

Development of an inpatient fall's pathway for silver trauma patients

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Aim

Our aim was to develop a standardised and evidence-based pathway for Silver Trauma patients (over 65 and admitted with a fall or a history of falls) on the Major Trauma Ward (MTW) in an attempt to improve their strength, balance and mobility. An additional goal would be to reduce the risk of future falls at home and create community networks for continued falls support post discharge. This is in line with NICE rehabilitation after trauma guidelines in relation to falls patients.

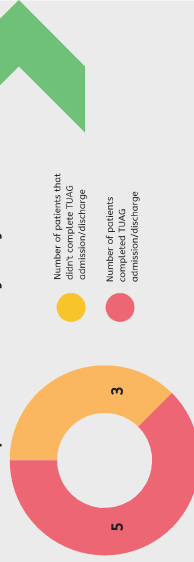
Feasibility Study

- A feasibility study was carried out to identify any gaps in the treatment pathway for silver trauma patients admitted falling a fall.
- Timed up and go (TUAG) had a strong evidence base for falls risk and there was evidence to support BERG and Tinetti as balance based outcome measures.
- The feasibility of introducing TUAG/ Berg and Tinetti outcome measures on admission and repeated on discharge for all patients over 65 admitted to the MTW following a fall was assessed.

Results

- Data was collected for 8 patients, 5 were able to complete TUAG.
- No consistency in completion of the Berg or Tinetti assessments.

Total number of patients in feasibility study



Analysis:

- Although patients TUAG improved from admission to discharge the average TUAG on discharge remains >30 secs which is predictive of an increased risk of falling.
- The 3 patients that couldn't complete TUAG on admission required aids such as Sara Steady.
- Berg/ Tinetti were not completed due to suitability/ability of patients at that stage of their admission.
- It was identified that in the context of silver trauma patients some outcome measures (Berg & Tinetti) were not appropriate with this patient group.
- Despite selecting lower level outcome measures (TUAG) there were still some patients that were unable to complete on this outcome measure on admission.

Next steps:

- Replace Berg / Tinetti with alternative outcome measures.

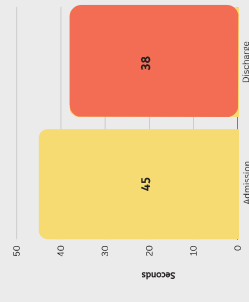
Pilot

Based on the results and findings of the feasibility study, the outcome measures chosen for admission and pre discharge were : TUAG, grip strength and fear of falling questionnaire. These were selected as they were deemed more appropriate for the silver trauma patient population.

Results

Information was gathered for a total of 22 patients using the above outcome measures.

01. Average TUAG Scores



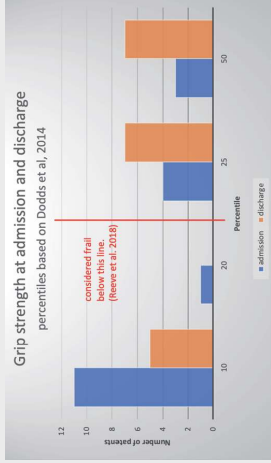
A score of > 30 seconds is predictive of requiring a mobility aid, being more dependent on others for ADLs and increased risk of falling. The graph displays a decrease in TUAG scores on discharge compared to admission. However, scores still remained above 30 seconds on discharge.

03. Fear of falling questionnaire

Fear of falling questionnaire*	Median	
	Range	Median
Admission	6-35	19
Discharge	3-44	16

This 14 point questionnaire has a potential score of 56. The patients scores improved from admission to discharge but the overall range and mean scores on discharge indicate an ongoing fear of falling.

*It should be noted that a higher score indicates greater activity limitation and participation restriction as a result of the fear of falling. (Lander et al., 2011)



A score under the 20th percentile for grip strength (indicated by the red line) is indicative of frailty. Data collected showed that 63% of patients were frail on admission. On discharge, this figure had improved but 26% of patients continued to score below the 20th percentile.

Analysis

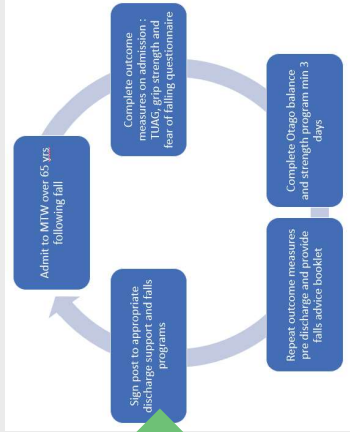
The pilot has identified the practicalities of using the above specified outcome measure in clinical practice. TUAG scores reflected an increase risk in falling, grip strength scores indicated ongoing frailty in silver trauma patients and fear of falling questionnaire highlighted that the majority of the 22 patients still had a fear of falling in the future. Although there was some improvement in patient scores on admission and pre discharge, a large proportion of patients remained frail despite physiotherapy assessment and input.

Intervention

Now that baseline outcome measures are being collected the Otago balance / strength program will be introduced as per the patient flowchart below.

Outcome measures will continue to be collected on admission and discharge to evaluate the impact of the Otago program.

Patient Journey Flowchart



References:

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