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Falls and Injury Prevention in Fraser Health's Acute Care: the Universal Approach

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Hospitals should be a safe and injurious fall free place. Therefore, Fraser Health's Acute Care Clinical Working Group in collaboration with acute care sites is working to make this a reality. Falls account for up to 60% of inpatient accidents and approximately 30% of patients' falls result in physical injury. Furthermore, falls can take away confidence and freedom of movement, increase hospital length of stay and prevent people from returning to their homes. The goal of this initiative is not only to decrease the number of falls, but also the severity of injury due to falls in acute care.

The Universal Fall Precautions initiative is founded on the principle that all patients are at risk for falls and a core set of fall prevention principles is applied by all staff to all patients. The acronym SAFE (Safe environment, Assist with mobility, Fall risk reduction, and Engage patient and family) is utilized to describe our key strategies for universal fall prevention. Furthermore, the Falls Risk & Injury Reduction Intervention Tool is used to provide specific interventions (e.g., hip protectors, commodes at bedside, bed alarms, closer observation, and referrals to OT and PT) based on patients' own risk factors for falls and fractures. We have also introduced a pro-active approach by having every staff member ask three questions before exiting a patient's room: (1) Do you need to use the toilet? (2) Do you have any pain or discomfort (3) Do you need anything before I leave? Pre and post-implementation measurements have included environmental audits, chart audits and tracking of falls and injuries.

The focus of this presentation will be not just on the data, processes, tools, strategies, and outcomes but also, the dynamic journey that continues within FH as we expand the program across the region in order to achieve our goal.