

Pursuing Wellness: Achieving Fall Reduction Through Staff and Patient Partnership

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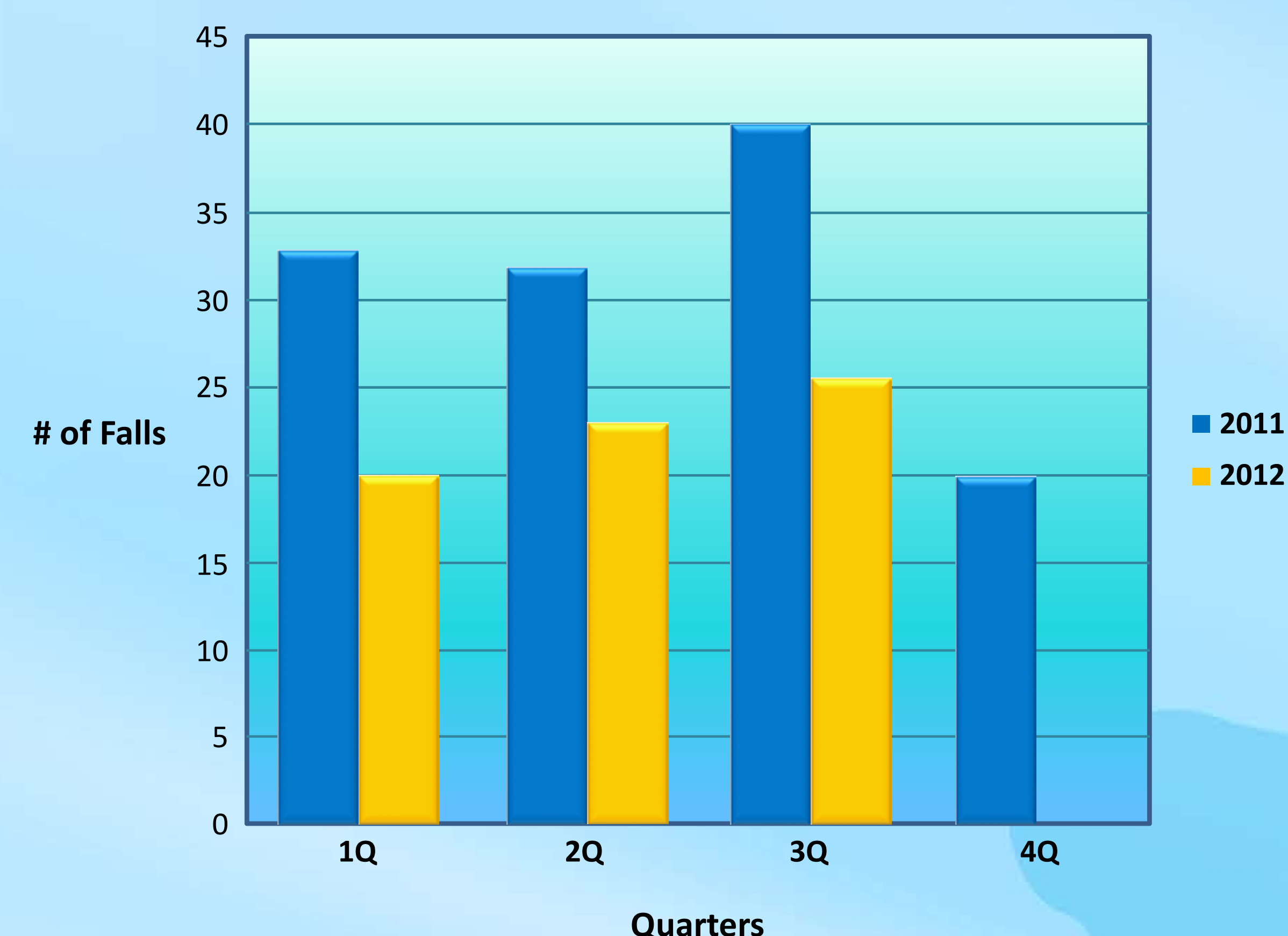
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Pursuing Wellness: Achieving Fall Reduction Through Staff and Patient Partnership

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Abstract

Patient falls are a major cause of injury among hospitalized psychiatric patients, often prolonging and complicating their stay and impacting their well-being beyond hospitalization. A gradual rise in fall rates prompted nurses on a 52 bed, acute adult behavioral health unit in an academic, community Magnet™ hospital to translate new research into their fall prevention practices.



This data translates evidence into practice. New research shows patients who perceive engagement and involvement with both staff and their treatment programs experience a greater sense of value in their recovery. In turn, recovery well beyond hospitalization and across the life span is realized.

Comprehensive Fall Prevention Plan

Search of the evidence resulted in a revised fall prevention practice guideline

- “FALL” tab in the electronic documentation system containing all fall-related information in one easy to access location.
- The Hendrich II Fall Risk Model + ABCS Injury Risk Assessment
 - Identifies additional patients at potential risk of fall injury
 - Prompts nurses to think more critically and individualize a fall prevention plan for each patient through use of additional tool
- Fall Prevention Contract
 - Requires patient agreement upon admission to follow specific action items 100% of the time
 - Prompts patients to make good and healthy choices
- ‘Fall tips’ posters in all patient rooms to educate on what causes falls and how to prevent them
- Revised/updated guideline
- Use of non-skid yellow socks
- Toilet rotation schedule incorporated into the patient rounding schedule
- Mandatory staff education
- Staff safety huddles
 - All communications placed in yellow fall binder

Patient Fall Information and Safety Contract

All Patients are assessed by an RN for any fall risk indicators which may be present on admission or during your hospitalization. We will require if you have fallen within the last year, if you use any assistive devices and then we use the Hendrich Fall tool to come up with a baseline fall score.

At this time staff feels that you are at risk for falls based on your score and overall assessment. Staff will sit with you and explain what steps we take to prevent falls while here on the unit.

While you are in the hospital we ask you to **contract or promise** to do the following, as we recognize that you are vulnerable to falling. Things like unfamiliar environment, medication side effects like dizziness, sedation, and low BP all make it more likely that you could fall.

What you can do:

- Practice Safe Body Mechanics – do not stretch and reach for items while lying in bed, place items close to you on your bed side table.
- Move safely about the units – avoid walking on wet floors, place disposable towels near shower, avoid freshly mopped floors, always turn on light do not walk around in a darkened room, avoid running. Wear non slip socks or footwear at all times.
- Remember to get up slowly, every time you change positions wait and allow your body to adjust.
- Sit on edge of the bed for a minute before you stand
- Don't lean back in chairs so the chair legs are off the floor, always sit back with feet flat on floor
- Use the arm rests to help guide you out of the chair
- Bend at your knee when picking up things from the floor
- When carrying something keep object close to your body
- If you experience dizziness, sit down and ask for staff assistance right away.
- Do not go to the bathroom alone at night, people often fall at night because their blood pressure drops when they stand up. They are also often groggy and disoriented. ALWAYS call the staff to assist you!!!

If you practice these basic tips you can avoid a fall and avoid serious injury.

I, _____ agree to follow 100% of the time, the instructions given to me to help prevent falls. I recognize that I am at INCREASED risk for falling due to the fact that I am on medications and in an unfamiliar environment. I will follow these instructions even when I do not feel like I need assistance or do not feel dizzy or unsteady as I understand that I might feel these things suddenly and be unable to prevent myself from falling and being injured.

Patient Initials/Date and Time _____ Staff Initials/Date and Time _____

YOUR SAFETY IS IMPORTANT TO US!

There are some things we can do to lessen the chance of a fall happening while you are in the hospital. Some things that can increase the chance of a patient falling are: the new and strange environment of the unit; medication side effects like dizziness and sleepiness; and low blood pressure.

The behavioral health staff asks you to agree or promise to do the eleven things on the list below to help yourself to avoid falling while you are on our unit.

What you can do:

1. Practice Safe Body Mechanics – do not stretch and reach for items while lying in bed, place items close to you on your bed side table.
2. Move safely about the units – avoid walking on wet floors, place disposable towels near shower, avoid freshly mopped floors, always turn on light do not walk around in a darkened room, avoid running. Wear non slip socks or footwear at all times.
3. Remember to get up slowly, every time you change positions wait and allow your body to adjust.
4. Sit on edge of the bed for a minute before you stand.
5. Don't lean back in chairs where any of the chair's legs are off the floor, always sit back with feet flat on floor.
6. Use the arm rests to help guide you out of the chair.
7. Bend at your knee when picking up things from the floor.
8. When carrying something keep object close to your body.
9. If you experience dizziness, sit down and ask for staff assistance right away.
10. Do not go to the bathroom alone at night, people often fall at night because their blood pressure drops when they stand up, and because they are often groggy and disoriented. ALWAYS call the staff to assist you!!!

If you practice these basic tips you can avoid a fall and avoid serious injury.



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