

USING THE VISUAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (VAT) ON ALL PATIENTS AT RISK OF FALLS IN THE DAY ASSESSMENT UNIT (DAU)

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INTRODUCTION

Patients with visual impairment are twice as likely to fall than those without. The NAF 2015 report identified <50% of elderly patients had their vision assessed in hospital; also evident at Southend Hospital.

OBJECTIVE

To conduct a QIP to ensure that >80% of DAU patients' vision was assessed via the VAT as per National Audit of Falls Prevention Guidance.

METHODS

Data collection from 56 patients over 8 weeks following weekly interventions helped us analyse their impact on VAT use. Control data (week 1) was pre-intervention.

INTERVENTIONS

Six interventions were applied over 7 weeks – see table

	Eye Hx	VAT use	Mention of VA on DL	Interventions
W1	3	0	0	Control
W2	4	6	0	Teaching to nurses/HCAs
W3	3	1	0	Poster
W4	5	2	0	Nil
W5	3	8	0	Email
W6	4	7	0	Teaching to doctors
W7	6	8	1	Remainder emails
W8	6	8	2	Questionnaire

CONCLUSION

VAT use identified 3 ophthalmic problems that would have otherwise not been managed. While the QIP did not meet the target of >80% VAT use, it successfully informed DAU staff in proper conduct of VAT in falls patients.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mean age was 82 and 38% of patients attending DAU had an ophthalmic history. Pre-intervention (week 1) identified 0% VAT use.

In week 2, there was a 75% increase in VAT use after teaching nursing and HCA staff. In week 3, there was only 12.5% VAT use after the poster intervention. In week 4, there was a 25% uptake on VAT use with no intervention. Week 5's intervention witnessed 100% in VAT use, which remained high in week 6 (85.7%), 7 (100%) and 8 (100%). The final intervention of questionnaire highlighted that 100% of staff were (i) previously unaware of VAT, (ii) agreed on its importance in assessment of elderly patients, (iii) found teaching adequate, (iv) thought there was enough awareness on VAT use via the QIP, (v) agreed that an incomplete VAT was due to inability to undertake section 4 and 5.