

Fall Prevention in the Pre-Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)

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Introduction: Post-anesthesia patients are all identified as having a high risk of falls due to multiple factors, such as residual effects of anesthesia, side effects of narcotic medications, impaired cognitive functions, underlying health functions, and environmental factors.

Identification of the Problem: A fall occurred in the PACU of the patient status post total hip replacement in 2023 from an elective surgery causing the patient to be brought back to the operating room for the second time, extending the hospital stay and increasing complications of his surgical journey.

QI Question/Purpose of the Study: A project aimed at enhancing patient satisfaction and preventing falls was launched in the PACU

Methods: The Plan- Do- Study- Act Framework was used.

- Plan: An initiative to prevent patient fall in PACU for post-surgical patients after TJ surgeries.
- Do: Identify the problem. A patient fell in PACU after hip surgery in December 2023.
- Study: Improving patients' safety and satisfaction in ambulatory surgery. No patient has fallen since the implementation of the project. Data on falls was also utilized and shared with the nursing staff during staff meeting and huddles.
- Act: Patient case review presented with Q & A session at the staff meeting twice per month for two months.
- Patient Fall risk assessment include in pre and post op
- New smart phrase (in Epic Health Connect) created
- Revision "Total Joint Recovery" check list with supervised dangling and allocated timeframe for nurses
- Include Fall Prevention and educate patient and family at discharge

Outcomes/Results: Since the implementation of the project, there has not been any falls from surgical patient's s/p total joint surgeries.

Discussion: During the project there is a question regarding having family at the bedside for patient's supervision. Family is allowed to be present at bedside but consistent practice among staff is to ensure there is a staff member present during the supervised dangle portion of the checklist.

Conclusion: The project proved successful in preventing falls in post-surgical recoveries for total joint patients.

Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research:

- Include nursing staff feedback and suggest new changes in practice
- Improving patients' safety and satisfaction in PACU.

- Falls are eliminated, patient have higher chances of successfully being sent home after surgery instead of failing and getting admitted.