

Implementation of a Fall Prevention Program: A System Approach

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Background

Falls in acute care settings are one of the largest avoidable patient harm events. In 2021, across eight WellSpan Health (WSH) acute care hospitals, there were 988 inpatient fall events of which 204 resulted in patient injury. Based on fall data analysis and literature review, the WSH System Falls Committee concluded that the current fall risk screening tool was no longer the most valid and sensitive tool available. The Hester Davis Scale (HDS) and HD Nursing Fall Program was selected by WellSpan Health and implemented in November 2022.

The elements of the HD Nursing Falls Program were developed, tested, and validated together. These combine a comprehensive approach to fall prevention allowing for patients to be managed individually based on risk factors and changing conditions.



Predict Prevent Sustain

References:

Dykes, P. C., Curtin-Bowen, M., Lipsitz, S., Franz, C., Adelman, J., Adkison, L., ... Bates, D. W. (2023). Cost of inpatient falls and cost-benefit analysis of implementation of an evidence-based fall prevention program. *JAMA Health Forum*, 4(1):e225125. doi: 10.1001/jamahealthforum.2022.5125

Hester, A., & Davis, D. (2013). Validation of the Hester Davis Scale for fall risk assessment in a neurosciences population. *Journal of Neuroscience Nursing*, 45(5), 298-305. doi: 10.1097/JNN.0b013e31829d8b44

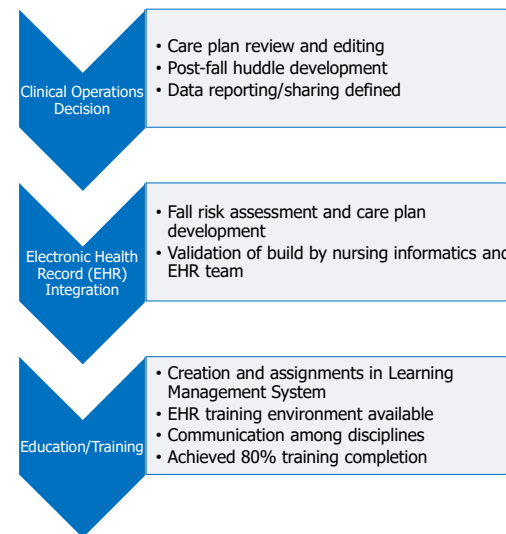
Purpose

It is estimated that nearly \$1 billion were attributed to inpatient falls at WellSpan Health hospitals in 2021.

WellSpan Health's 2025 Nursing Strategic Priority is to reduce patient harm events. The HD Nursing Falls Program has shown to reduce fall rates by 21% and falls with injury by 59%.

Methods

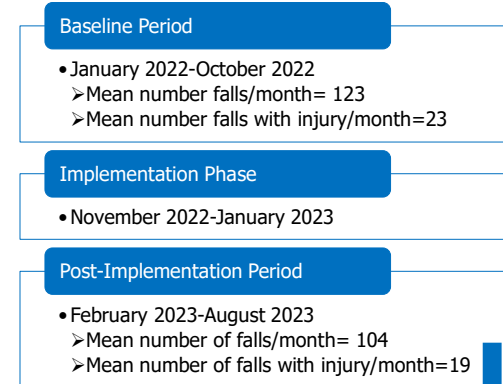
Led by a team of Clinical Nurse Specialists, various departments spanning multiple roles from across all WellSpan acute care entities began work in June 2022 on the HD Nursing design and system integration.



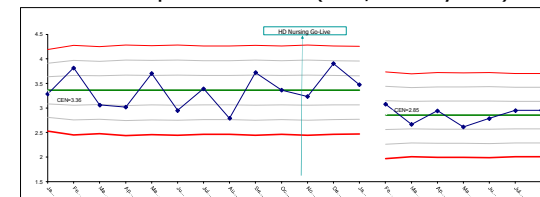
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Outcomes

Baseline and post-implementation data were collected and established.



Baseline vs. Post-Implementation Fall Rate (#Falls/Patient Days*1000)



Implications for Practice

The HD Nursing Falls Program has shown sustainable reduction in total number of falls across WellSpan Health. Individualizing a patient's plan of care, based on specific fall related risk factors, is key for a successful fall reduction program. It is recommended that institutions evaluate current fall prevention practices and implement a bundled approach program.