Patient name:	Date:	Time:	AM/PM
NHI:	Test carried out by:		

The Four Stage Balance Test

Overview: The Four-Stage Balance Test, in conjunction with other measures such as the 30 Second Chair Stand Test and Timed Up and Go (TUG) Test and an assessment of postural hypotension can help to indicate if a patient is at risk of falling.

Purpose: To assess static balance

Equipment: A stopwatch

Directions: Patients are asked to perform four progressively more challenging positions. Patients should not use an assistive device (e.g. walking stick), and should keep their eyes open.

If you feel the patient may be unstable and at a high risk of falling, or you are unable to safely catch them, you may choose to avoid this test.

Instructions to the patient:

"I'm going to show you four positions."

"Try to stand in each position for ten seconds. You can hold your arms out or move your body to help keep your balance but don't move your feet. Hold this position until I tell you to stop."

Describe and demonstrate each position. Stand next to the patient, hold their arm and help them assume the correct foot position.

When the patient is steady, let go, but be ready to catch them if they lose their balance.

For each stage, say "**Ready, begin**" and begin timing.

After 10 seconds, say "**Stop**."

If the patient can hold the position for ten seconds without moving their feet or needing support, proceed to the next position.

If not, stop the test.

See over page for detailed patient instructions and illustrations of the four positions.

1.	**Parallel stance**	
	Stand with your feet side by side.	**Time:**

2.	**Semi-tandem stance**	
	Place the instep of one foot so it is touching the big toe of the other foot.	**Time:**

3.	**Tandem (Heel-Toe) stance**	
	Place one foot in front of the other, heel touching toe.	**Time:**

4.	**One-legged stance**	
	Stand on one foot.	**Time:**

Patients aged 65 years or older who do not progress to the tandem (heel-toe) stance or cannot hold this stance for at least ten seconds are at increased risk of falling.

Notes:

Reference: Rossiter-Fornoff J, Walf S, Wolfson L. A cross-sectional validation study of the FICSIT common data base static balance measures. Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci 1995;50A(6):M291-M297.