

From the "fall" phenomenon evaluation in the Hospital setting to empowerment of citizens and professionals.

Giovanna Campaniello Responsible of Clinical Governance, Risk Management and Quality and Accreditation Coordination - General Directorate University Hospital of Parma
Anna Nardelli MD Director of Geriatrics Unit - University Hospital of Parma
Francesca Montali Clinical Governance, Risk Management and Quality and Accreditation Coordination - General Directorate University Hospital of Parma
Antonella Dovani Clinical Governance, Risk Management and Quality and Accreditation Coordination - General Directorate University Hospital of Parma
Luca Sircana Health Director - University Hospital of Parma

Background and aims

Falls prevention is a risk management issue on which there is attention both at National (Recommendation n.13, Italian Health Ministry, 2012) and at Regional levels (2nd most frequently reported event in Incident Reporting System and 1st event reported by severity). The Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria of Parma defined falls prevention a Clinical Governance and Risk Management priority. The citizen/caregiver/professional empowerment is a key element for the effectiveness of fall prevention. The purpose of this work is to develop involvement / information / education strategies for all the actors that contribute to the healthcare processes.

Type of innovation

The innovation of the management system in the "fall" phenomenon was carried out through the following steps:

- Identification of a Multi-Professional working group in the Parma Teaching Hospital;
- Implementation of an Incident Reporting System specific for "fall" phenomenon in the Parma Teaching Hospital (with the adoption of "Fall - Incident Reporting" detection sheet);
- Identification of the organization and department-based risk profile on the basis of the received reports;
- Redaction and diffusion of a light, functional, and specific communication system to professionals, called "How to deal with... Falls";
- Poster's preparation in order to disseminate recommendations both to patients and caregivers;
- Preparation of Brochures focused on patient and caregiver;
- Diffusion of National Recommendations and materials in the Hospital.

Scalability, replicability, transferability

Internal Transferability:

- Between different disciplines for inpatient areas (with different "clinical competences" eg. between geriatrics and surgery);
- Among wards and other services (eg. Diagnostic, operating rooms, etc.).

External Transferability:

- Between Hospital and Local Services;

- From the Hospital to the patient's home.

The project, realized with Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria's own resources, has been positively acknowledged by professionals (numerous reports without severe impact have been collected: this shows a good commitment to monitor the phenomenon). The professionals' awareness on falls risk has made it possible to realize prevention interventions. The produced materials, containing instructions ready for use, are also published on the Hospital website in order to reach the population at large. This experience was presented at the regional level and contributed to the definition of Good Practices for AGENAS of the Emilia Romagna (2012).

Results

If the observed data will be confirmed over time, the empowerment of citizens-caregivers-professionals could contribute to:

- reduce significantly injurious falls (from excoriation / contusion to fracture / death);
- reduce costs of diagnostic tests and specialist visits consequent to the fall events (a first estimate suggests that the economic value of the fall phenomenon in Parma Hospital may be at least 50 -60.000 euro per year).

