The Safety Dance: A Multidisciplinary and Multimedia Approach to Fall Prevention
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Objective: The participant will be able to recognize how innovative presentations can add fun to learning while stressing the importance of reducing and preventing patient and staff falls in the acute care setting.

Problem: Hospitals often rely on poster presentations, power point presentations and required learning through on-line learning management systems for staff education. Many of the staff are "burned out" with current presentation formats, which can be tedious at best and often difficult for the learners to retain information.

Evidence: Geropsychiatric patients tend to have the highest risk for falls. The overall risk of a patient falling in the acute care setting is approximately 1.9 to 3 percent of all hospitalizations and there are approximately 37 million hospitalizations each year in the United States (Currie, L., 2010) The Joint Commission has outlined specific goals to reduce the risk of inpatient falls. Motivating staff to recognize the importance of implementing fall risk initiatives can be challenging, considering the vast amount of ongoing education expectations.

Strategy: The Texas Health Southwest (THSW) Education dept developed their own multimedia production company, Roadkill Productions, which uses a camcorder, camera, no budget and staff to present fun and innovative learning presentations. The Safety Dance was developed in association with the THSW Falls committee to bring awareness to all areas of the hospital on a very important topic and a National Patient Safety Goal. We were provided support from administration, various departments, and volunteers to highlight important preventive measures to reduce falls for patients and staff at THSW.

Practice Change: The video was presented during the safety campaign at THSW. It continues to stream on the staff education channel. The staff is expected to watch it as part of the annual ongoing competency expectations.

Evaluation: Staff awareness of the Falling Star program, fall risk assessments, rounding, use of safety alarms on the beds, and required follow up in the event of a fall has increased.

Results: Texas Health Southwest has the second lowest fall history in our 14 hospital system. Staff awareness of the falling star program and process of implementing fall precautions has increased since the release of the video in May of 2010. Texas Health Southwest was recognized at our 2010 System Leadership Institute for innovation, promotion of safety and prevention of falls.

Recommendations: The DVD is presented to all new hires during orientation. It is also used as part of the staff ongoing annual competencies.

Lessons learned: It is important for educators to find innovative ways to capture the staff’s interest while addressing very important safety issues.

Bibliography:
Currie, L. Fall and Injury Prevention. retrieved August 2, 2010 from:
http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/nurseshdbk/docs/CurrieL_FIP.pdf