

Clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a multifaceted podiatry intervention for falls prevention in older people: a multicentre cohort randomised controlled trial (the REducing Falls with ORthoses and a Multifaceted podiatry intervention trial)

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Plain English summary

The REFORM RCT

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Plain English summary

Each year, many older people suffer serious injuries from falling. Foot problems and unsuitable footwear increase the risk of falling.

The REducing Falls with ORthoses and a Multifaceted podiatry intervention (REFORM) study aimed to find out if a package of care provided by a podiatrist could reduce the number of falls experienced by people ≥ 65 years old. All 1010 participants were sent a leaflet about how to prevent falls, and 493 participants were also offered the package of care, which consisted of three parts. Participants were given footwear advice and new footwear if their current footwear was thought to be unsuitable. They were also given an orthotic insole or, if they were already wearing an insole, their current insole was reviewed to ensure that it met their clinical needs. Finally, they were given a programme of foot and ankle balance exercises to do at home.

We found a small, but not statistically significant, reduction in the number of falls experienced by participants offered the podiatry package. A lower proportion of participants suffered at least one fall over 12 months in the group offered the podiatry package. The podiatry package is relatively inexpensive and we found that it was reasonable value for money. On the whole, participants liked the podiatry package and the majority of podiatrists thought that it was acceptable and straightforward to deliver but also found some of the programme elements to be time-consuming, such as explaining the foot and ankle exercises and the provision of footwear.

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This report

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