

## 7) The Implementation of an Interdisciplinary Patient Tracer Program for Proactive Risk Assessment

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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Patient and system tracers have been conducted at our institution since 2008. Prior to this project, inpatient, ambulatory and procedural tracers were performed by multiple departments and a unified approach to surveillance did not exist. Likewise, there was no collective mechanism to identify trends, compare performance, inform senior leadership or longitudinally assess risk.

The primary objectives of the Interdisciplinary Patient Tracer Program were to measure compliance with the National Patient Safety Goals and serve as an educational resource to hospital staff.

### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

- We developed an Interdisciplinary Patient Tracer Program to assess compliance with the National Patient Safety Goals
- We achieved representation from over eight disciplines including nurses, physicians, pharmacists, infection control practitioners, patient advocates, compliance specialists, medical interpreters, patient safety professionals and process improvement experts
- We performed tracers on over 77 units in 2014, with an additional 93 units scheduled to be surveyed in 2015
- We did not receive any National Patient Safety Goal findings during our triennial Joint Commission Hospital re-accreditation survey in April 2015

### LESSONS LEARNED

1. Interdisciplinary Patient Tracers are an integral complement to traditional quality and patient safety performance metrics
2. The interdisciplinary approach to patient tracers improves the ability of surveyors to integrate all aspects of care, including policies, practices, providers, patients and the physical environment when assessing quality
3. Incorporating process improvement and defining accountability for risks identified helps to ensure that findings are mitigated.