

TO: University Senate

FROM: William Wertheim, MD, MBA
Executive Vice President for Stony Brook Medicine

DATE: February 3, 2025

SUBJECT: SBM EVP Report

ACADEMIC UPDATES

Renaissance School of Medicine and Brookhaven National Laboratory Collaborate to Create Proton FLASH Project

Stony Brook Radiation Oncology Department and Brookhaven National Laboratory Heavy Particle Collider and Accelerator Department have collaborated to develop the SBU-BNL Proton FLASH Project, a new innovative cancer therapy modality. FLASH therapy uses ultra-high radiation dose-rates (≥ 40 Gy/second) to enhance tumor destruction while minimizing toxicity. This requires proton beams accelerated at much higher speeds, achieved through a novel permanent magnet accelerator technology, compared to the currently available systems. This innovative technology enables rapid proton energy adjustments, reduces radiation levels, and cuts costs to \$40M–\$50M, compared to \$150M–\$200M for existing units. The project seeks to create a clinical-grade prototype for research, clinical trials, and commercialization, offering more effective, affordable and versatile cancer treatments.

School of Social Welfare's Child Welfare Training Program Co-Sponsors Conference on Changes to Child Protective Services System

Along with Suffolk County Executive Edward P. Romaine and the Suffolk County Advisory Board on Child Protection, the School of Social Welfare and its Child Welfare Training Program, recently sponsored a day-long conference, "Creating Transformational Change for Children and Families in the Child Protective System." The conference explored ways to mitigate systemic impacts of the child welfare system and create transformational change in Child Protective Services (CPS) by bringing together a multidisciplinary group from the human services community to understand issues and challenges and collaboratively work toward solutions. Diana Filiano, Director of the Child Welfare Training Program and Diane Monks, Senior

Education Specialist, Child Welfare Training Program, serve on the Suffolk County Advisory Board on Child Protection.

School of Social Welfare, BSW Program Hosts Annual Human Rights Day

As a major component of two core social work courses, Community Learning and Professional Preparation, the School of Social Welfare recently hosted its annual BSW Program Human Rights Day, bringing students, faculty, and guest speakers together to explore the theme of ***Economic Justice: A Cornerstone of Universal Human Rights*** and the topic to the forefront of campus conversation. The day's events included interactive workshops and opportunities for students to engage in meaningful conversations about income inequality, community participation, and social programs that promote economic justice, and a thought-provoking keynote address by Dr. Savi Bisnath, Senior Director of Global Policy, Institute on Race, Power, and Political Economy at The New School.

School of Social Welfare Launches New Academic Area of Specialization:

In response to the growing demand for qualified professionals to address K-12 students' social and emotional needs, the School of Social Welfare is launching an intensive study program for MSW students focused on school social work. School Social Workers are the link between the home, school and community in providing direct as well as indirect services to students, families and school personnel to promote and support students' academic and social success.

Linda I. Rosa-Lugo Elected ASHA President

Linda I. Rosa-Lugo will begin her term as American Speech–Language–Hearing Association's (ASHA) President-Elect this month before she becomes President of ASHA in 2026. Dr. Rosa-Lugo has been an active member of ASHA for over 30 years. She has received numerous awards and has served as Vice President for Professional Practice and President of the Hispanic Caucus.

[Brown Clarke's Role Expands to Include Chief Health Equity Officer \(SB News\)](#)

William A. Wertheim, MD, Executive Vice President for Stony Brook Medicine, announced that Vice President Judith Brown Clarke's role has been expanded to incorporate new responsibilities focused on integrating health equity principles into research, policy, and practice.

Her new title, which includes Chief Health Equity Officer, reflects this expanded scope of work and a steadfast commitment to advancing equity and inclusion throughout Stony Brook Medicine and the university.

School of Nursing's Ann Margaret Navarra Selected for N-SISS Fellowship

Dr. Ann Margaret Navarra has been named one of the first ten innovators selected for the highly competitive Nursing Science Incubator for Social Determinants of Health (N-SISS) Fellowship at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing's Institute for Policy Solutions. This prestigious fellowship recognizes Dr. Navarra's exceptional qualifications, innovative research, and unwavering dedication to advancing health equity by addressing social determinants of health. Her commitment to eliminating health and healthcare inequities in the U.S. reflects the core values of the School of Nursing in building healthier, more equitable communities for all.

Susan Miale and Nancy Krisch Win PTLI Education Influencer Award

From the Department of Physical Therapy, Susan Miale, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development and Clinical Associate Professor, and Nancy Krisch, Clinical Assistant Professor, have won the Physical Therapy Learning Institute (PTLI) Education Influencer Award. Drs. Miale and Krisch received this award for their poster presentation at the Education Leadership Conference 2024, Participating in Large-Group Classroom-Based Simulations Improves Physical Therapist Student Clinical Decision-Making. This award is given to a presentation that has the potential to have a positive influence toward excellence in physical therapy education, consistent with the vision of PTLI to ignite collaborative advancement to transform the health of society.

[Brock-Petroshius Awarded Prestigious Frank R. Breul Memorial Prize \(SB News\)](#)

Kristen Brock-Petroshius, assistant professor in Stony Brook University's School of Social Welfare, has received The Frank R. Breul Memorial Prize, a prestigious award from the *Social Service Review*, one of the most important journals in the field of social work.

Brock-Petroshius was recognized for her article "Race Talk to Change Carceral Attitudes: A Field Experiment on Deep Canvass Organizing," which appears in the December 2024 issue. Brock-Petroshius' article uses a randomized, placebo-controlled field experiment to demonstrate that deep canvassing is a promising method for changing underlying ideological attitudes about the carceral state and building support for anti-carceral policies. Deep canvassing is a canvassing method that focuses on building emotional connections through personal stories. This research shows that when it includes explicit discussion of anti-Black racism, it can effectively change minds.

Anissa Abi-Dargham to Serve on National Advisory Council on Drug Abuse

Dr. Anissa Abi-Dargham, Professor and Chair of the Renaissance School of Medicine's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health, has accepted an invitation to serve on the National Advisory Council on Drug Abuse (NACDA). NACDA advises the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and, by extension, the NIH Director and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), on identifying, reviewing and supporting the highest quality scientific research. Dr. Abi-Dargham's appointment begins immediately and will extend through November 2027.

NIH Recognizes Study by Joe Verghese on Culturally Unbiased Cognitive Assessment

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has recognized a study led by Dr. Joe Verghese, Chair of the RSOM's Department of Neurology, as one of 2024's top five research highlights in human health advances. Published in *Nature Medicine* last June, the study introduced 5-Cog, a brief, culturally unbiased cognitive assessment tool designed to evaluate memory recall, cognition-gait connection, and symbol-picture matching in only five minutes. The study demonstrated significantly positive patient outcomes, tripling the odds of improvement when patients with cognitive concerns received dementia-related care compared to standard care. The findings also support the integration of 5-Cog in primary care settings, which could potentially reduce barriers and bolster dementia follow-up care.

Rewa Thompson Leads the Way in Inclusive Nursing Education

Rewa Thompson, the recipient of the 2024 Stony Award and the President's Award for Nurturing a Welcoming, Inclusive Campus Culture, is a nurse practitioner, educator, and advocate for women's healthcare and reproductive rights. She leads nursing students toward clinical excellence while addressing bias and promoting health equity in nursing education. As co-chair of the Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Social Justice (IDEAS) Committee, Dr. Thompson is dedicated to fostering inclusivity and equity across campus. Her recent accolades include the CELT David L. Ferguson Award for Inclusive Teaching and the 2024 Nassau Suffolk Council Nurse of Excellence Award in Education.

School of Health Professions Faculty Recognized as NAP Distinguished Fellows

Ann D. Cuccia and Dr. Renee Fabus have been accepted as Distinguished Fellows of the Respiratory Care Academy and the Speech-Language Pathology Academy, respectively, in the



National Academies of Practice (NAP). NAP is a non-profit organization founded in 1981, dedicated to advancing interprofessional education, scholarship, research, practice, and public policy. Its mission is to transform health and well-being through collaboration among healthcare professionals, ensuring patient-centered, inclusive and equitable care for all. Distinguished Fellows are elected by their peers from multiple different health professions. Ms. Cuccia and Dr. Fabus will be inducted in March 2025 in Washington, DC.

Renaissance School of Medicine to Participate in SUNY Chancellor's Pre-Med Opportunity Program

This summer's SUNY Chancellor's Pre-Med Opportunity Program, an in-person program created to help Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) students from underserved communities earn a medical degree, will commence in a 1+ 1+ 2 format. From June 9 through June 13, students will attend SUNY Upstate Medical University, followed by Stony Brook University from June 14 until June 20 and Downstate Health Sciences University from June 21 through July 3. While at Stony Brook, the Renaissance School of Medicine will provide students with clinical exposure through simulation labs as well as workshops, skills development and academic programming. Activities will include the Clinical Simulation Laboratory, Anatomy Lab, Suturing Lab, Research 101, Dissecting the MCAT Workshop, Dissecting the AMCAS Application Workshop, Mock Interviews, Medical Student Panel, and "Exposure to Clinical Physicians and the Anatomy of a Medical Student Workshop."

19th Annual Women in Medicine and Science Research Day, March 5th

The 19th annual Women in Medicine and Science Research Day takes place on Wednesday, March 5, but the deadline for submitting abstracts for the event is on Friday, February 7. The Office of Faculty Affairs and the Group for Women in Medicine and Science encourage faculty, nurse practitioners, post-doctoral fellows, fellows, residents, medical students, and graduate and undergraduate students to submit an abstract that celebrates research, new discoveries, and achievements in medicine and science. Original research, case reports and case series are welcome. For more information on abstract requirements, please go to the WIMS page on the RSOM website. All abstracts should be emailed to Dr. Agnieszka Bialkowska by February 7.

CLINICAL UPDATES

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

- The New York Power Authority (NYPA) announced it installed a suite of energy efficiency upgrades at Stony Brook University Hospital (SBUH). The projects, which total nearly \$20 million, directly support BuildSmart 2025, a statewide energy efficiency program administered by NYPA, aimed at reducing energy usage in state facilities by 11 trillion British Thermal Units (BTU) by the end of 2025—the equivalent of removing nearly 500,000 cars from the road.

NYPA implemented a variety of energy efficiency measures across SBUH's campus including upgrades to heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, the installation of energy efficient LED light fixtures, and the addition of controls for fan and pump units. NYPA also implemented building envelope improvements at the Health Science Center, Medical Center and Basic Science Tower. The upgrades include window sealing and the installation of steel insulated panels that reduce infiltration and energy consumption.

Additionally, NYPA installed individual electrical and thermal meters at each of the five buildings on the hospital campus to provide insight into the energy usage of each individual building.

In total, the projects will reduce the campus' carbon emissions by more than 6,000 metric tons—the emissions equivalent of removing more than 1,400 cars from the road. Additionally, the improvements will reduce SBUH's operating and maintenance costs by nearly \$1.5 million annually.

- On Dec. 18, New York State Department of Health Commissioner James McDonald, MD, MPH, declared influenza to be prevalent in the state for the 2024-25 season.

As required by our influenza vaccination policies and Section 2.59 of New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Title 10, and to protect the health of our employees, patients and visitors, all Stony Brook Medicine personnel who have not been vaccinated for influenza must wear a mask in any areas a patient can potentially be found.

Examples include but are not limited to hospital and clinic lobbies, hallways, elevators, etc. This applies to all personnel at all SBM locations, including those at our four hospitals and two cancer centers; medical staff; personnel with patient contact working in Article 28 and non-Article 28 outpatient sites; volunteers; students; vendors and contract personnel.

- Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital announced the opening of two new recovery homes on the East End, providing safe, supportive housing for women and LGBTQ individuals. These homes were established through a Suffolk County Opioid Grant, underscoring SBM's commitment to fostering stability and independence for individuals in need and at-risk within our diverse community. A ribbon-cutting ceremony recently took place at one of the new recovery homes in Flanders, followed by a small reception.

The homes, along with the established recovery residence for men, provide safe and supportive housing for up to 34 residents at a time, offering a full spectrum of support services such as medical and mental health care, substance use counseling, and vocational guidance, all through SBM's network. This expansion is an essential enhancement to the local framework of compassionate, accessible care—delivering vital resources and a strong sense of community to those progressing toward independent living.

- TBR News Media has recognized Dr. William Wertheim as a person of the year for his leadership, his deep listening skills and his ongoing commitment to the university and the surrounding communities. In June, former SBU President Maurie McInnis named Dr. Wertheim executive vice president for SBM, after serving in an interim role since October. A few weeks later, Dr. Wertheim was appointed SBU Officer-in-Charge until current Interim President Richard McCormick arrived in August after President McInnis resigned to become president of Yale University.

One of Dr. Wertheim's directives that has been particularly effective involved developing a new governance structure for SBM. Whereas groups had been creating strategic plans for one year, Dr. Wertheim asked them to develop a three- and five-year plan. He also unified service lines, combining such areas as ambulatory and hospital care. By understanding how patients transition from ambulatory to hospital care, SBM can ensure a smoother and more patient-centric experience.

As a leader, Dr. Wertheim makes a concerted and ongoing effort to interact with staff throughout the system, including medical assistants, front-desk representatives and janitors, to name a few.

Dr. Wertheim was the vice dean of the medical school a few years ago when Dr. Peter Igarashi, Dean of the Renaissance School of Medicine, first arrived.

As a primary-care physician, Dr. Wertheim has also communicated effectively to residents and students about the importance of having a fundamental foundation of excellence.

- The Healthcare Association of New York State today announced its 2025 board of trustees' officers, executive committee and members. Carol Gomes, MS, FACHE, CPHQ, will be serving as a member of the Executive Committee effective January 1, 2025.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Emergency Services:

- The Mobile Stroke Units (MSU) have responded to over 9,000 calls since the program inception. We anticipate that we will reach the milestone of 10,000 responses in the summer of 2025.
- The volume of patients seen in the emergency department continues to be strong. In calendar year 2024 the ED experienced 112,486 patient visits compared to 109,667 who were seen in calendar year 2023.

Heart Institute:

- The most recent STS report for Cardiac Surgery (ending in June 2024), demonstrates a star rating for isolated CABG remaining at three stars, better than expected, the highest possible rating. In addition, Mitral Valve Repair Replacement (MVRR) also received three stars.
- On December 2, 2024, the Heart Failure/LVAD team held a support group meeting for our Left Ventricular Device (LVAD) patients. Patients who are implanted with LVADs were invited for an educational session and opportunities to collaborate with the clinical team to provide support. These support group meetings will be held quarterly throughout the year.

Neurosciences Institute:

- Based on unit-level performance during Q3 2024, 10 North Adult Behavioral Health was the most improved unit for the quarter and became the latest Patient Experience Quarterly Recognition Award winner. This award recognizes the department/unit (with a minimum n size of 20) that has shown the most improvement in their Overall Rating quarterly score compared to the previous quarter. The Adult Behavioral Health unit Overall Rating improved by 30.4 points as compared to Q2 2024, increasing their top-box score to 82.1%.
- Dr. Nikhil Palekar and the Center for Excellence in Alzheimer's Disease (CEAD) team treated their first early-stage Alzheimer's Disease patient in December, with the new anti-amyloid monoclonal antibody Donanemab (Kisunla) at the MART infusion center. Stony Brook is the first on Long Island to provide this new medication.

- Dr. David Fiorella's paper, "[Embolization of the Middle Meningeal Artery for Chronic Subdural Hematoma](#)" was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in November.
- The Joint Commission surveyed the SBUH Comprehensive Stroke Center in December, which was a successful review. Only a few minor citations were noted which have been addressed. The recertification process was successful and a reflection of the teams' dedication to quality patient care and community awareness.

Surgical Services:

- PACU boarder hours, the time from when a patient is ready to leave the Recovery Room after a surgery until they can be moved to the appropriate inpatient bed, continue to remain an area of focus. SBUH hit its target to be below 2.0 hours for 2024 with an average of 1.6 hours in December. Surgical throughput is a constant priority to ensure patient, faculty and staff safety and satisfaction.
- The Ambulatory Surgery Center continues to expand the cases performed and most recently added multiple head and neck procedures with the help of the clinical leadership. Looking forward to 2025, we will be expanding additional Ophthalmology and Urology procedures.

Women's/Children's:

- All ambulatory practice moves for the Department of OB/GYN have been completed. Gynecology services have been successfully relocated to Lake Grove and Article 28 facilities have been moved to 14 Technology Drive with Orthopedics. Upgraded ultrasound equipment has been delivered and installed to improve patient care and imaging potential.
- Upon participation in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2024 Maternity Practices in Infant Nutrition and Care survey (mPINC), we are pleased to report that Stony Brook scored very strongly. Our overall score was 89, compared to the average US score of 82, regional average score of 86 and similar size hospital average score of 84. Identified areas of improvement include rooming in versus time in the newborn nursery, formula feeding of breastfed newborns and acquisition of infant formula.
- Dr. Randi Trope, the Department of Pediatrics Vice Chair of Patient Safety, has been accepted to become a member of the Child Health Patient Safety Organization's (PSO) newly developed Enrichment Committee. This committee will serve as a review board of both historical and new alerts as well as other PSO developments to ensure a rigorous review process.



- Dr. Robyn Blair, Pediatric Residency Program Director, is proud to report that this year's class of graduating pediatric residents achieved a 100% pass rate of their pediatric boards. Many new features have been integrated into our residency program to support board studying, including workshops on effective evidence-based study strategies, weekly quizzes, True Learn and AAP PREP board study programs, minimum questions tracked per month, board review sessions during academic half-days, and board questions included in Afternoon Case Conference.

Ancillary/Support Services:

- The Anatomic Pathology Department is currently performing a verification on the Leica Digital Pathology Scanner. This scanner, once verified, will be used for remote/off-site viewing of pathology cases for diagnostic sign-out.
- Anatomic Pathology's Histology Laboratory received interest from Indiana University to create an affiliation agreement to allow Laboratory Histotechnology Students to rotate in our Histology Laboratory. This would satisfy the student's on-site training requirements for their program. Histology Leadership is working with Stony Brook's Clinical Placement Coordinator and Legal Team to finalize the affiliation agreement.
- The Radiology department has received its first full-length scoliosis cassette, which is used to image full spine and full legs lengths in one exposure. This new cassette offers reduced radiation exposure and improved image quality compared to the legacy system. It is also half the weight and fully wireless.
- Stony Brook Radiology has acquired three new Carestream portable units. These portable units feature advanced technology that ensures lower radiation doses and superior image quality.
- SBUH's speech language pathology graduate students coordinate free virtual, individual and group weekly speech and language therapy sessions for patients with aphasia following a stroke. Each semester one of our hospital speech language pathologists organizes the group, observes the first few sessions, and supervises students. The Joint Commission surveyor's recent visit to review our stroke program was impressed with this new program.
- SBUH's PGY1 Pharmacy Residents presented Medication Use Evaluation projects at the Vizient Pharmacy Network Meeting in December, 2024 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Their project titles are as follows:
 - Thomas Bokinz: Assessment of Updated Institutional Empiric Vancomycin Dosing Guidelines



- Jasmeen Jaur: Piperacillin-tazobactam for Community Acquired Intra-Abdominal Infections
 - Anisha Varghese: Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Labor & Delivery Insulin Infusion Protocol
 - Zach Walker: Evaluation of Perioperative Antibiotic Use in Cardiothoracic Surgery
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- The Recycling department has teamed with Equipment management to recycle patient beds related to their recent upgrade. The additional metal captured and recycled totaled over 8,000 pounds.
 - SBUH received a rebate check from Premier, one of SBUH's Group Purchasing Organizations, for \$314,619.36 covering the period of July through September 2024. These rebates are associated with achieving milestones related to purchasing volumes, as stated in hospital-based contracts, for goods and services.

Human Resources:

Career Service Milestones

- In response to employee feedback, the hospital's Career Service Milestone program, which recognizes employees celebrating service milestones of five-year increments, was enhanced by offering service milestone pins.

Salary Increases

- A market salary study was completed for clinical, professional employees whose positions require RN licensure. This study included 244 employees in approximately 70 distinct job titles. 214 of these 244 employees (89%) received an increase.

Recruiting and Retention

- Voluntary Turnover rates remain well below the industry average of 15%.
- Job vacancy rates remain well below the industry average of 19%.



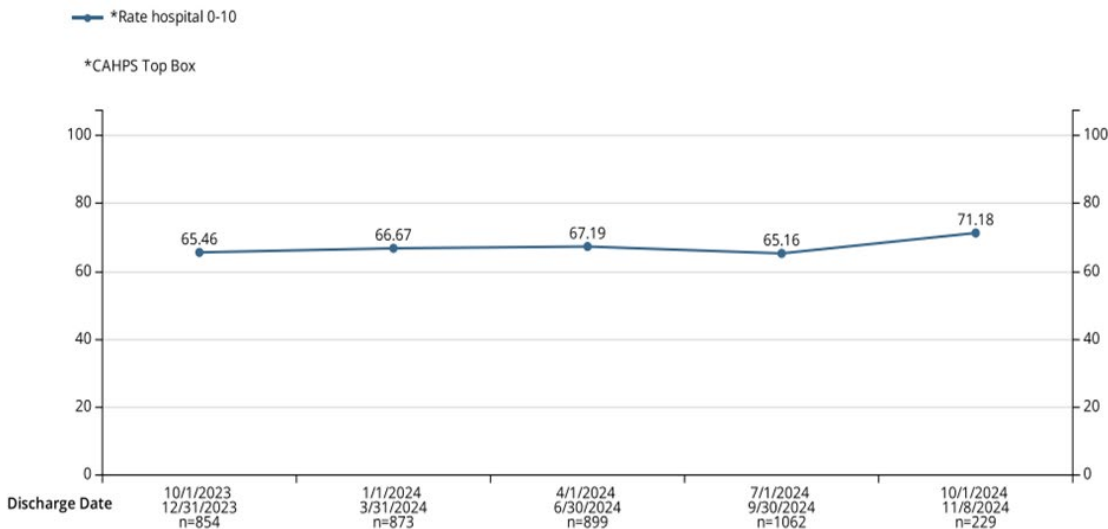
Staffing Metric	SBELIH	SBSH	SBUH	Total
Total Employees	451	1328	8096	9875
Voluntary Separations	3	4	47	54
Annualized Voluntary Turnover Rate	7.98%	3.61%	6.97%	5.47%
Position Vacancies	69	98	357	605
Position Vacancy Rate	13.27%	6.87%	4.23%	5.77%

Patient Experience:

- Fr. Matthew Udobi was hired and will provide coverage weekend nights to cover codes, patient support requests, sacraments at end of life, and code lavenders.
- The Patient Experience Bi-monthly Quality Task Force was launched and includes representation from: Quality, Nursing, Operations, Environmental and Patient Experience staff. The goal is to increase Nurse Leader and Environmental proactive patient rounds to address patient and family needs. Real time data is collected and entered into a dashboard to monitor for improvement.
- The new Hospital Consumer Assessment of Hospital Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey education was provided to Leadership and front-line staff. The new survey questions went into effect January 1, 2025.
- Nicole Rossol attended the Next Generation Patient Experience conference and presented on Workplace Violence and “The Journey to Health Equity Certification”. In addition, Nicole participated in the National Collaborative “Experience Leader Think Tank”.



Stony Brook Medicine Overall Rating of Care



Quality:

Fall Facts:

- Inpatient falls are the most frequently reported safety incident within hospitals. 3% of all patients will experience a hospital fall with 30-51% of those falls resulting in injury.
- SBM’s 3-year goal is to achieve NDNQI top decile for hospital falls, and hospital falls with injury.
- SBUH hospital falls with injury rate has been trending down and we are below the 50th percentile, moving closer to top decile.

Process changes implemented within the past year:

- Implemented the Bedside Mobility Assessment Tool, which assesses the patient’s mobility level and provides easy identification of the patient’s level of mobility, as well as which devices should be used to safely move the patient.
- Purchased footboards for stretchers within the ED, which will prevent patients from getting out of bed unassisted.
- Began using yellow hospital gowns to easily identify when a patient is a fall risk.
- Created an electronic Post Fall Debrief Tool, which will allow the hospital to learn from the fall and develop preventative measures moving forward.
- Developed a falls resource page on *ThePulse*.
- Participated in a hospital-wide Patient Safety Quality Fair to bring hospital awareness to fall prevention.
- Revised hospital policies to align with our goals and initiatives to reduce hospital falls.



- Updated fields within the electronic medical record for better understanding of fall risk categories.
- Began proactive toileting trial to reduce falls associated with going to the bathroom unassisted.
- Presented at the ECRI annual virtual conference on the hospitals' interventions and success of reducing falls with injury.

Selected next steps:

- Create a routine task within the electronic medical record to improve compliance with conducting the Bedside Mobility Assessment Tool.
- Increase availability of bed and chair alarms throughout the hospital. This will allow for rapid identification when fall risk patients are attempting to stand unassisted.
- Implement camera monitoring system which will allow for the continuous monitoring of patients who are at risk of falling.