Scottish Patient Safety Programme Falls impact report 2024

Overview

Falls are a common cause of harm for people in hospital. The Scottish Patient Safety Programme (SPSP) led a breakthrough series collaborative 2021-2024, which achieved a **9% national reduction in the rate of falls in acute hospitals** (see chart below).

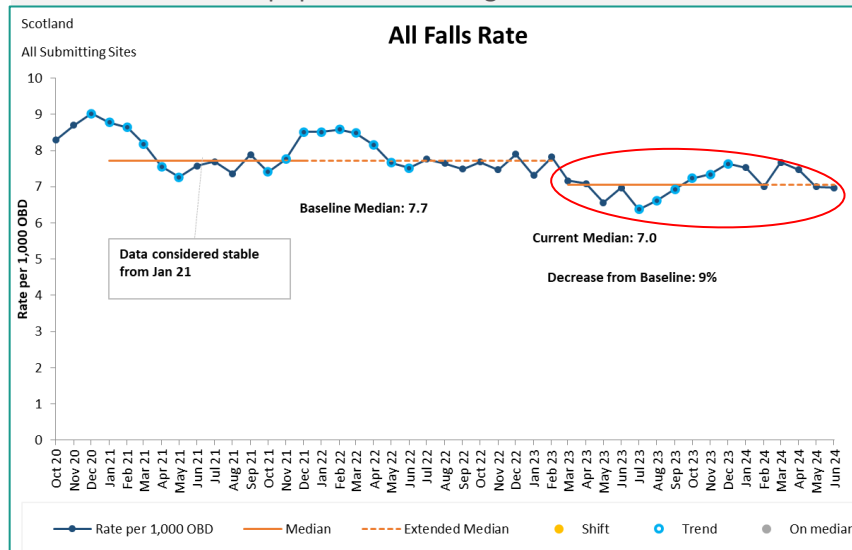## Scottish Patient Safety Programme

SPSP is part of Healthcare Improvement Scotland, the national improvement agency for health and social care in Scotland.

SPSP aims to improve the safety and reliability of care and reduce harm through:

- SPSP Essentials of Safe Care

- SPSP Programmes of work

- SPSP Learning system

NHS Scotland all falls rate: acute hospitals

Dataset has >90% population coverage for all months

Scotland
All Submitting Sites

All Falls Rate

Rate per 1,000 OBD

Data considered stable from Jan 21

Baseline Median: 7.7

Current Median: 7.0

Decrease from Baseline: 9%

Legend: Rate per 1,000 OBD — Median — Extended Median — Shift — Trend — On median

Sustained improvement in the rate of falls was achieved in 38% (5/13) participating NHS Scotland health boards.

The estimated cost avoidance of the reduction was £119,000, largely attributable to 95 avoided bed days compared to the baseline year.

Further detail in the full report.

Reducing falls: what works?

NHS Scotland health boards with a sustained reduction in their rate of falls identified contributors to their success. The key themes centred on the SPSP Essentials of Safe Care* including:

- Visible leadership to support a culture of safety*
- Team engagement in understanding and using ward level data
- Person centred approaches to care*
- Multidisciplinary team working*
- Shifting culture from preventing falls to promoting safer mobility

For further details, please refer to the full report.

Falls with harm

- Across NHS Scotland there are differences in the definitions of a fall with harm. Because of these differences it was not appropriate to aggregate the falls with harm data in a national chart.
- There were sustained reductions in the rate of falls with harm in four health boards, and an increased rate of falls with harm in three boards.
- Changes in rates of falls with harm did not consistently track changes in all falls.

Hear from a team

In this video NHS Ayrshire and Arran highlight key learning from their falls improvement work.

https://youtu.be/PgUi2dhcJiI

Next steps

With the support of the SPSP collaborative, teams across Scotland have made important progress in reducing the rate of falls in hospital. Their achievements have been delivered with a backdrop of COVID-19 and significant system pressure.

Despite demonstrable improvement, falls continue to be among the most common adverse events reported in acute hospitals across Scotland. Healthcare Improvement Scotland remains committed to working in partnership with NHS Scotland health boards to reduce falls.

Resources to reduce falls

The falls reduction driver diagram and change package was developed with clinicians, researchers and improvement teams.

- Falls driver diagram and change package
- Falls measurement framework

Email to join our learning system:
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