

# Prevention of costly hip fractures should be a priority in UK

29 March 2015

A new study presented today at the World Congress on Osteoporosis, Osteoarthritis and Musculoskeletal Diseases reveals the high cost of first and subsequent hip fractures to the healthcare system in the UK.

Researchers from the University of Oxford and the MRC Lifecourse Epidemiology Unit in Southampton estimated UK hospital costs of [hip fracture](#) in the two years following the fracture, and compared average hospital costs before and after hip fracture. Their study analyzed data from 33152 hip fracture patients (average age 83 years), 75% of which were women.

The study found that hospital costs after hip fracture were an average of £14,163 in the first year and £16,302 in the first two years following the incident. Having a hip fracture increased hospital costs by £10,964 compared to the year before the fracture. The study reports the main cost drivers in the first year following hip fracture to be experiencing a second hip fracture, hip fracture-related complications and breaking other bones.

The study shows that hip fractures are an enormous cost to the [healthcare](#) system, with total annual hospital costs of new hip fractures estimated to be approximately £1.1 billion.

Lead author, Dr. Jose Leal of the Health Economics Research Center, University of Oxford stated, "The impact of hip fractures is very significant. The UK population is ageing and unless action is taken to prioritize fracture prevention, the cost of treating fractures in the senior population will continue to rise dramatically in the future."

He added, "To reduce the costs of fractures we need to identify and invest in cost-effective approaches and incentives aimed at preventing avoidable fractures and improving the quality of life in these elderly populations. Fracture liaison

services in hospitals and clinics have been shown to be a way forward as approximately half of the patients who are treated in hospital for hip fracture - the most costly, serious and even life-threatening type of fractures - have had a previous fracture of some kind. That first fracture was a 'warning' that should have triggered testing and treatment."

Provided by International Osteoporosis Foundation

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