

## **Preventing Falls in the Surgical Setting by Implementing a Fall Prevention Bundle**

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**Introduction:** A quality improvement (QI) project was implemented to prevent perioperative patient falls.

**Problem:** Perioperative adult patients are at a high risk of falls due to gait and balance disturbances, postoperative polypharmacy, intravascular volume status changes, and unfamiliarity with the perioperative environment. There were eight preventable falls during 2020 in adult perioperative patients at an urban hospital despite their current fall prevention strategies.

**Purpose of the study:** The purpose of this QI project was to evaluate a fall prevention bundle, which included a fall safety agreement, patient falls education, and the Fall Tailoring Interventions for Patient Safety tool (Fall T.I.P.S.).

**Methods:** This QI project was implemented in three surgical units over 16 weeks from August to December 2021. Ninety-one registered nurses in Preop/PACU/Phase II recovery, 14 patient care technicians, six transporters, nine patient service representatives, and two administrative assistants were trained on the fall prevention bundle. Preop nurses gave all adult surgical patients the Fall Safety Agreement to review and sign, and implemented the Fall T.I.P.S. tool if the adult surgical patient has a Morse Fall Scale (MFS) score  $\geq 51$ .

**Results:** Weekly data were collected over 16 weeks, including RN adherence to implementing and documenting interventions, and fall rates. By the end of the project, the average percentage of staff adherence with documentation of interventions was 80.8%. The average percentage of patients who received education and signed the fall safety agreement was 92%. The implementation rate of the Fall T.I.P.S. tool for patients with a MFS  $\geq 51$  was an average of 67.1%. The average number of patients with MFS  $\geq 51$  was 3.62 patients per day. During project implementation, there were no falls reported.

**Conclusions:** The fall safety agreement provides standardized fall education for patients and can be modified for any setting. The Fall T.I.P.S. tool is an effective communication tool used to notify staff of a patient's fall risk and individualized interventions.

**Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research:** There is limited research for fall prevention in perioperative patients. This QI project utilized a fall safety agreement, designed for perioperative patients, and the Fall T.I.P.S. tool to prevent falls. These interventions were simple to implement and had a positive impact on reducing patient falls in the perioperative setting.