Orthostatic Blood Pressures to Combat Falls
Sinai Hospital of Baltimore

Program/Project Description.
The inpatient psychiatric unit had an increase in the number of patient falls (these are reported via occurrence reports) Each fall event requires a debriefing form. In reviewing the forms, it was noted that all of the falls occurred around the same time in the AM. Each patient was also on medications that had potential side effects of vertigo and hypotension. To be successful, the number of falls would decrease on the unit.

Process.
The Nursing process aligned with the Rosswurm Larrabee Research Model was the framework.

The Nursing Process is a feedback loop of:
- Assess/Diagnosis/Outcome Evaluation/Implementation/Evaluation

while the Rossworm Larrabee model is to:
- Assess Current practice & need for change; collect & Compare data
- Identify interventions, select outcome indicators
- Search research literature for best evidence that fits the situation
- Design the practice Change
- Implement & Evaluate the change (Pilot study demonstration)
- Communicate & Educate staff on change; integrate into practice

Solution.
After a literature search, the Advanced Practice Nurse and the Clinical Leader of Psychiatry, along with the manager and the Outcomes & Practice Committee, implemented an Orthostatic Blood Pressure Protocol. This protocol ensures that orthostatic blood pressures will be taken on all patient admits to the inpatient psych unit on their admission and for two days following admission at 11AM. These blood pressures are accompanied by patient teaching about their medication side effects, the signs and symptoms of hypotension as well as fall precautions. The order for these blood pressures was added to the admit orders, and the measurements are noted in the electronic record, and can be graphed.

Measurable Outcomes.
There is data on falls: a high of 9 falls in June 2009 and then post implementation date of the orthostatic blood pressure protocol. If accepted, the data will be graphed and displayed. A screen shot of blood pressures graphed in the electronic documentation system will be shown also.

Sustainability.
As above (protocol, orderset) as well as reporting to the unit Multidisciplinary Committee, the Outcomes and Practice committee, and the housewide Performance Improvement Council.

Role of Collaboration and Leadership.
Nursing Leadership recognized the issue, reported data to the Multidisciplinary committee and the unit Risk Management rep. Physician and Pharmacy support was obtained, and is essential for medication surveillance.

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