

**Solution: Enhancing the Culture of Safety**

**Organization:** Anne Arundel Medical Center

**Type:** Acute Care

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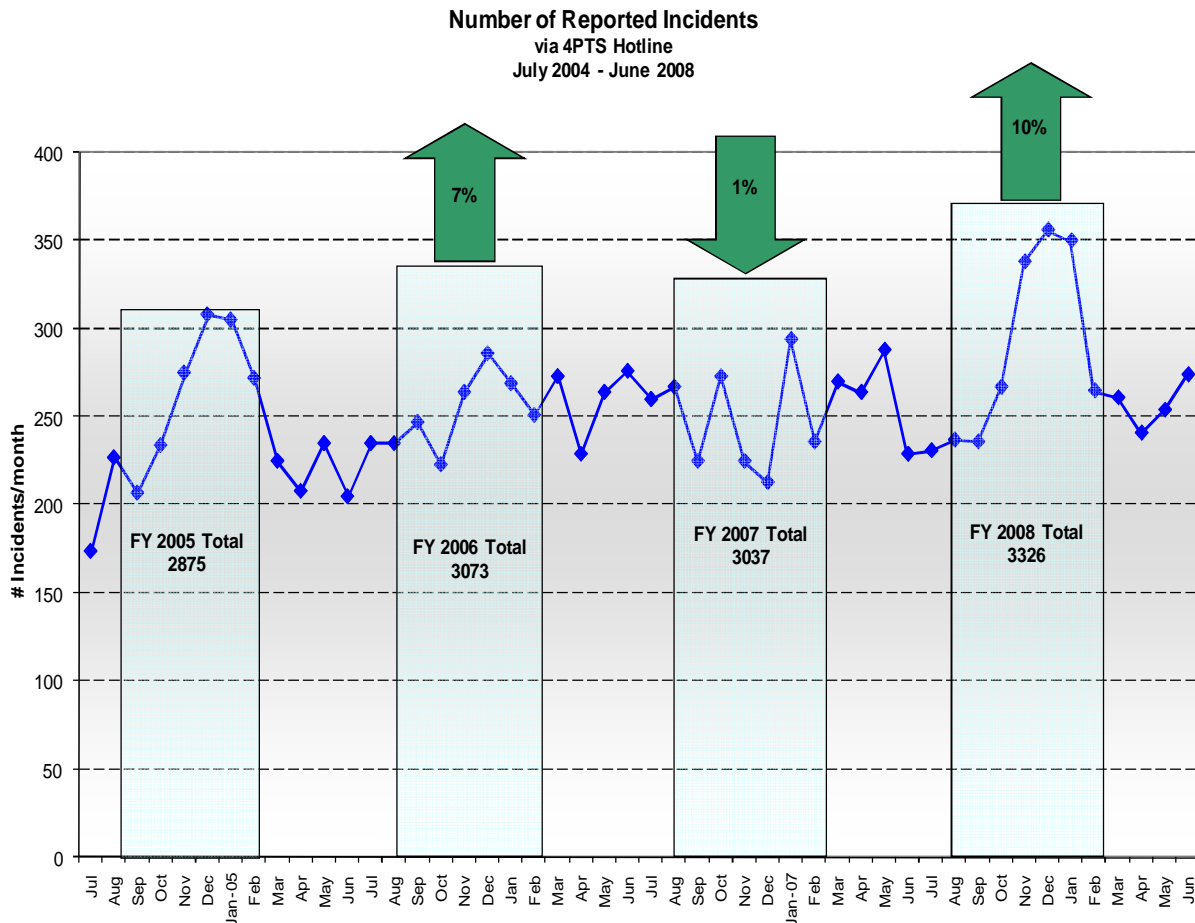
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**IDENTIFICATION:**

A priority for all healthcare organization is to continuously enhance the Culture of Safety. Anne Arundel Medical Center (AAMC) identified a need for further enhancement of our Culture of Safety. Our safety program at the time was supported by our culture, which encouraged all staff to report near misses that have the potential of harm for our patients.

Since the implementation of our 4PTS Hotline, which is a telephonic-only incident reporting system, we had seen steady increases in incident reports on a quarterly and yearly basis since its inception. However, during the last quarter of fiscal year 2007, a downtrend was identified that showed a decrease in the reporting of near misses. Below is a graphic that depicts our trended 4PTS hotline calls including the identified decrease in reports. Our challenge was to continue to increase the “Culture of Safety” by not only increasing the awareness of our culture but by promoting the reporting of incidents, with a focus on the “near misses”.



**PROCESS:**

Improving systems and process are essential in reducing harm from all potential risks in healthcare settings. AAMC's Patient Safety Committee which is a multidisciplinary team made up of representatives from pharmacy, quality and patient safety, nursing, medical staff and ancillary departments and AAMC's Department of Quality and Patient Safety teamed up to develop an organization wide program to promote, encourage and reward all staff in reporting near misses to reduce the potential harm to our patients.

Goals that were identified included:

- Focusing on a culture where staff and leaders are committed to safety
- Fostering a culture where staff are safety conscious and freely reports near misses and adverse events
- Creating a culture where we have the information and tools to prevent or reduce the probability of any harm that can potentially reach our patients

The team began by researching what is considered to be best practices and strategies for "Creating a Culture of Safety" in healthcare organizations. We strived to create a program that would become an accepted and permanent part of the organizational culture and one, which would encourage and reward reporting of near misses across all departments of the organization.

The team developed a list of essential components that were to be incorporated in the program. Included in this list were the following:

- Declare that safety is an urgent priority
- Show by example a commitment to safety
- Encourage communication and collaboration
- Develop a program and involve all departments and encourage and obtain "buy in" by all employees
- Establish, encourage and practice non-punitive reporting
- Encourage use of telephonic reporting process to communicate safety concerns, problems, and errors
- Increase awareness of all employees in looking for potential issues of safety
- Support the sharing of lessons learned at all levels of AAMC to effect behavioral changes within the organization

**SOLUTION:**

On June 27, 2007, during National Safety Awareness Month, AAMC launched a new hospital wide program titled the "Good Catch Club". Again, our aim was to encourage and enhance the use of the current 4PTS Hotline (incident reporting) process and to further infuse a healthy culture of safety within our organization.

During the kick-off of the program, posters and table tent cards were distributed throughout the organization with flyers describing the new initiative. A baseball theme was utilized to promote interest and chocolate baseballs were given to each department and unit with a poster describing the initiative to raise awareness. Emails were also sent out to all staff and physicians introducing the program and its components.

All employees across the organization were encouraged to report all “near misses” to the 4PTS Hotline. With this, we created a culture where we work as a team to identify, report and prevent or reduce the probability of any harm that can potentially reach our patients. Near misses provide the following opportunities for learning:

- Lessons can be found from incidents that almost happened
- Interventions can be put in place to prevent the further risk of an adverse event from happening
- Increased eye for safe practice from all staff and physicians

Staff is recognized and rewarded for their “Good Catches” by:

- An impromptu visit to the department by senior leadership which includes sharing with recipient and peers the scenario of the “Good Catch”, rewarding the recipient with a “Making a Difference” pin and a providing recipient a plate of cookies to celebrate and share with their peers
- The recipient’s picture is taken and added to our “Good Catch Club” bulletin board. This bulletin board is centrally located in our main cafeteria for all staff and visitors to see. This provides a visual reminder to a large volume of staff on a daily basis.
- The recipient is recognized and featured in AAMC’s Quality and Safety Quarterly Newspaper
- Bi-annually, each recipient is included in a drawing for prizes in recognition of their contributions to our culture of safety.
- Gold & Platinum level memberships awarded for continued reporting



Since the inception of the Good Catch Club at AAMC there has been 249 good catches identified by staff from 29 different units/departments across the organization from August 2007 through December 2008. The good catches continue to be monitored by our 4PTS incident reporting system.