Core Initiatives for Fall Prevention

Falls contribute to a patient’s functional decline and to increased health care needs. Lasting pain, suffering and limited function can result. Falls have a tremendous financial impact. A 2011 study reports the average hospital stay for patients who fall is 12.3 days longer and injuries from falls lead to a 61% increase in patient care costs. ¹


Purpose:
To identify successful core solutions to prevent patient falls at Stormont-Vail HealthCare. Our presentation will highlight our journey of piloting innovative initiatives for fall prevention.

Initiatives:

Leadership:
Quarterly Administrative Quality and Patient Safety Presentations
Results Reported to Stormont-Vail HealthCare Board
Hospital-Wide Performance Improvement Committee Presentations
Leadership Patient Safety Rounds

Interventions:
Hourly Rounding
Immediate Post Fall Huddle
New Bed/Chair Alarms
New Gait Transfer Belts
“Call Don’t Fall” Safety Volunteer Program
Re-admission Alerts to Department of Prior Patient Fall Incidents

Data:
National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI®) Data
Results Comparisons
Peminic (Incident Fall Reports)
Department Monthly and Quarterly Fall Demographic Information

Education:
Top 10 Ways to Prevent Patient Falls (flyer)
NDNQI® Fall Reliability Study
For Your Health Be Safe. Call. Don’t Fall
Sensor Bed/Chair Pad Posey Alarm Education
Hospital Newsletter Articles

Community:
Fall Prevention Awareness Day
Channel 13 News “To Your Health” discussing Fall Prevention
Community HealthWise 55 Fall Prevention Presentations

Lessons Learned:
Leadership education and involvement is crucial for implementing fall prevention initiatives.

Evaluating and trending NDNQI comparative data is vital for determining the effectiveness of initiatives and developing educational needs.

An immediate post fall huddle creates a debriefing process about the details of the fall, and collects vital information for preventing future falls. It also emphasizes to staff the importance of preventing falls at our facility.

Creating a safe environment for patients is the responsibility of all employees in an organization.

Future Goals:
Continue to evaluate and trend NDNQI® comparative data and utilize it for education to all hospital staff.
Expand fall prevention initiatives to Ambulatory Care Services.
Implement further action plans to decrease falls in departments.
Expand hourly rounding to include all hospital departments.
Study long-term effectiveness of Volunteer Program.
Assess effectiveness of Readmission Alerts

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Stormont-Vail Regional Health Center, located in Topeka, Kansas, is a 586-bed acute care center that provides inpatient, outpatient and a variety of community outreach services. Stormont-Vail HealthCare is an integrated health care system serving a 13-county area in northeast Kansas.