

Health Promotion, Disease Prevention Program: *Senior Fall Prevention*

SDS Senior Community-Based Grants: (\$150.0 GF/MH)

What is the end result?

Project Goal

Provide targeted funding to implement evidence-based senior fall prevention interventions to reduce the rate of injuries and deaths for older Alaskans related to falls.

■ **Results Desired**

- Prevent fall-related injuries for older Alaskans with ADRD and other seniors at-risk.
- Reduce burden on families impacted by senior falls.
- Lower health care costs related to senior falls.

Health Promotion, Disease Prevention Program: Senior Fall Prevention

Story behind the curve

- Falls are the #1 cause of non-fatal hospitalized injuries for Alaskans age 65+ and the #1 cause of death for older Alaskans 75+.
- Annually, an average of 671 seniors (65+) are hospitalized from fall injuries and 12 die from falls.
- Falls are expensive leading to high hospitalization costs, nursing home admissions, and loss of independence.
- Medical conditions, inaccessible living environment and the “fear of falling” increase risk for senior falls.
- Senior fall-related injuries are a serious public health concern that need to be addressed.
- Falls are not a normal part of aging. Evidence-based prevention strategies work!

Health Promotion, Disease Prevention Program: Senior Fall Prevention

How are we doing?

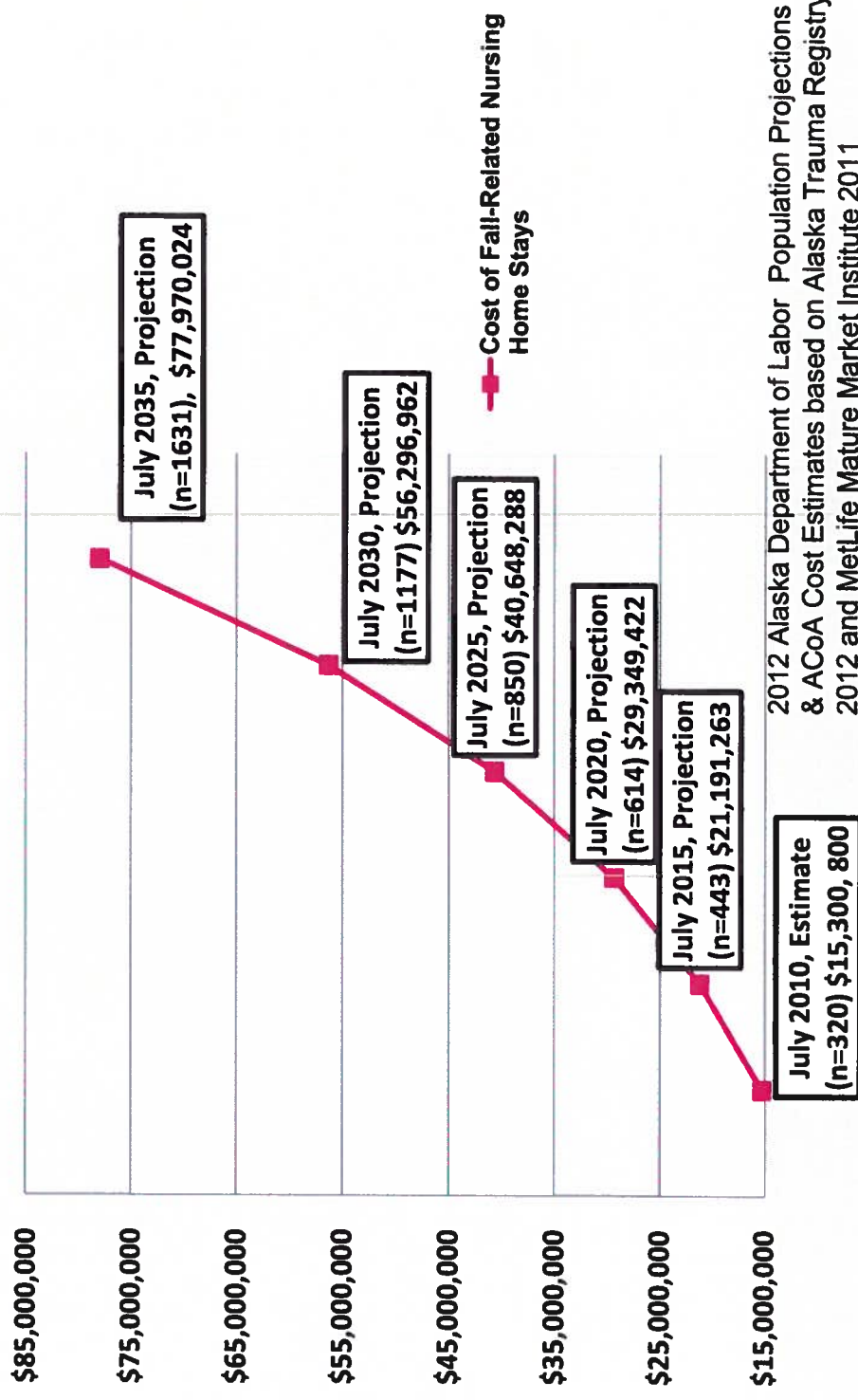
Total of 3,356 hospitalizations related to senior falls, 2005-2009:

- 2,029 due to injuries in the home
- 1,571 due to a slip, trip, or stumble
- 493 due to a fall from one level to another such as from the bed, a chair or wheelchair
- 210 falls suspected or proven to have been associated with alcohol
- 2,534 falls diagnosed as resulting in fractures, multiple fractures (n=350), and traumatic brain injury (n=416)
- 21,646 hospital days were recorded with hospital charges totaling \$96 million (median 15 days hospitalization)

Health Promotion, Disease Prevention Program: Senior Fall Prevention

How are we doing?

Projected Cost of Senior Hip Fractures Resulting in Nursing Home Admissions



Health Promotion, Disease Prevention Program: Senior Fall Prevention

What works to turn the curve

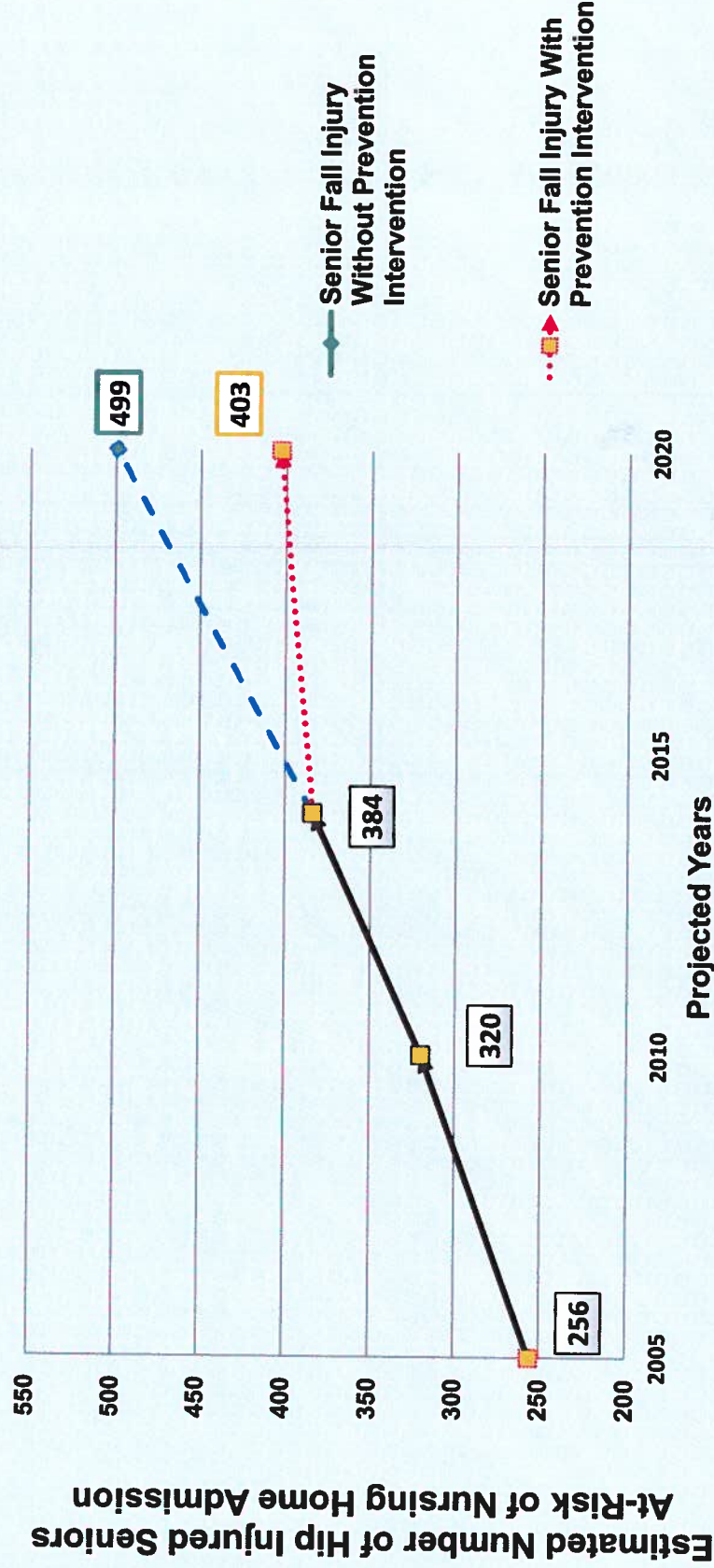
Evidence-based strategies that promote senior fall prevention:

- Public awareness efforts that identify risk factors for senior falls and prevention strategies.
- Health care providers who recognize fall risk factors and screen seniors for falls.
- Health care providers who review senior prescriptions and over the counter drugs to identify medication complications.
- Exercise programs that promote balance, strength and flexibility available at senior centers, assisted living and nursing homes.
- Removal of home hazards.
- “White cane training” and low-vision clinics.
- Incorporating evidence-based falls prevention interventions as part of hospital discharge programs.

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How are we doing? Results desired.

Effectiveness of Senior Fall Prevention Intervention



Source: Alaska Department of Labor Projections 2011

Source: Centers for Disease Control 2007

Source: ACoA Projections 2012