Conquering the Occurrence of Falls in Ambulatory Setting

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Abstract Background Information: Patient falls are a persistent and costly safety concern in both inpatient and outpatient healthcare settings. As ambulatory services expand and patient care complexity increases, peri anesthesia nurses must proactively develop and implement evidence-based solutions to address fall prevention in these settings.

Objectives of Project: In fiscal year (FY) 2023, the ambulatory center recorded a higher-than-expected fall rate. The primary objective of this project was to reduce fall incidents by 30% in FY 2024, aligning with the facility's commitment to patient safety and adherence to National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI) benchmarks.

Process of Implementation: Key fall prevention interventions where implemented which included: environment/facility assessments to identify potential fall hazards; collaboration on fall prevention through interdisciplinary teamwork and alignment on best practices; regular communication and feedback to ensure continuous improvement and engagement of all stakeholders; education and training for all staff to enhance awareness and adherence to fall prevention protocols; electronic health record utilization to send appointment reminders, including information on assistive devices to patients; and coordination with patient transportation staff to minimize fall risk during patient transfers and mobility. Effectiveness of the strategies was assessed by comparing fall incidents from FY 2023 to post-implementation data from FY 2024.

Statement of Successful Practice: After one year of implementing fall prevention strategies, the ambulatory center achieved a 29.89% reduction in falls. By leveraging institutional resources, the team enhanced patient safety, reduced financial burdens, and improved overall stewardship. This initiative also eased pressure on emergency medical services (EMS) and hospitals by decreasing fall-related healthcare needs. Additionally, improvements in safety measures contributed to enhanced patient and visitor experiences.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: The success of this fall prevention initiative has had a significant impact on patient safety and offers broader implications for peri anesthesia nursing. Integrating staff training, environmental modifications, and continuous monitoring will enhance care quality, foster a culture of safety, and further reduce fall incidents in ambulatory settings, ultimately improving patient outcomes.