Background

- Falls accounts for 70% of accidental deaths in patients aged 70 and above (Bonner, et al., 2007).
- They are a persistent problem in all healthcare settings, with rates in acute care hospitals ranging from 1.3 to 8.9 per thousand patient days, with about 30% resulting in injury (Goldsack, J., et al., 2015).
- Today’s challenge is to be creative with our strategies in significantly reducing harm and fall rates among the elderly (Dyck, et al., 2013).

Objectives

- To stress the importance of fall prevention bundle in reducing the number of falls and falls with injury in a heart failure unit.
- To implement a creative way to influence practice change by consistent use of fall prevention measures and equipment’s that maintains a patient centered culture.

Methods

Using the IOWA model, the team examined evidence based literature for best strategies in fall preventions.

- Staff compliance with the falls bundle was collected as a baseline data. Staff were re-educated about the initialization of the fall prevention bundle and the patient risk assessment on admission.
- The fall prevention bundle consists of: doors kept open, application of yellow arm bands, and yellow socks, bed alarms and chair alarms turned on.
- Staff was re-educated about the fall prevention bundle. Practice was enhanced by adding fall prevention measures including gait belts, walkers, bedside commodes and chair alarms. These items became standard room equipment.
- Our practice changed with the initiation of the fall prevention bundle including consistent documentation of the bundle.

Results

- Post intervention results showed a dramatic improvement in the use and documentation of the bundle in the areas of yellow armband use 95%, yellow socks 96%, bed and chair alarms 90%.
- Falls in 2017 were significantly reduced to a rate of 2.65% per thousand patient days (4.16 in 2016) surpassing their goal of 5% reduction. Falls with injury reduced by 50% a savings of $56,000.

Nursing Implications

With the implementation of evidence-based practices and equipment to maintain a patient centered culture that promotes safety and harm free environment, influenced practice and resulted in the reduction of falls and falls with injury.

Conclusions

Consistent diligent use of fall prevention measures and equipment to maintain a patient centered culture that promotes safety and harm free environment, influenced practice and resulted in the reduction of falls and falls with injury.

References