Inpatient Psychiatry Falls

The Inpatient Psychiatry data regarding patient falls from 2012 to 2014 was examined in a search of similarities between instances of falling and the characteristics of those who fell. From January to June in 2015, it was noted that the age range of 50 to 69 had a higher number of falls than any other age range. It was determined that patients in this range didn't think that they were at a high risk of falling while in the hospital. Further, the effect of medications on things like blood pressure combined with an unfamiliar environment contributed to the higher rate of falls. These facts led to the conclusion that the root cause of the higher rate of falls was that patients in this age range were unaware of their fall risk and the factors that might make this risk higher while in the hospital.

During the "Improve" phase of the DMAIC framework, written education was targeted to all patients. The information presented explained why the patient might be at a fall risk while in the hospital and how he or she could work with staff to prevent a fall. Nurses walked patients through this information upon admission, and it was also posted on the wall of the patient's room. Counseling patients on fall risk factors was imperative in ensuring that patients were aware of their environment and the ways in which medications might change the way they moved in their environment.

For patients between 50 and 69 years old, the number of falls decreased by half from June 1 to December 31 in 2015. There were 10 falls in the specified age range from January 1 to May 31, and 5 falls in the specified age range from June 1 to December 31.

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