

QI Storyboard: Reducing Patient Falls

Problem Statement: The rate of patient falls on the Medical-Surgical Unit has been increasing over the past six months, putting patients at risk of injury and increasing the length of stay and cost of care.

Goal: Reduce the unit-wide patient fall rate by 50% (from an average of 4.2 falls per 1,000 patient days to 2.1 falls per 1,000 patient days) within six months.

"Before" Picture: Initial Performance

This run chart illustrates the negative trend of patient falls before the implementation of the new intervention. The center line is the average of 4.2 falls per 1,000 patient days.

Month	Falls per 1,000 Patient Days
Month 1	3.5
Month 2	4.0
Month 3	4.8
Month 4	5.1
Month 5	4.6
Month 6	4.4
Average (Center Line)	4.2

(Imagine a run chart here showing an upward, negative trend hovering between 3.5 and 5.1 with the center line at 4.2)

The Intervention: Post-Fall Huddles

The intervention implemented was a standardized Post-Fall Huddle process.

Within 15 minutes of any patient fall, a brief, interdisciplinary huddle (including the primary nurse, charge nurse, and nursing assistant) is conducted right at the bedside. The huddle focuses on:

1. Immediate Care: Ensuring the patient is safe and injuries are assessed.
2. Root Cause: A rapid, simple analysis of "What happened?" and "What could have prevented it?"
3. Action Plan: Development of at least one immediate, patient-specific safety measure to implement before the end of the shift (e.g., relocating a bedside commode, adjusting medication timing, adding a frequent rounding schedule).

This system ensured that a learning loop was closed immediately after every event, leading to timely and tailored adjustments to the fall prevention plan for the individual patient.

"After" Picture: New, Improved Performance

This run chart shows the fall rate after the implementation of the Post-Fall Huddle intervention. The goal of 2.1 falls per 1,000 patient days was met and sustained.

Month	Falls per 1,000 Patient Days
Month 7	3.0
Month 8	2.5
Month 9	2.0
Month 10	1.8
Month 11	2.2
Month 12	1.7
New Average (Center Line)	2.2

(Imagine a run chart here showing a steep drop-off after Month 6, and a sustained, lower trend hovering between 1.7 and 2.2 with the new center line at 2.2)

What it means:

- + Dr. Anya Sharma, MD – Sponsor, Chief Medical Officer
- + Dr. Elizabeth Kim, PharmD – Clinical Pharmacist
- + Robert Chen, RN, BSN – Team Lead, Nurse Manager
- + Sarah Miller, MS – Quality Improvement Specialist
- + Maria Rodriguez, RN – Staff Nurse Representative
- + David Owens, PT – Physical Therapy Representative
- + Javier Santos – Nursing Assistant