Fall Prevention in the Acute Care Hospital Medical Surgical Setting

CHI Saint Joseph Health

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Background

- Nurses are responsible for assessing patients to determine those who are at risk for falling, those who have potential for fall with injury and for the development of a patient specific fall prevention plan.
- The hospital care team can influence fall prevention using an interdisciplinary approach and by engaging the patient and caregiver(s).
- Leaders can negate barriers by ensuring supplies/equipment availability, rounding on high fall risk patients to validate strategies, and by fostering a learning environment for caregivers with an edge of accountability as needed.

Objectives

- **Primary**: To decrease patient falls in the acute care setting.
- **Secondary**: To improve patient quality outcomes by decreasing injury from falling.
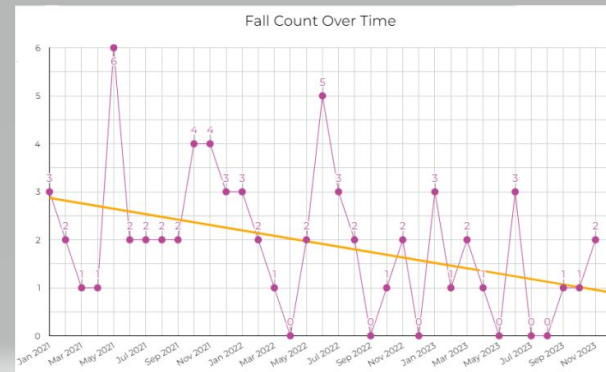
Methods

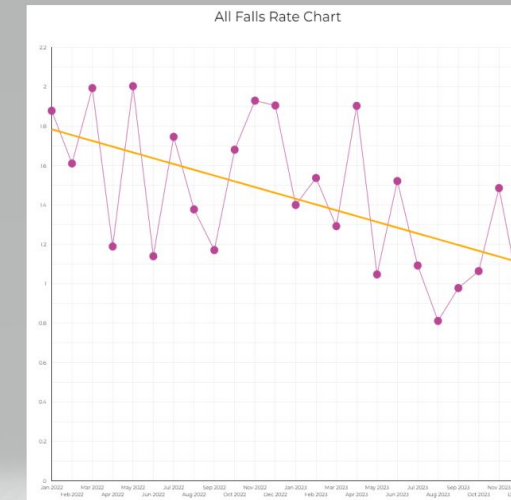- A Fall Prevention Checklist was developed to serve as a real time reminder for bedside caregivers.

- Education to all medical surgical caregivers was completed and emphasized patient as well as staff safety.
- The Checklist was used during Bedside Shift Report to validate that all prevention strategies were in place and being maintained by off going and incoming care teams.

Total Patient Fall Count Trending
Medical Surgical 4 Unit

Fall Count Over Time

Checklist Implementation

All Falls Rate
Saint Joseph London Entire Facility

All Falls Rate Chart

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Summary

- Collaboration with our department caregivers helped to identify barriers in their day to day work environment.
- Our shared governance approach focused on removing barriers and a shared accountability structure that ultimately improved our outcomes.

Conclusions

- Patient falls decrease when caregivers utilize checklist to validate fall prevention interventions.
- In calendar year 2023 there were fourteen falls on the Medical Surgical 4 unit. The unit noted a >50% reduction in falls from 2021 to 2023.
- This improvement resulted in a decrease in facility fall rate from 1.88 in January of 2022 to the current rate of 0.95 in January 2024.

References

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