

Exercise 1: Determining Cause

Instructions: Work through this exercise one page at a time. As a group, review the information provided on each page and discuss possible causes while only considering the data at hand.

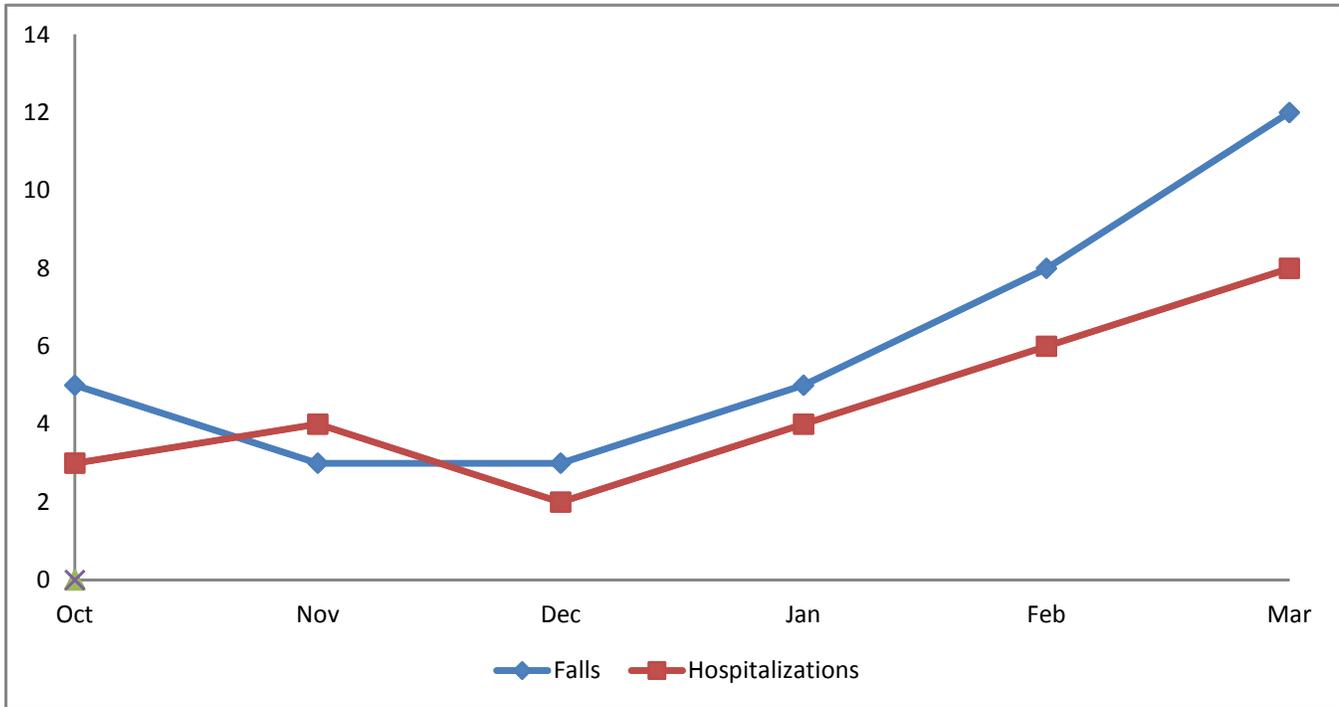
Your team has completed a quarterly record review and examined incident reports, complaints and consumer records. Tracking of gathered data is done, and here's what it shows:

1st Quarter Report

	January	February	March
Number of Falls	5	8	12
Unexpected Hospitalizations	4	6	8
Uncontrolled Pain	0	1	0
Number of Infections	3	2	3
Incomplete Wound Care Documentation	2	1	0

1. What stands out when you look at this report and what is most concerning?
2. Based on this data, what are some possible causes of the concerns you identified?
3. What additional information would you like to gather?

Your review team provides you with the following additional data:



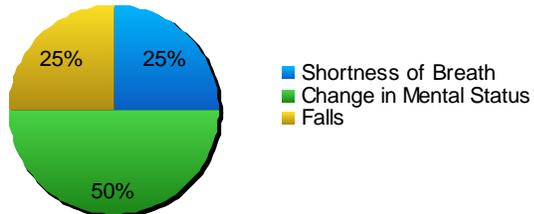
1. What additional information does this data provide you?

2. With this additional data, can confidently determine the cause?

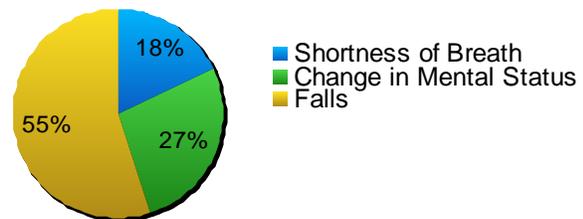
3. Given the additional data, where will you focus your efforts in determining the cause?

The review team provides the following data regarding the reason for hospitalizations:

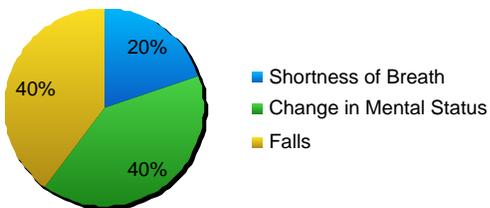
Hospitalizations, January 2013



Hospitalizations, March 2013



Hospitalizations, February 2013



1. Do you see any trends related to the reason for hospitalization? What are they?
2. What follow up investigation will you conduct in light of the data above?
3. Can you establish other possible causes in light of the new data? If so, what are they?

With data tracked and examined, you investigate the cause of each fall in search of a trend:

-In October 2012, there were 5 falls. One was related to dizziness. Two occurred because the consumer was not using their walker/cane. One was related to weakness/balance. One was unknown, because the consumer could only state that they "just fell."

-In November 2012, there were 3 falls. One occurred because consumer slipped on ice. One was related to dizziness. One occurred because the CNA was not using a gait belt.

-In December 2012, there were 4 falls. Two were related to dizziness. One was related to consumer weakness/balance. One occurred because the consumer tried to walk to the bathroom in the dark and stumbled over a trash can.

-In January 2013, there were 5 falls. Two were related to weakness/balance. Two occurred because the consumer did not have or know how to properly use their equipment. One occurred because the consumer tripped on his oxygen tubing.

-In February 2013, there were 8 falls. Three were related to weakness/balance. Three occurred because the consumer did not have or properly know how to use their equipment. One occurred because the consumer slipped on ice. One occurred because the consumer was reaching for something high in the pantry and lost their balance.

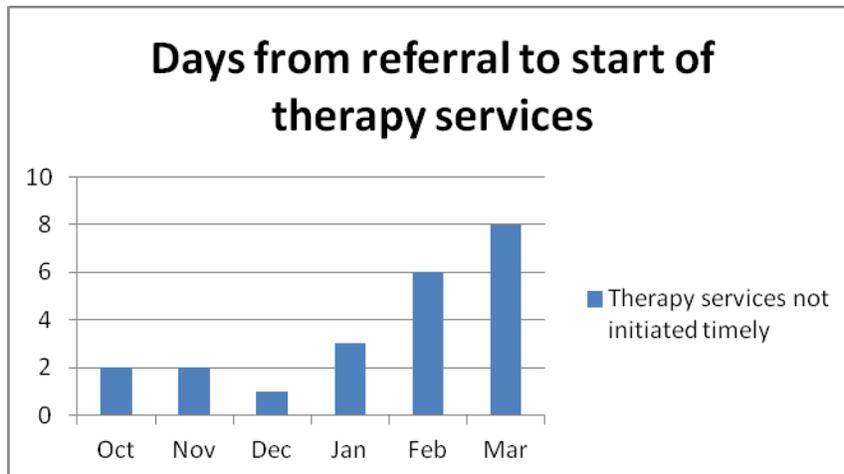
-In March 2013, there were 12 falls. Four were related to weakness/balance. Five occurred because the consumer did not have or properly know how to use their equipment. Two were related to dizziness. One occurred because the consumer tripped over their dog.

1. With the details of the data explored, what trends do you identify?

2. What is your expected cause of this problem?

3. Is there more information you seek? What methods will you employ to gather it?

You've established that something about the agency therapy services contain the cause of the increase in falls and hospitalizations. You decide to evaluate any recent changes in the provision of therapy services. You review the sample of consumer records reviewed in the last 6 months. Notable data from that review is below:



In January, February and March, 50% of the consumers did not receive therapy services within 72 hours of admission. Many of them did not receive their first therapy visit until 5-7 days after admission to the agency.

1. What does this new data suggest?

2. Has your potential cause changed, given the new information? What is it?

3. What methods, not previously used, can you employ to explore why the delays occurred?

You have a series of discussions with various staff members. Their reports were the following:

Skyler, RN Case Manager: "Since the memo went out in January instructing us to use a new 'Referral for Therapy Services' form, I have not been calling therapists. Instead, I fill out the form stating the patient's needs for therapy services, and I turn the form in with my other visit notes every Friday. I'm not sure what happens with that form after I turn it in."

Walt, Physical Therapist: "I have liked using the referral forms to communicate with the nurses. It means less time spent on the phone, using up my minutes, and a lot less phone tag. I pick up the nurse's referral forms on Monday mornings. By that time, the Scheduler has already arranged visit dates and times with each of my new patients. All I have to do is show up for the visit!"

Jesse, Scheduler: "I was not aware the agency had a policy about getting Therapists out to see patients within 48 hours of referral. The memo didn't state that. I also did not consider the patient's immediate condition or needs when scheduling their initial therapy visits because the referral forms the nurses were handing in did not contain that sort of information. I don't know, I just work here."

1. Can you confidently determine the cause of the increase in falls and hospitalizations?

2. Was the actual cause you arrived at the same as the potential cause(s) you guessed at throughout the exercise? If not, what does the exercise illustrate about the process of determining cause?