Abstract:
ABSTRACT: Prevention of falls in the elderly is a public health target in many countries around the world. While a large number of trials have investigated the effectiveness of fall prevention programs, few focussed on interventions embedded in the general practice setting and its related network. In the Prevent Falls (PreFalls) trial we aim to investigate the effectiveness of a pre-tested multi-modal intervention compared to usual care in this setting. PreFalls is a controlled multicenter prospective study with cluster-randomized allocation of about 40 general practices to an experimental or a control group. We aim to include 382 community dwelling persons aged 65 and older with an increased risk of falling. All participating general practitioners are trained to systematically assess the risk of falls using a set of validated tests. Patients from intervention practices are invited to participate in a 16-weeks exercise program with focus on fall prevention delivered by specifically trained local physiotherapists. Patients from practices allocated to the control group receive usual care. Main outcome measure is the number of falls per individual in the first 12 months (analysis by negative binomial regression). Secondary outcomes include falls in the second year, the proportion of participants falling in the first and the second year, falls associated with injury, risk of falls, fear
of falling, physical activity and quality of life. Reducing falls in the elderly remains a major challenge. We believe that with its strong focus on a both systematic and realistic fall prevention strategy adapted to primary care setting PreFalls will be a valuable addition to the scientific literature in the field. NCT01032252.