



Creating a Culture of Safety for Safe Patient Handling

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Background

Health care workers at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) who handle patients have little guidance to help them identify when to use the existing equipment for moving patients. Manual lifting of patients continues despite equipment installation and training. Therefore, health care workers on the inpatient care units are frequently injured from patient handling tasks.

UWHC Direct Cost and Volume of Patient Handling Injuries by Fiscal Year

Year	Cost	Volume
FY 2005	\$ 653,601	54
FY 2006	\$ 813,949	56
FY 2007	\$ 591,193	89
FY 2008	\$ 418,272	90
FY 2009	\$ 184,782	93
FY 2010	\$ 695,288	150

Note: Open claims continue for fiscal years 2006 – 2010, therefore costs are not final for these fiscal years. Costs are direct costs only. Source: Lorna Knapp, RN, COHN-S

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to decrease the number and severity of health care worker injuries on one inpatient care unit at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics by implementing a culture of safety for safe patient handling.

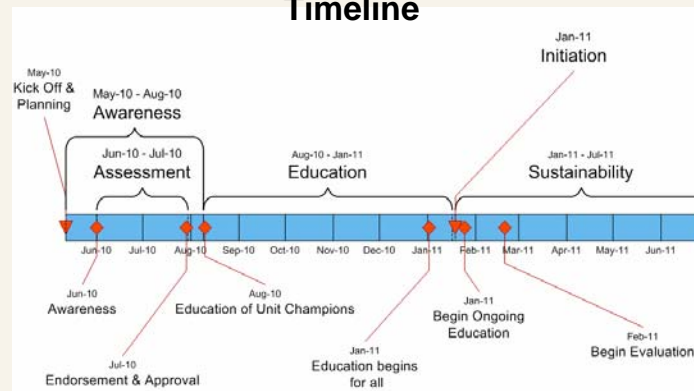


Materials & Methods

A multi-component safe patient handling program was deployed on an early adopter unit at UWCH with the following components:

- state of the art equipment for patient handling;
- education and training on risk assessment, patient assessment and equipment;
- unit based ergonomic assessment;
- patient handling assessment criteria;
- guideline on safe patient handling;
- visible support from leadership;
- unit based SMART champions;
- providing after action event reviews; and
- the use of data to analyze effectiveness of the program.

Timeline

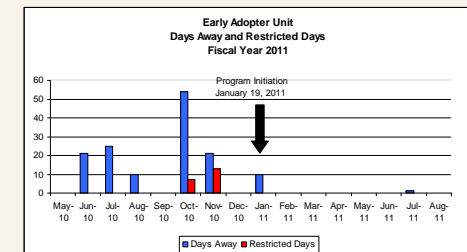


Results

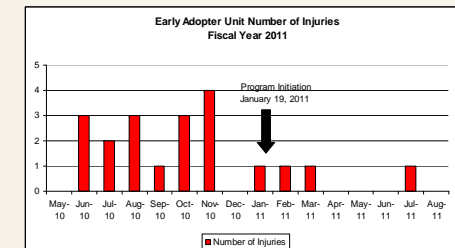
UWHC Early Adopter Unit Direct Cost for Patient Handling Injuries

Year	Cost
FY 2006	\$ 33,728
FY 2007	\$ 77,838
FY 2008	\$ 62,285
FY 2009	\$ 3,203
FY 2010	\$ 41,895
FY 2011 (6 months pre)	\$ 44,487
FY 2011 (6 months post)	\$ 11,056

Note: Open claims continue for fiscal years 2006 – 2011, therefore costs are not final for these fiscal years. There are 4 open claims for fiscal year 2011. Costs are direct costs only. Data abstracted by Lorna Knapp, RN, COHN-S



Source: UWHC Workers Compensation



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Conclusions

Eight months after implementing the safe patient handling program, there has been a reduction in the volume (75%), cost (76%) and severity of injuries related to patient handling (92% in lost work days and 100% in restricted work days).