

0729 **EXPLORING THE ASSOCIATION OF FALLS WITH THE SENSE OF COHERENCE AND FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY INDICES AMONG COMMUNITY DWELLING OLDER PEOPLE OF RURAL GREECE**

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Introduction Older people in Greece enjoy the lowest incidence and mortality due to falls possibly due to genetic/environmental factors; it has not been adequately explored, however, whether a stronger sense of coherence (SOC) may be associated with better health outcomes.

Objective To examine the association of SOC with fall incidence among older people and present the process of the study design and implementation.

Materials and Methods The initiative was undertaken by a doctoral student of Aristotle University in consultation with CEREPRI. Alternative methodological designs ensuring study quality and high participation as contrasted to the limited financial and scientific resources available were evaluated. An Internet search was undertaken to compile a list of instruments for a local population-tailored study. Selected tools were pilot-tested, if already validated and the minimum sample size was calculated.

Results 300 individuals aged ≥ 65 years, enrolled in the community-based state organisations for older people and residing

in 10 villages are planned to consent for a structured questionnaire through face-to-face interview addressing demographics, health status and recent history of falls as well as the SOC-29 scale, the Berg Balance Scale/Test and the Activities Specific Balance Confidence Scale. Barriers and facilitating factors of conducting research in adverse conditions of remote rural communities were also identified.

Conclusions Given the population ageing, it is imperative to focus research on factors potentially affecting functionality and well-being among older people; sharing experience in research designs and implementation when exploring the interrelation of SOC and falls may proven essential in preventing falls and improve health outcomes.