



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

To describe the experiences of nurses who worked with impact-absorbing flooring.

Effects of Impact-Absorbing Flooring in Residential Care from the Perspectives of Enrolled Nurses

Gustavsson, J., Rahm, G., Jernbro, C., Nilson, F., 2017 | *Journal of Housing For the Elderly*. Volume 31, Issue 4, Page 367-381

Key Concepts/Context

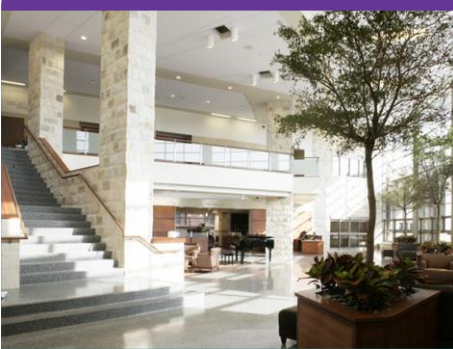
Despite the fact that patient falls happen on a daily basis, there are few effective solutions for reducing fall-related injuries. Residential care facilities equipped with impact-absorbing flooring (IAF) present promising evidence for reducing fall-related patient injuries, but virtually all aspects behind the process of implementing IAF require further study.

Methods

The researchers held focus group interviews with staff members from a 60-room, 60-patient, six-ward residential care center following the installation of IAF (10 rooms per ward). Two registered nurses who were responsible for all six wards and eight of 10 “enrolled nurses” (primary caregivers for elderly patients) participated in the study. The flooring was installed in six out of the 10 rooms in one of the hospital wards, as well as a total of 350m² of flooring between the communal dining room and sections of the corridors.

Findings

General perceptions of the IAF among the nurses were positive. The flooring was viewed as beneficial for residents in that fewer injuries occurred on average, which meant a general decrease in the amount of medical attention required. Even with the decrease in fall frequency, the residents did not notice the change in flooring materials aesthetically. Daily routines among both staff and patients remained unchanged with the presence of the IAF. Some staff noted that the material was slightly more difficult to walk on and move objects across.



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Limitations

This study took place in a single medical facility with a relatively small number of participants and tested one specific model of IAF. The authors note that individual interviews (as opposed to group interviews) may have provided more information, and that one of the researchers involved in the paper was familiar with some of the participants.

Design Implications

Impact-absorbing flooring can be an effective way to reduce patient falls and fall-related injuries without significantly impeding the movement and free space of patients themselves. While some healthcare staff noted the flooring was occasionally more difficult to walk on and push objects across, these factors were overshadowed by the overall efficacy of the flooring material.

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