

BACKGROUND

- Postoperative patients in the PACU are at increased risk for falls due to residual anesthesia, impaired mobility, surgical pain, and medication effects.
- A review of the PACU Keepsafe incident report data identified that most falls occurred during activities such as ambulation, toileting, and dressing, often when patients relied on escort/family members instead of clinical staff
- These findings highlighted a gap in patient and family understanding of postoperative fall risk and the need for consistent staff involvement in mobility and discharge activities
- This project aimed to reduce perioperative fall risk by implementing a standardized Fall Risk Prevention Bundle, with a focus on early patient/family education and reinforcing the role of clinical staff assistance during high-risk activities

METHODS

Pre-Intervention: Jan-March 2025 (Q1)

- Analyzed 2025 PACU Keepsafe fall data to identify trends and risk points
- Performed direct observation of clinical staff practices during patient dressing and discharge processes in PACU

Intervention: Apr 2025 (Q2)

- Designated Fall Prevention Champions across perioperative units
- Engaged multidisciplinary stakeholders (nursing leadership, perioperative teams, and surgical providers) to standardize practices, including the removal of surgical pants
- Delivered staff education (in-services) on the "Fall Prevention Bundle" interventions in pre- and post-operative units

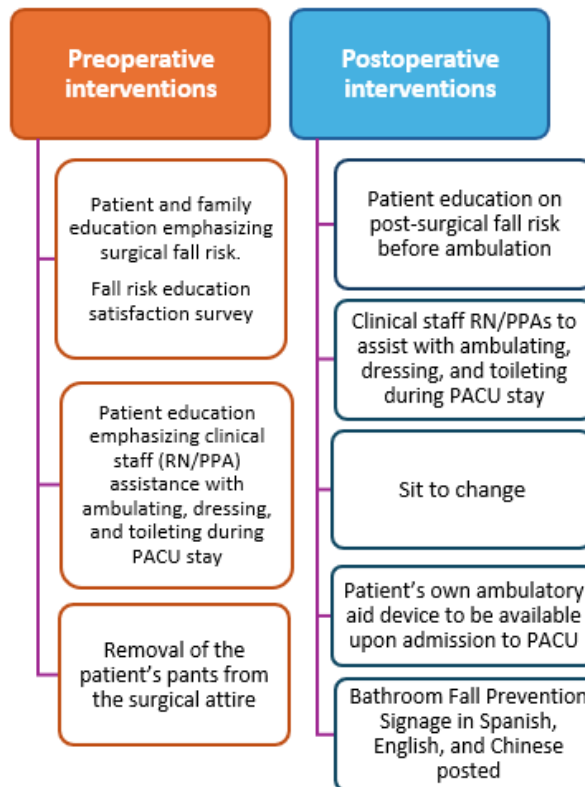
Post-Intervention: May-Dec 2025 (Q2, Q3 & Q4)

- Monitored PACU Keepsafe falls events for outcome evaluation
- Performed direct observations to evaluate adherence to Fall Prevention Bundle practices
- Reinforced interventions through continuous staff engagement and feedback

KEY FINDINGS

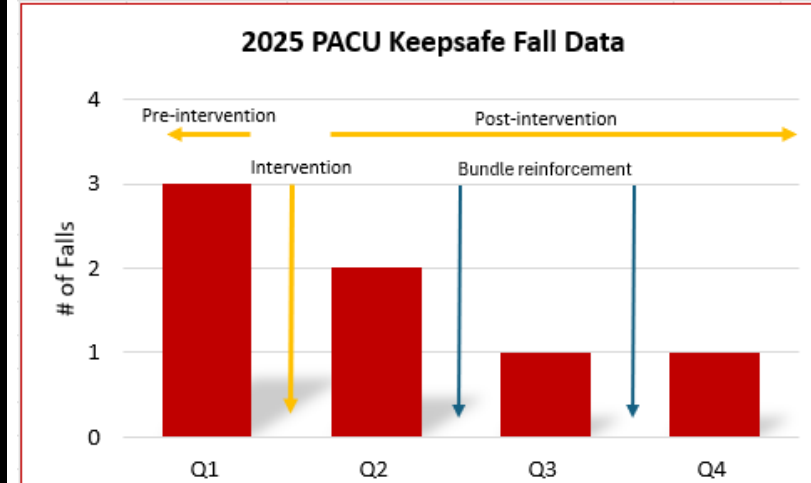
- Preoperative education reinforced patient safety behaviors, contributing to safer postoperative discharge practices
- Increased clinical staff engagement in high-risk activities, with direct observation (N=30) showing 87% of patients received staff-assisted ambulation, dressing, or toileting

FALL RISK PREVENTION BUNDLE



RESULTS

Implementation of the Fall Risk Prevention Bundle was associated with a reduction in PACU fall events, with zero falls observed in multiple post-intervention months



DISCUSSION

Enhancing patient and family awareness of postoperative fall risk through preoperative education resulted in improved acceptance of staff assistance

Integrating a structured fall prevention bundle into daily practice promotes safer patient transitions and strengthens a culture of safety

Teamwork, continued monitoring, and education by Fall Prevention Champions are key to sustaining safety

REFERENCES

Walsh, S. S. (2025). "Enhancing Patient Outcomes and Safety by Reinforcing Nursing Staff Education about Fall Risks and Prevention in the Orthopedic Unit: A Quality Improvement Project". *University of New Hampshire Scholars Repository*. Available at: <https://scholars.unh.edu/thesis/1941/>.