

Horton, K. (2012) Active ageing and fall prevention among older Chinese people. *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, 20, S111-S.112

If we aim to promote active ageing, we need to have cultural awareness since culture is a major determinant of how people understand and interpret their experiences which in turn could impact on how they respond to the promotion of active ageing. Where fall prevention is concerned, it is argued that ethnicity and cultural may affect attitudes towards and participation in fall-prevention strategies although there is little understanding of this influence.

Findings reported In this presentation were part of a larger UK study which adopted a Grounded Theory approach and was conducted in the south east of England involving 17 focus groups (with a total of 122 older people) and 65 semi-structured interviews. The aim was to explore the perceptions of older people on falls and fear of falling, and to identify facilitators and barriers to fall prevention interventions. With a purposive sample of 30 Chinese older people (9 men and 21 women) who attended Tai Chi classes, two focus groups with ten people in each and ten face to face in-depth interviews were conducted in Mandarin or Cantonese. Interview transcripts, back translated were analysed. Constant comparative analysis highlighted a range of health-seeking behaviours following a fall.

Deeply entrenched within their response is the influence of Chinese culture, rooted in the beliefs and practices of the Chinese philosophical assumptions about health, illness and healing and their acquired ways of coping with the experience of falls. Although the family is still regarded as the cornerstone of their society they remain fairly conservative in clinging to the 'social' aspect traditional Chinese society as cultural intergenerational relations had an impact on taking actions to prevent falls and whether or not to take up Tai Chi as a 'Chinese' option.