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What we are trying to accomplish

Project Aim: To prevent fall in the PACU for TJA surgeries

Global Aim: To improve patients' satisfaction and quality of patient care

Background:

Setting: 15-bay surgical recovery unit in a Sacramento hospital with focus in PACU

Quality Gap: A fall occurred in the PACU for a post operative patient with severe complications as a results and extended stay in the hospital.

Evidence:

Liu et. al, (2020) identified risk factors for total joint surgery including advanced age, female, overweight (BMI≥25 kg/m2), falls history, use of walking aid, diabetes, cardiac disease, hypertension, COPD and depressive symptoms and mentioned that falls in persons with arthroplasty are common. Previous studies have found in-hospital fall rates after TJA surgery of about 1%. Wu et.al, (2025) conclude that falls are a significant concern following TKA and THA, with a notable percentage of patients experiencing falls postoperatively. These falls, often attributed to surgery-induced changes in muscle strength, can lead to serious consequences including fractures, decreased mobility, and reduced quality of life.

How we will know there is improvement

Measures:

Falls reported In Pre-Op/PACU for 2024 among Total Joint Surgery Cases

Percentage of compliance new process implementation

Tools

Total Joint Checklist Form



TOTAL JOINT RECOVERY

PACU ARRIVAL: _____

- ☐ Oral Pain Medicine
- ☐ X-RAY
- ☐ Early Nutrition
- ☐ Nerve BLOCK
- ☐ IV Fluid Bolus
- ☐ SUPERVISED DANGLE (5-10 minutes)
- ☐ Chart in NOTE with .pacudangle (smartphrase)
- ☐ DC TEACHING with CAREGIVER
- ☐ Medication PICK UP
- ☐ PT EVALUATION
- ☐ VOID
- ☐ TXA
- ☐ Antibiotic

TJ Audit Tool

SSI AUDIT PER SHIFT				
DATE:				
TJs	1st case	2nd case	3rd case	4th case
.pacudangle				

.pacudangle smart phrase

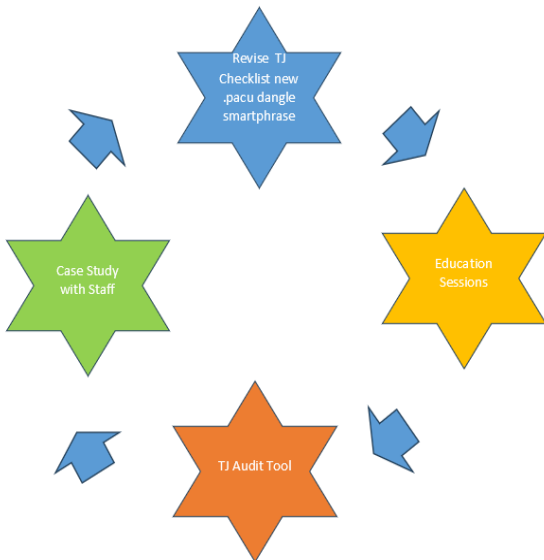
→ pertinent information included i.e. patients' V/S and toleration of walking

What changes can we make

Interventions

1. Case review at staff meeting
2. Safety Committee members and lead identifying change in process
3. Change in practice with 1:1 supervision and .pacudangle smartphrase
4. Revamp new check list
5. Huddle with staff
6. Audit tool implemented

PDSA Cycles



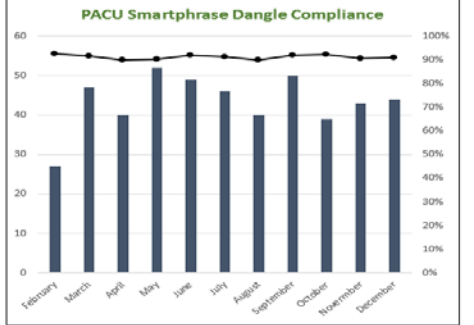
Results

Zero reported patient falls from 02/2024-December 2024 for TJA surgeries

Process:	PACU Dangle Smart Phrase Compliance
Time Period:	February 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024

Month	Number of Total Joint Cases	Number of .pacudangle documentation	Percentage per Month
February	27	25	93%
March	47	43	91%
April	40	36	90%
May	52	47	90%
June	49	45	92%
July	46	42	91%
August	40	36	90%
September	50	46	92%
October	39	36	92%
November	43	39	91%
December	44	40	91%

Total Fallouts	27	435
Sample Size (Obs)	477	91%



References:



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Dorothy Vergel MSN, RN PACU(Manager)
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