



Measuring Falls

In an age where quality of care is becoming more and more transparent and consumers are becoming savvier, it is important to know what care metrics we are measuring and what the results we get from those metrics tell us about our delivery of care. While falls have historically not been a publicly reported metric, to the consumer, falls are one of the easiest things used to judge the quality of a facility's care. By the time a person has entered into a facility, there is a great likelihood that the person has already fallen at home, or has a great fear of falling which is part of the reason a stay in a facility becomes necessary.

So, the question then becomes how we measure falls in a way that helps us to trend our success and look for opportunities to improve. Here is one formula that you may consider using to help trend what is happening in your facility:

Measuring on a monthly basis take:

The number of residents who fell (multiplied by)

The number of days in the month (divided by)

Total number of resident days for the month (multiplied by) 100 = the percentage that fell.

You could stop there and use this number as a way to trend your progress, or you could take:

The percentage that fell and subtract it from 100 to get the percentage that DID NOT fall.

Using a positive percentage can help motivate staff in a competitive manner against their own goals. Once you have a baseline percentage you can then begin to track the effectiveness of interventions and look for opportunities to improve upon care plans and staff training as needed. Remember, once you begin measuring, it is important to be prepared to address consumer questions about how your facility does regarding falls management. Having this data available to all staff can help the staff communicate the hard work and effort that goes into keeping residents safe and well cared for. Making this type of trending a part of your overall quality program will help to position your facility as a proactive and serious about care delivery.