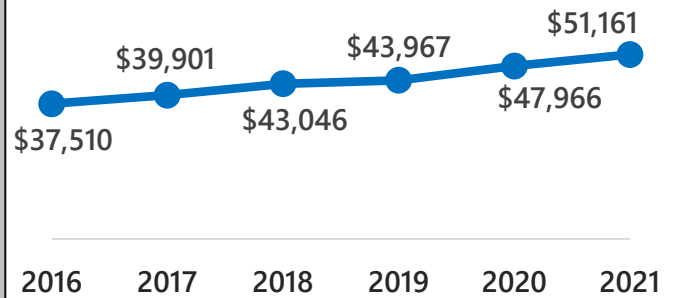


Almost two-thirds of unintentional fall-related deaths occurred due to a fall on even ground.

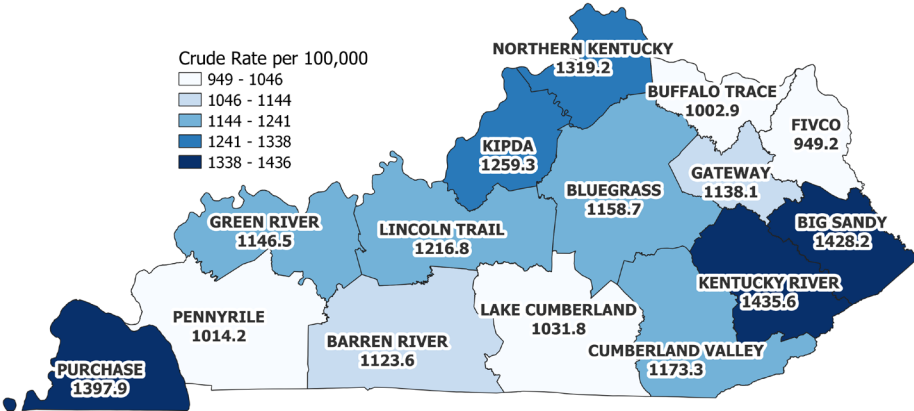
The average discharge cost for an older adult fall-related hospitalization was **\$53,585**. Discharge costs totaled **\$2,838,024,219** from 2016–2021.



Median Discharge Costs from Inpatient Hospitalizations among Older Adults², 2016–2021³



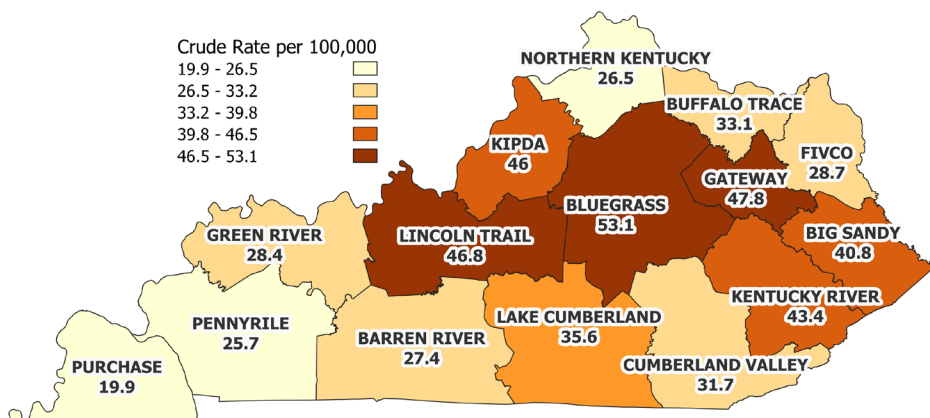
Unintentional Fall-Related Inpatient Hospitalization Rates among Kentucky Older Adults² by Area Development District, 2016–2021³



Fall-related inpatient hospitalizations and death rates for older adults vary by Area Development District (ADD).

The highest crude rates of **inpatient hospitalization** occurred in the **Purchase, Big Sandy, and Kentucky River** ADDs.

Unintentional Fall-Related Death Rates among Kentucky Older Adults² by Area Development District, 2016–2021³



The highest crude rates of **death** occurred in the **Lincoln Trail, Bluegrass, and Big Sandy** ADDs.

Older Adults: What Can I Do?



Practice good housekeeping by keeping walkways tidy, picking up items off the floor, securing loose rugs, and clearing clutter.

Other fall-related hospitalizations were falls from stairs and steps. Use hand railings to support oneself when walking up and down stairs.



Turn on lights and use nightlights. Keeping areas well lit can help reduce the risk of falls.

Help prevent bathroom-related falls by installing grab bars around tubs and toilets to help maintain balance in the bathroom, especially when floors are wet.



Exercise can help prevent falls. Focus on exercises that help build strength and balance (like yoga, chair aerobics, or Tai Chi).

Talk with your health care provider and pharmacist about fall risk and prevention. Ask them to make sure your drugs are not interacting and making you more susceptible to a fall.



What Can Health Care Providers Do?

Use CDC's STEADI initiative in your practice. It is evidence-based and effective!

Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries

Step 1:

Screen all patients aged 65+ for fall risk.

Step 2:

Assess a patient's modifiable risk factors and fall history.

Step 3:

Intervene to reduce identified risk using effective strategies.

Visit www.cdc.gov/steady/ for more information.

Additional Resources

- Kentucky Safe Aging Coalition: www.NoFalls.org
- Older Adult Fall Prevention Facts, Resources, and Interventions: www.cdc.gov/falls/
- Caregiver Fall Prevention, National Council on Aging (NCOA): www.ncoa.org/caregivers/falls-prevention
- NCOA Falls Free CheckUp: www.ncoa.org/assessment/falls-free-checkup