

COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO DECREASING PATIENT FALLS IN VIDANT MEDICAL CENTER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UNIT

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

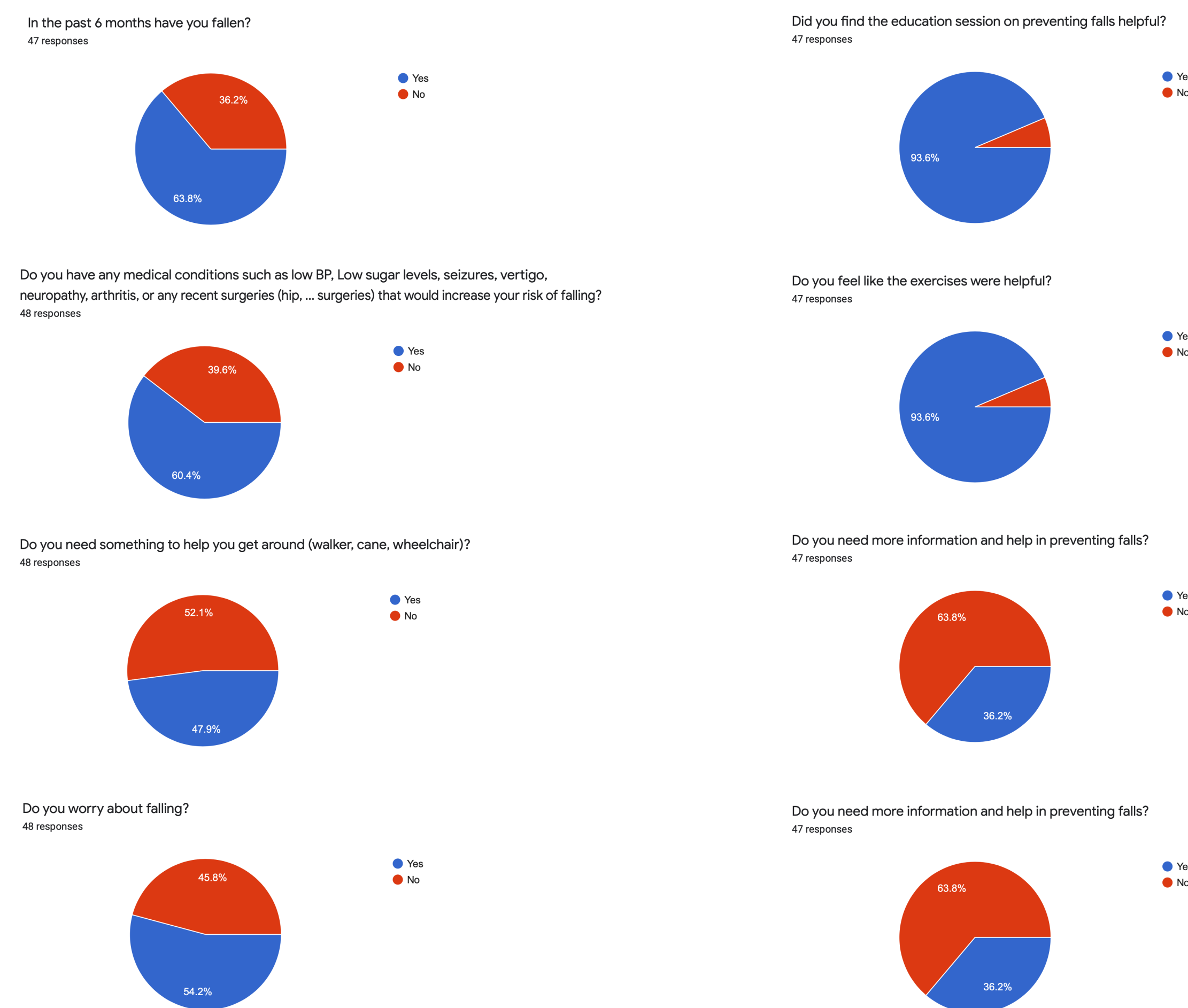
- A recent study on the incidence of falls in US hospitals found a fall rate of 8.55 per 1000 patient days and injurious fall rate of 1.97 per 1000 patient days on geriatric psychiatric units in general hospitals.
- This rate is significantly higher than for general adult psychiatric units in general hospitals. Psychiatric conditions and psychiatric medications are associated with an increased fall risk.
- Other clinical conditions including neurological disorders and gait, balance, and visual/hearing deficits may also increase fall risk.
- The most common activities patients are engaged in during falls in psychiatric settings include getting up from a bed, chair or wheelchair; walking/running; bathroom-related; or behavior-related.
- Hospital fall prevention strategies target patient and family education, clinician education, environmental modifications, assistive devices, hospital systems, and medication reviews.

METHODS

- Our quality improvement project used a collaborative approach to reduce falls in Vidant Medical Center Internal Medicine/Psychiatry (Geriatric) Inpatient Behavioral Health Unit.
- Our collaborative approach involved physicians, nursing, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, with the support of allied health staff.
- After identifying patients with a moderate to high fall risk we provided patient education focusing on fall prevention, weekly physical therapy and occupational therapy led exercises, and assistive devices.
- Physicians assigned to patients also performed daily medication review in collaboration with nursing.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES

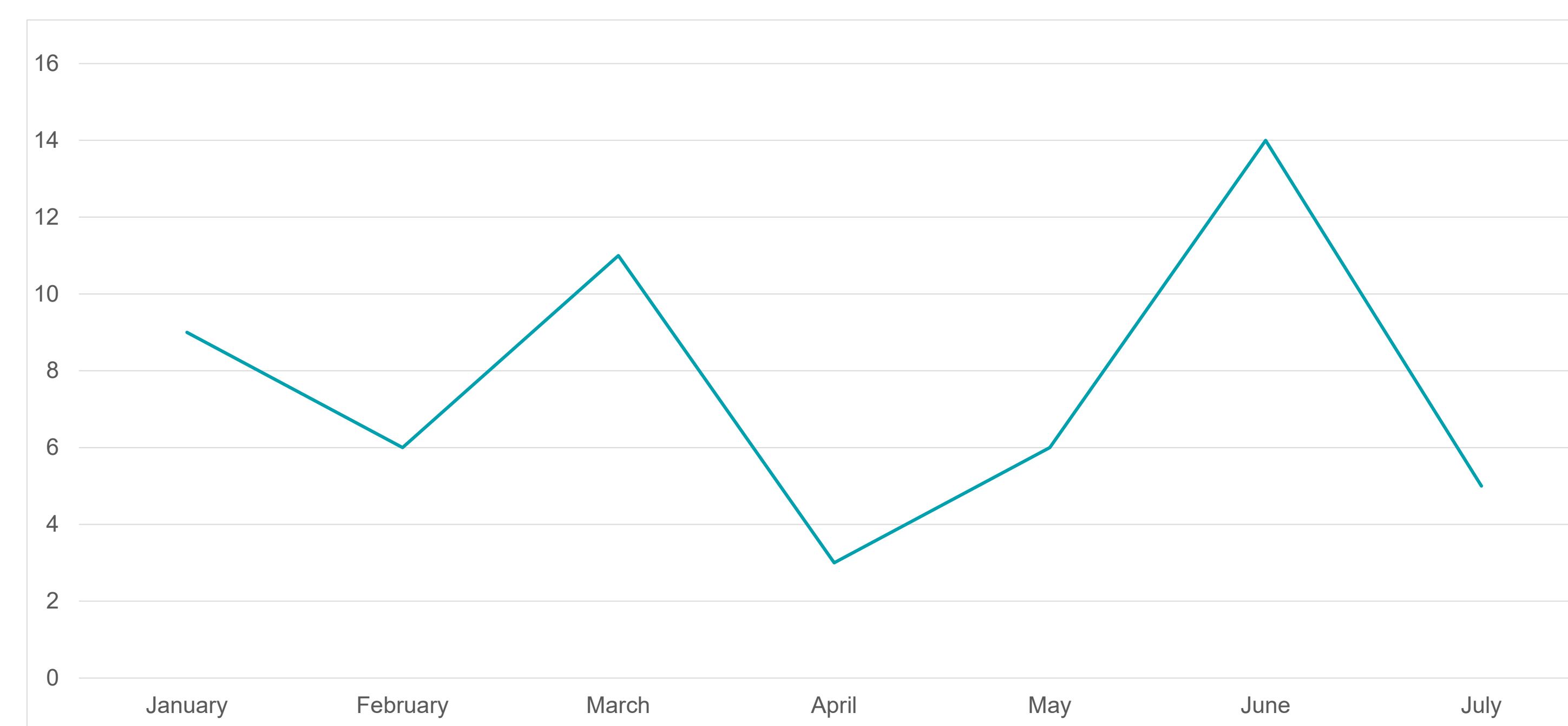
- Following these interventions patient feedback was overwhelmingly positive with patient impressions that they benefited.
- Data was insufficient to demonstrate reduced fall rate over period of time of study.



Pre-class survey

Post-class survey

BHU Falls



CONCLUSIONS

- Our quality improvement project utilized a collaborative approach felt to be successful by patients and staff.
- Future research should include longer time period with larger sample size and standardized data recording in order to obtain data sufficient to demonstrate reduced fall rate.
- An improved intervention could also include increased frequency of structured exercise sessions, possibly even daily.
- Our collaborative approach to reduce falls could potentially be further expanded to other patient populations.

REFERENCES

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