2020 Nursing Summit

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Patient Fall Reduction Quality Improvement Project

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Background
• In December 2017, Stephanie Dunkle, MSN, RN, Covenant Medical Center Neurological Telemetry Unit Nurse Manager, observed an increase in patient falls on her unit.
• Findings were shared with the unit staff during staff meetings.
• Direct care nurses (Alexa Baughman, BSN, RN; Sarah Langley, BSN, RN; and Mindy Starch, BSN, RN) volunteered to work with two unit charge nurses (Lauren English, BSN, RN and Casey Hernandez, BSN, RN) to work as a unit fall reduction team to reduce falls of patients admitted to their floor.

Purpose
The Neurology Telemetry Unit total fall rate per 1,000 patient days for December 2017 was 4.56

Goal Statement
To reduce the Neurological Telemetry Unit total patient falls per 1,000 patient days rate.

Methods
• In January 2018, new processes, including work environment redesign, for reducing patient falls were developed by the unit’s fall reduction work group.
• A magnetic communication board was placed in the nurse’s lounge.
• Oncoming and off going charge nurses moved shift huddle to the nurse’s lounge emphasizing patients with an increased risk for falls.
• Charge nurses placed a magnet by the room number of patients at high risk for falls.

Impact
Caregivers have increased visibility and awareness of fall risks when starting their shifts and during breaks taken in the nurse’s lounge.

Outcome
Following changes to the work environment, total falls per 1,000 patient days on the Neurological Telemetry Unit decreased.
• December 2017 rate was 4.56 falls per 1,000 patient days
• February 2018 rate was 1.00 falls/1,000 patient days
• March 2018 the rate was 0.55 falls/patient days
• April 2018 rate was 0.49 falls/1,000 patient days

Discussion
• Nurses represent one of the most innovative groups of professionals in the workforce.
• When presented with a problem, nurses find solutions.
• Nurse leaders should engage direct care nurses in solving problems impacting care delivery and nursing practice.

Conclusion
• What works for one unit of nurses may not work for other units due to unique care environments and cultures.
• Fall reduction on the Neurosurgical/Neurology Unit at Covenant Medical Center was reduced by nurses leading practice environment and workflow changes in their own practice setting.