# Strategies to Minimize Falls in Long-Term Care Facilities

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## EVIDENCE-BASED INSTRUCTION

**Figure 1. YouTube video link**

**Figure 2.** Keiro fact sheet link

## CONTACT

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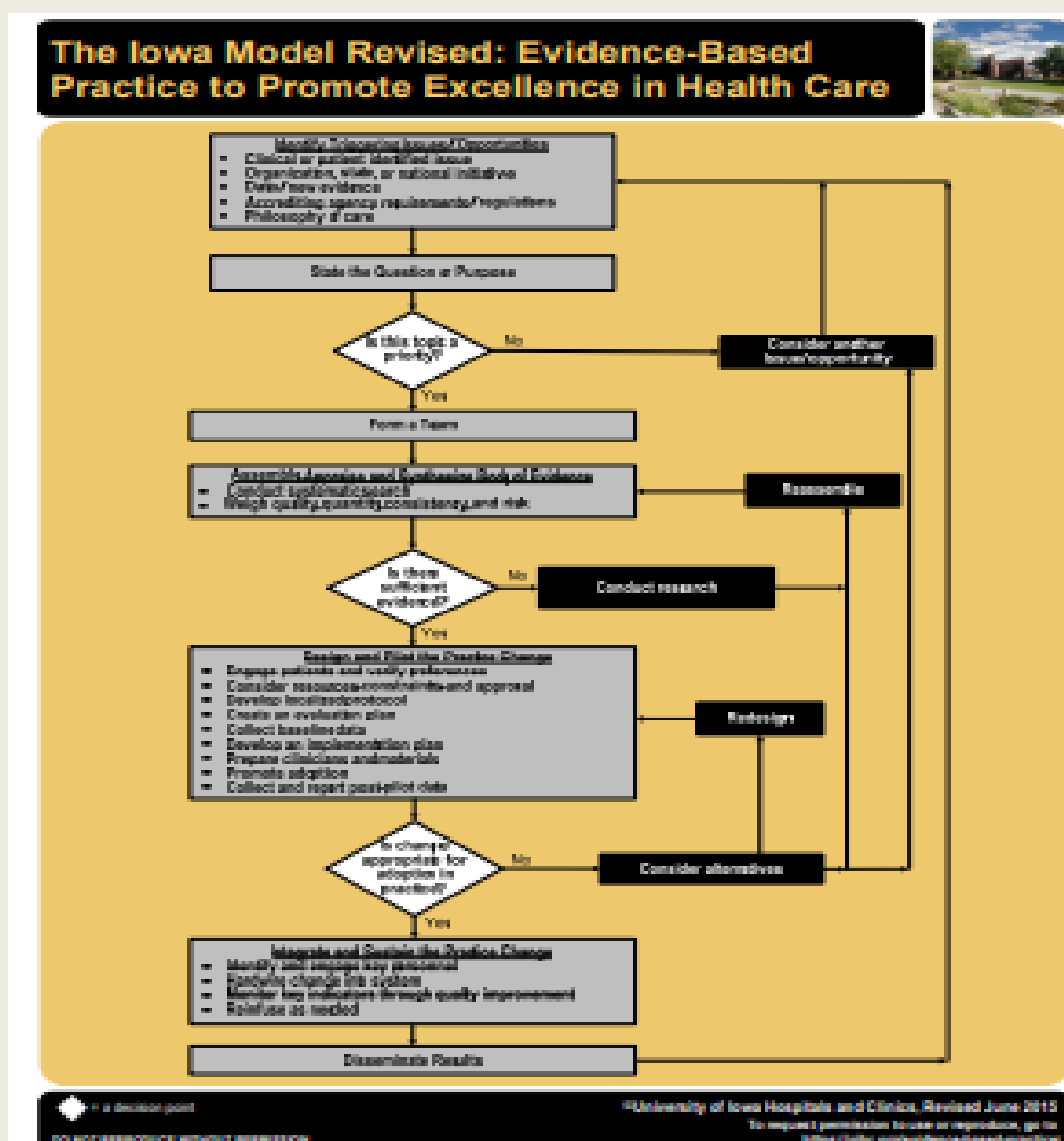Email: tchery@Samford.edu
References upon request*

## PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

- ❖ The incidence of falls among residents in long term care (LTC) facilities continues to be of major concern. Falls are accredited with increased disability, significant long-term health complications, and increased costs of care in relation to treatment, caretaking, and reimbursement for related injuries in the aging person.
- ❖ In a small skilled nursing facility in Long Island, New York, monthly fall reports indicated an average of seven falls per month with many reported falls occurring in older adult residents.
- ❖ Facility falls reports depict a high rate of falls during peak activity times.

## PROJECT PURPOSE

- ❖ The purpose of this project is to introduce the use of gait belts for ambulatory residents of a LTC facility to reduce the incidence of falls.
- ❖ Adhering to identified evidenced for gait belt use instructions, implementation of this fall prevention method will guide faculty in daily care for rehabilitating LTC facility residents.
- ❖ This project supports the creation of an evidenced based fall prevention algorithm for guiding daily care in the rehabilitating elderly person.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Iowa Model Revised: Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Excellence in Health Care

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- ❖ The model consists of seven steps with three major decision points integrated within the guideline. The steps and decision points specific to this project include:
  - ➤ Identifying a high incidence of falls as an opportunity for change
  - ➤ Questioning if the use of an evidence-based algorithm and gait belt usage will reduce the number of falls in an LTC facility
  - ➤ Identifying fall prevention as a priority in healthcare
  - ➤ Team formation
  - ➤ Synthesizing available evidence
  - ➤ Determination if sufficient evidence is available
  - ➤ Design and pilot of practice change
  - ➤ Determination if gait belt use is appropriate for adoption
  - ➤ Integration of gait belt use
  - ➤ Dissemination of results

## METHODOLOGY

- ❖ The population of the DNP project is the LTC facility's staff providing patient care services.
- ❖ Staff will be provided evidence-based instructions.
- ❖ Algorithm focus will be on gait belt use for safety and fall prevention.
- ❖ A variety of gait belt options are available on the market.
- ❖ The single buckle gait belt is employed for this project.
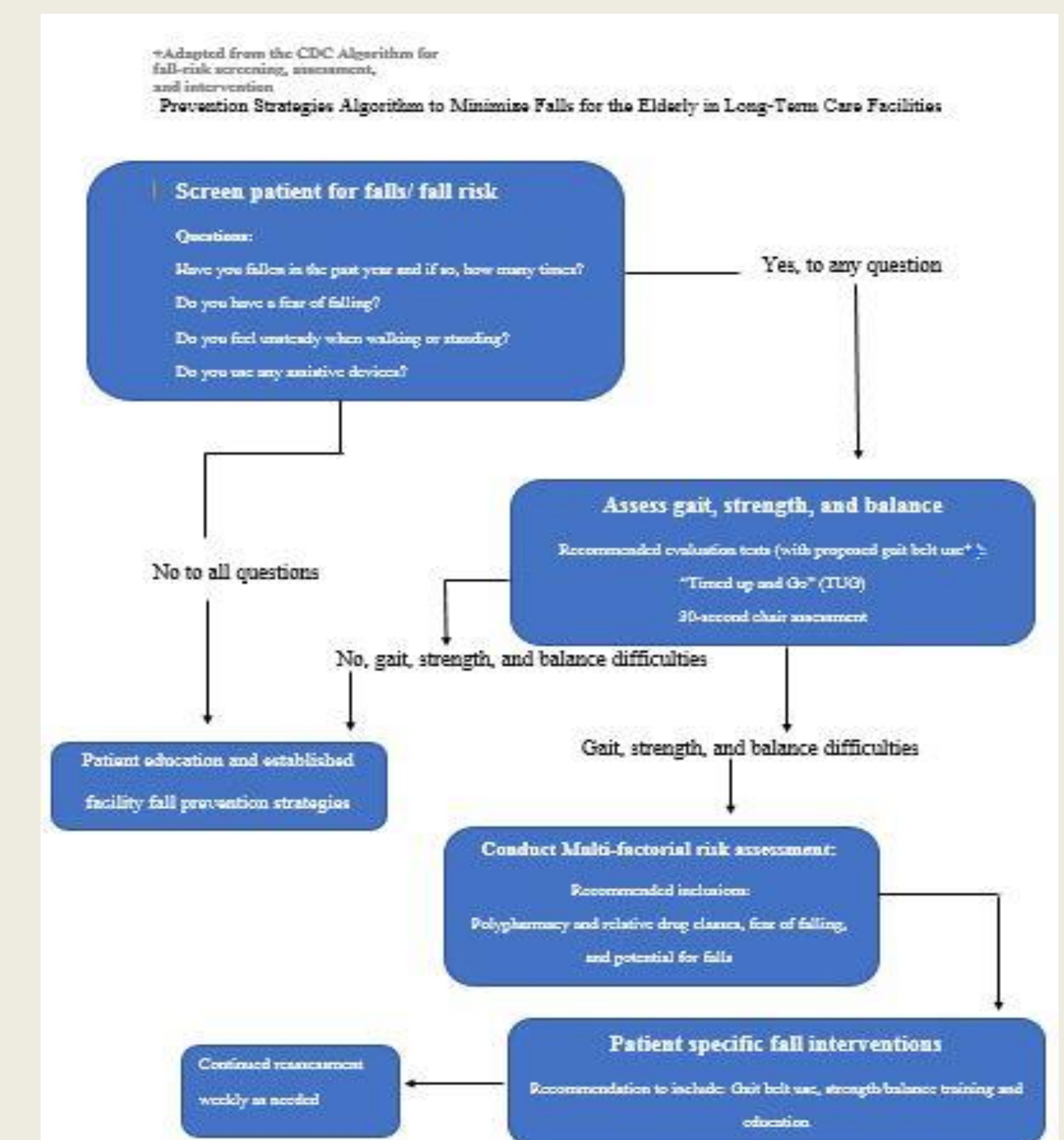
**Figure 3. Gait belt**

## IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

- ❖ Monthly fall committee incidence reports will be reviewed.
- ❖ Staff will complete a pre-implementation survey.
- ❖ Participating staff will be provided education.
- ❖ A one-month time frame will be given for project implementation.

## EVALUATION PLAN & CRITERIA

- ❖ Following the one-month implementation time, staff will be given a post-implementation survey.
- ❖ Data reports from the one-month implementation period will be reviewed and evaluated to determine if the projects implementation has affected fall incidence rates in the LTC facility.
- ❖ Both pre-and-post implementation surveys will be utilized to assess the effectiveness of this project.

## ALGORITHM

## IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- ❖ The fall prevention project offers a strategy for daily care of the rehabilitating person.
- ❖ Implementation of this project can supplement an institutions established fall prevention program.
- ❖ Evidence suggests that gait belt use has potential to prevent falls and decrease potential injuries that result from falls.