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## South Tyneside's falls service in spotlight

South Tyneside's groundbreaking approach to preventing falls among older people was highlighted as an example of best practice at a national conference.

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's falls specialist physiotherapist Dean Metz was invited by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy to give a presentation at the Primary Care and Public Health Conference in Birmingham on the work going on in the borough.

The Trust's community falls service in South Tyneside has already been hailed for its innovative approach to improving the patient's journey by offering a joint nursing and physiotherapy assessment in a one-stop clinic and for the effectiveness of its rehabilitation programme in reducing the number of falls. The emphasis at the conference was on how the Trust, working in partnership with Public Health at South Tyneside Council and Age UK, developed a multi-agency falls prevention group.

Mr Metz said: "We are the only Trust in the North East to have successfully adopted this particular approach to falls preventative care and education. The group's membership is wide-ranging; as well as traditional organisations such as the NHS and voluntary bodies, it includes, among others, the fire service and libraries, which can provide unique insights and resources."

Falls are a major problem for older people, robbing many of them of their health and independence, and they cost the country £2.3 billion a year. One in three over the age of 65 will have a fall this year and half of all those over 80 fall at least once a year, often suffering serious injuries and long-term complications, and loss of confidence, as a result.

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*Pictured above: South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's falls specialist physiotherapist Dean Metz*

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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