We See You! – Increased Focus on Implementing Virtual Monitoring

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Background

May '23-July '23:

- **59.6%** of the patient falls meeting virtual monitoring criteria did not have VMU implemented as expected
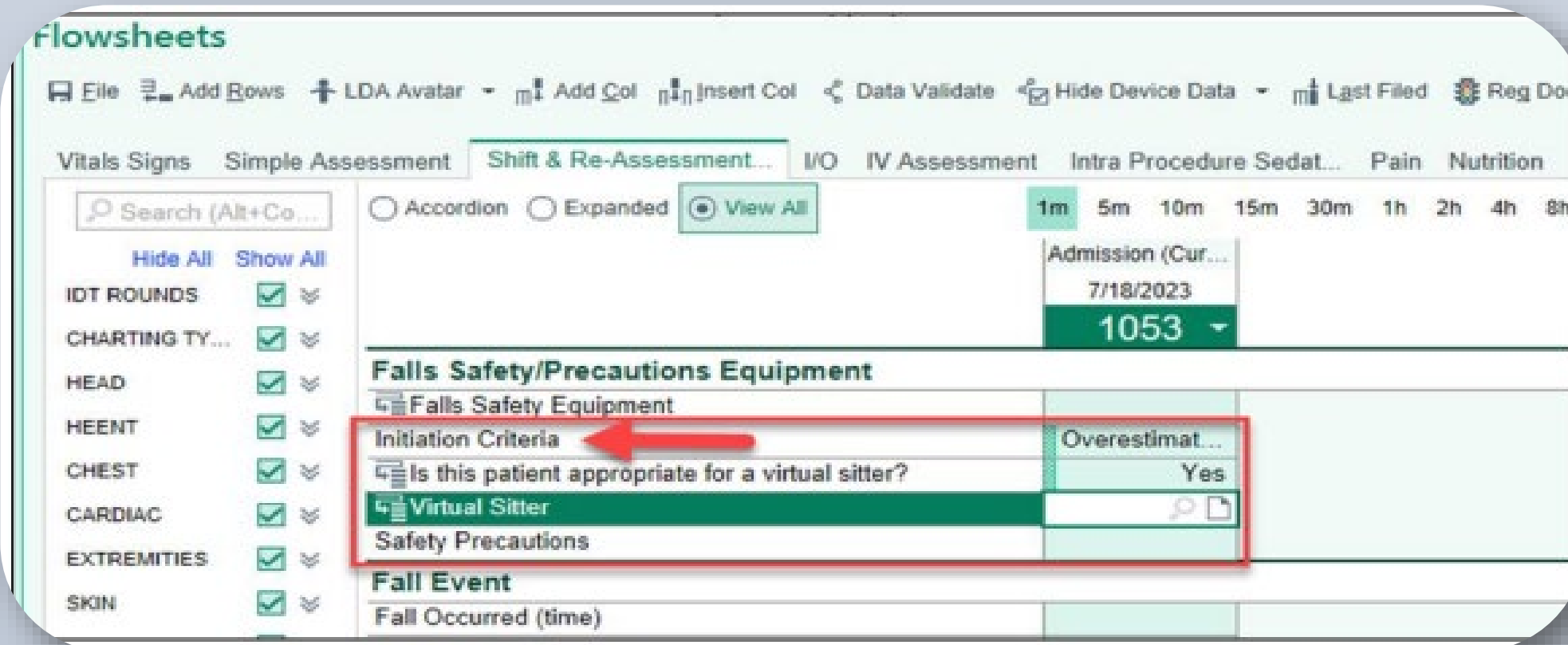
Review of the electronic health record (EHR) flowsheet discovered challenges for the nurse to effectively identify patients who met criteria, leading to underutilization of this safety resource. Analysis found nurses were implementing VMU based on subjective reasoning instead of objective criteria, leading to inadequate observation of patients and increased falls.

Methods

Feedback from nursing staff concerning the lack of clarity about eligibility for virtual monitoring led to optimization of the nurse's workflow by making two distinct changes.
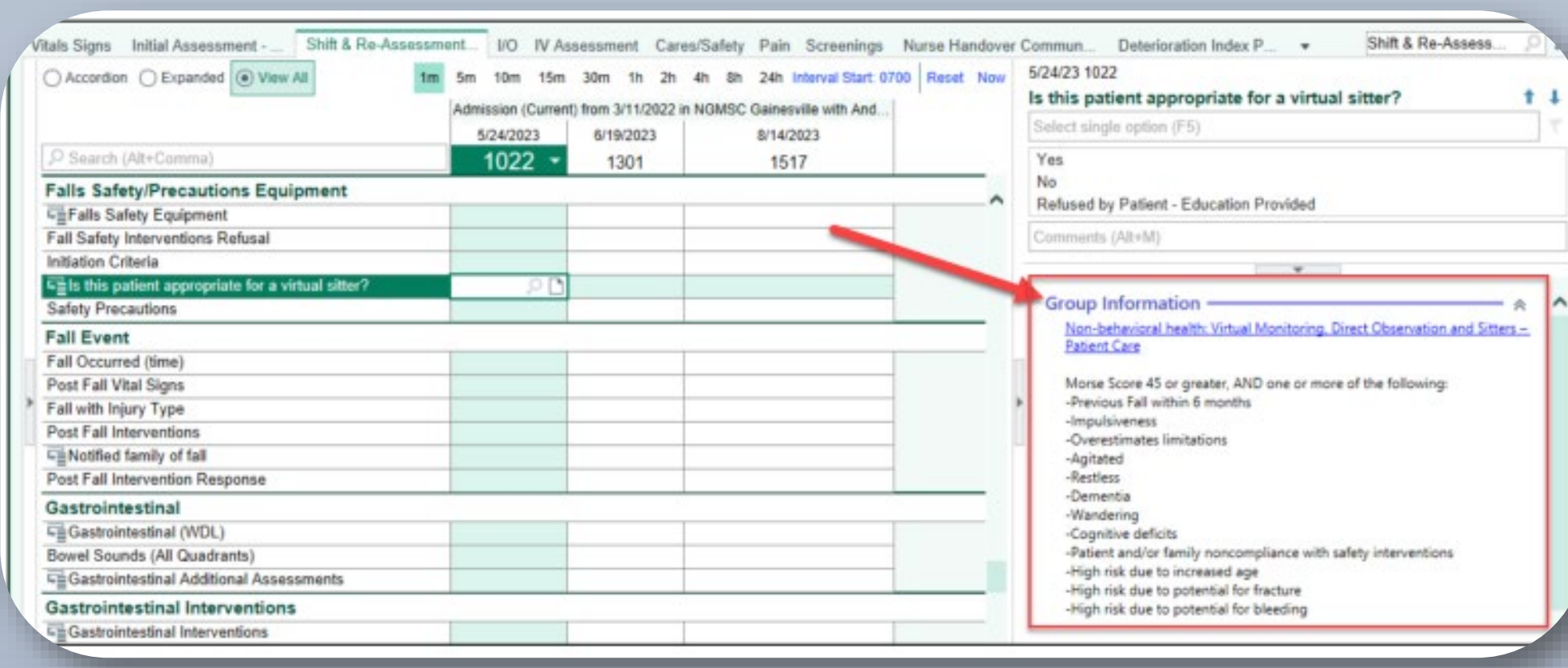
1. **Rearranging flowsheet rows in the EHR:**

    The row for "Initiation Criteria" has been moved to be above the row for "Is this patient appropriate for a virtual sitter?"

2. **Increasing visibility of initiation criteria at moment of decision:**

    Adding initiation criteria to the sidebar for the Yes/No selection on the row: "Is this patient appropriate for virtual sitter?"
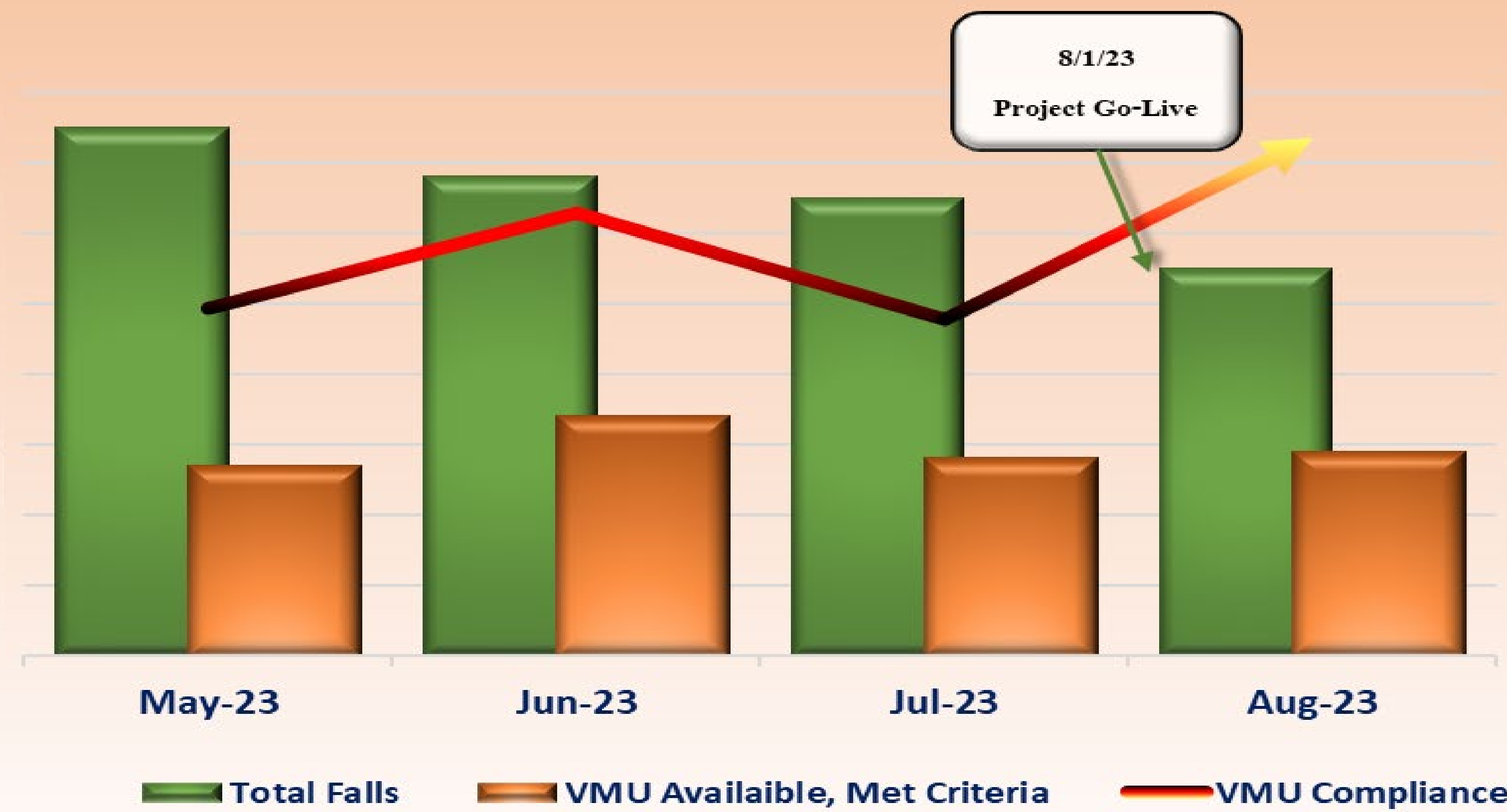
Purpose

This quality improvement project was implemented to increase nursing focus on the importance of utilizing the virtual monitoring unit (VMU) as a safety resource to reduce patient falls.
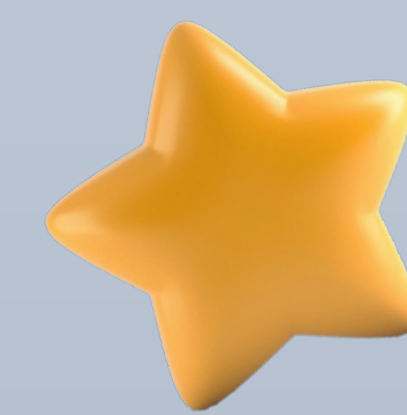
Results

VMU Utilization for Fall Reduction

8/1/23 Project Go-Live

Legend: ■ Total Falls ■ VMU Availabil, Met Criteria ▬ VMU Compliance

August 1, 2023, the optimized EHR flowsheet was initiated in all units with VMU capability with an expected outcome of patient fall reduction.

Post-implementation data collected found:

- **44.8%** of the patient falls meeting virtual monitoring criteria did not have VMU implemented as expected

There was a 14.8% increase in virtual monitoring compliance and a 21.5% decrease in average daily falls

As an ongoing quality improvement project data collection will continue, to monitor effectiveness of the flowsheet optimization over time.

Practice Implications

This project underscores the pivotal role of technology in enhancing patient care, demonstrating how the strategic integration of digital solutions can optimize healthcare delivery. The insights gained are applicable to various healthcare settings, regardless of their size or patient population. By implementing similar changes to improve the visualization of key criteria, other institutions can enhance EHR workflows to improve patient quality and safety. This approach fosters a universal framework for advancing healthcare practices and ensuring the well-being of patients across diverse healthcare landscapes.

Furthermore, this adaptable approach not only enhances patient safety but also supports healthcare institutions in achieving better patient outcomes and operational efficiencies. It encourages a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, allowing healthcare providers to navigate the evolving healthcare landscape with confidence while delivering high-quality care to their patients.

References

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