

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to look closely at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Fall Resulting in Fracture

Summary:

A resident of a long-term care facility was ambulating through the dining area with a four-wheeled walker. The tables and chairs in the area were displaced to facilitate cleaning of the area. A feeding stool on wheels was moved out of the way by a staff member and inadvertently entered the path of the resident.

The resident became agitated by approach of the oncoming stool, lost their balance and fell to the floor. The stool did not collide with the resident. The fall resulted in a fracture of the hip.

Keywords: fall, fracture, four-wheeled walker

This review is based on a single event.

Findings of the Review:

A supplementary wax and polish of the dining room floors was scheduled at a time during the day when the floors would not typically be cleaned. The dining room was not cordoned off. Signage was not placed to restrict residents from entering the area.

Prior to the fall, the resident ambulated independently with a four-wheeled walker. The resident was wearing appropriate footwear.

The Falls Prevention & Management Policy was utilized and falls prevention interventions were in place.

System Learning:

Develop policy that requires Environmental Services staff to cordon off areas during cleaning, waxing and polishing of floors to prevent residents entering the area and minimize the risk for falls. Review the policy with all staff working in the area.

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