Our Evidenced Based practice Committee did a “missed care” survey on our surgical ward in June 2011. The missed care survey showed that 86% of patients randomly surveyed stated they were not given an opportunity to ambulate. The same survey showed that 80% of the nursing staff randomly surveyed felt the patients were not being offered an opportunity to ambulate. Nursing staff concluded the missed care was partly due to high acuity of patients and time constraints.

Our objective was to increase the awareness of the importance of ambulation to nursing staff and patients in order to improve the provision of ambulation to surgical inpatients and to provide a program to assist nursing staff with patient ambulation.

Our process of implementation included collecting baseline data and determining what we wanted our outcome to be. This process included involving Physical therapy to train volunteers as walking partners, educating the nursing staff on importance of post-surgical ambulation, providing educational pamphlets for patients and families preoperatively and designating measured walking paths on the surgical units.

The results of our “walk with me” program showed an increase in walking opportunities from 14% to 63% in our first two months.

In addition to the positive outcomes of increasing ambulation in post-surgical patients, we hope to show a decrease in post-surgical complications related to immobility, decreased LOS and DVT’s.