

Postural Hypotension – A Quality Improvement Project

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Background & Aims

- Postural hypotension (PH) is an identifiable and potentially reversible cause of falls in the elderly.
- The National Audit of Inpatient Falls¹ recommends lying and standing blood pressure (LSBP) measurements for patients aged over 65.
- Our project aims to develop a standardised approach to investigate and manage PH in the geriatrics department, starting with patients who have been admitted with a fall.


Methods

- We performed two cycles of retrospective data collection across three geriatric wards to assess whether patients admitted with a fall were investigated in accordance with the Royal College of Physicians' (RCP) recommendations².

- Between cycles, formal and informal educational strategies were implemented and a sticker was designed to ensure that the correct technique is used.

Name Hospital number

LYING

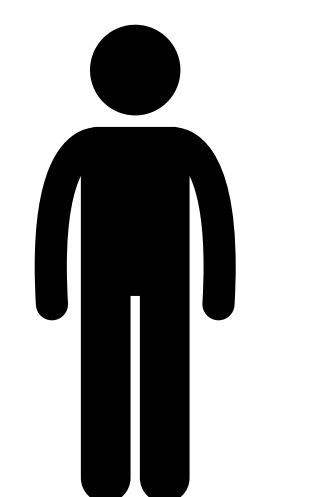


AFTER 5 MINUTES OF LYING DOWN:

BP ____ / ____ HR ____

SYMPTOMS EXPERIENCED:

STANDING



WITHIN 1 MINUTE OF STANDING:

BP ____ / ____ HR ____

SYMPTOMS EXPERIENCED:

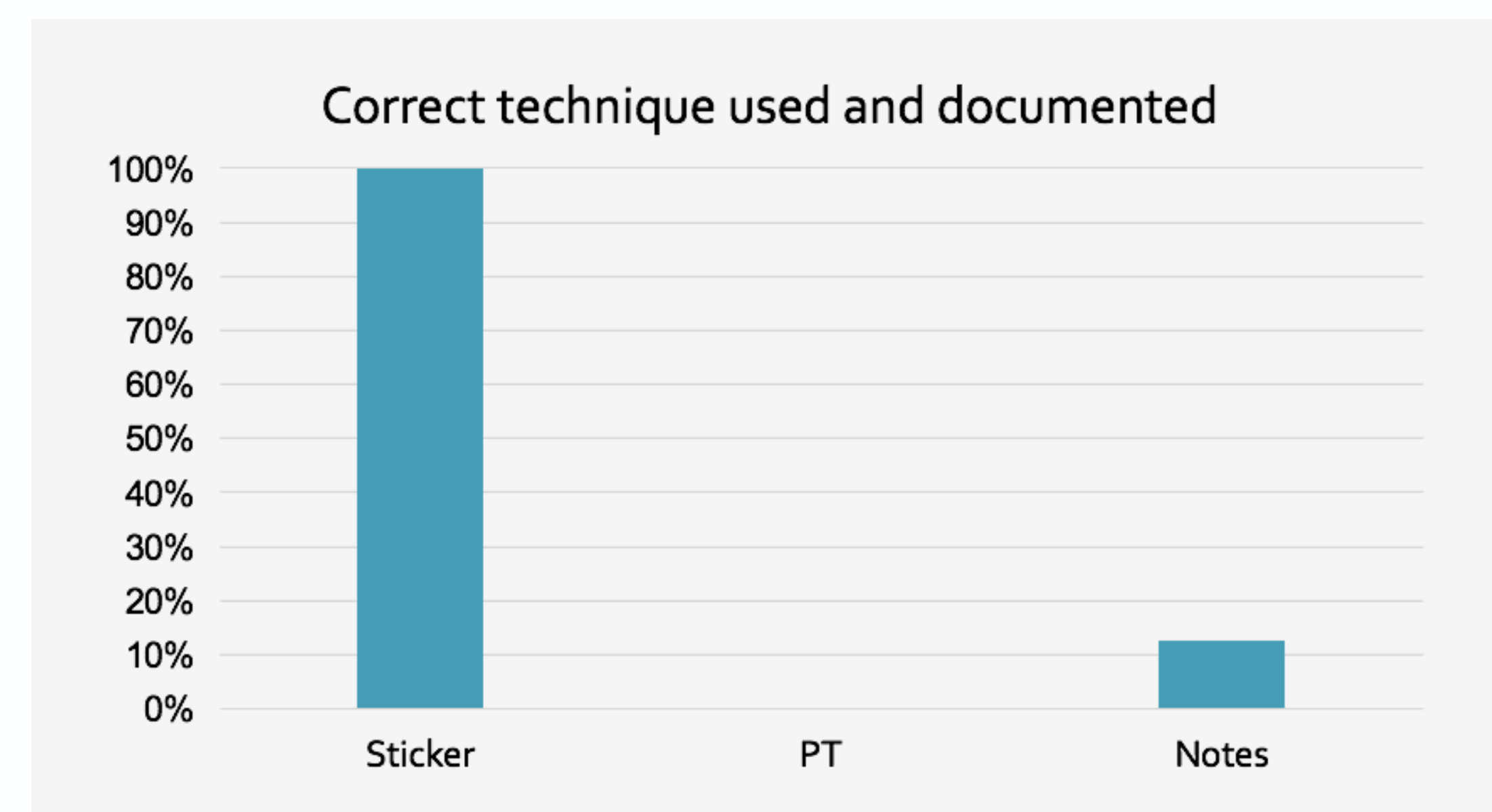
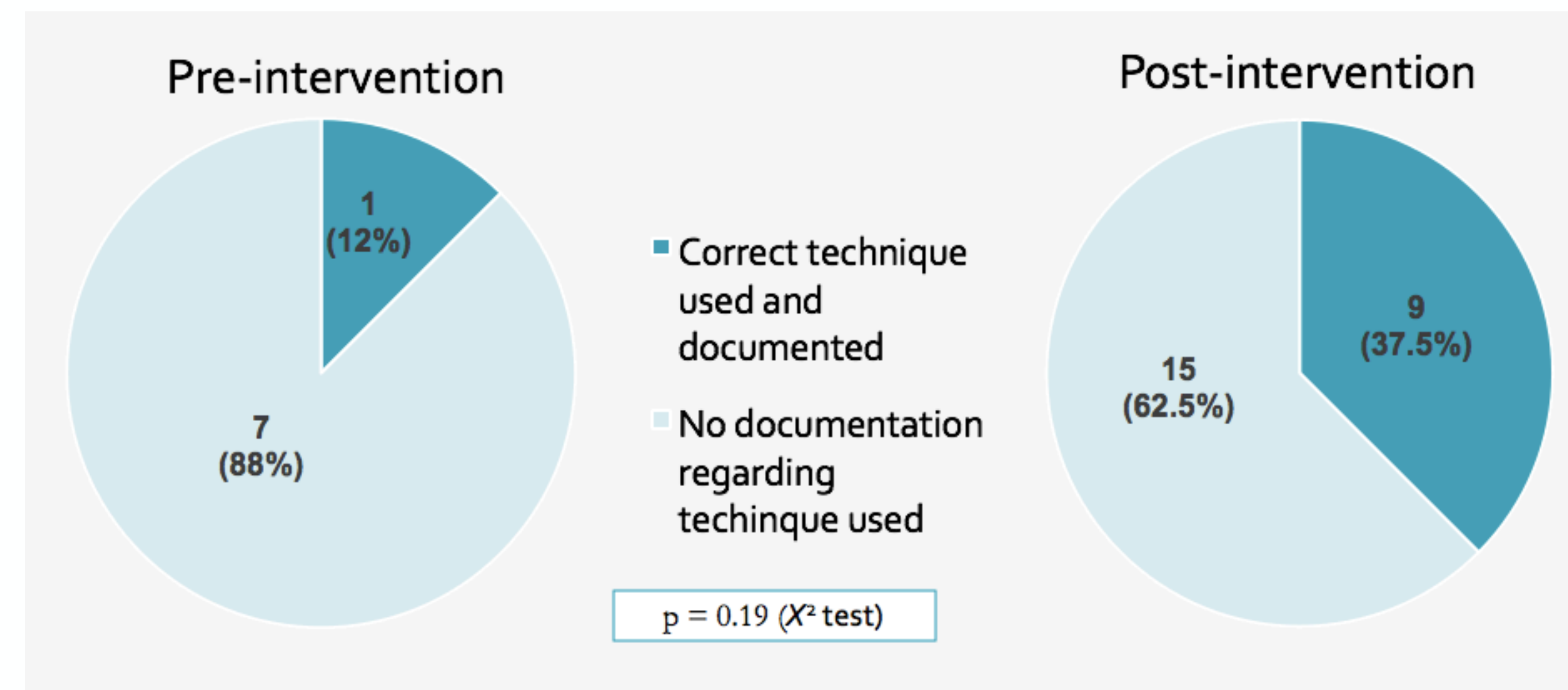
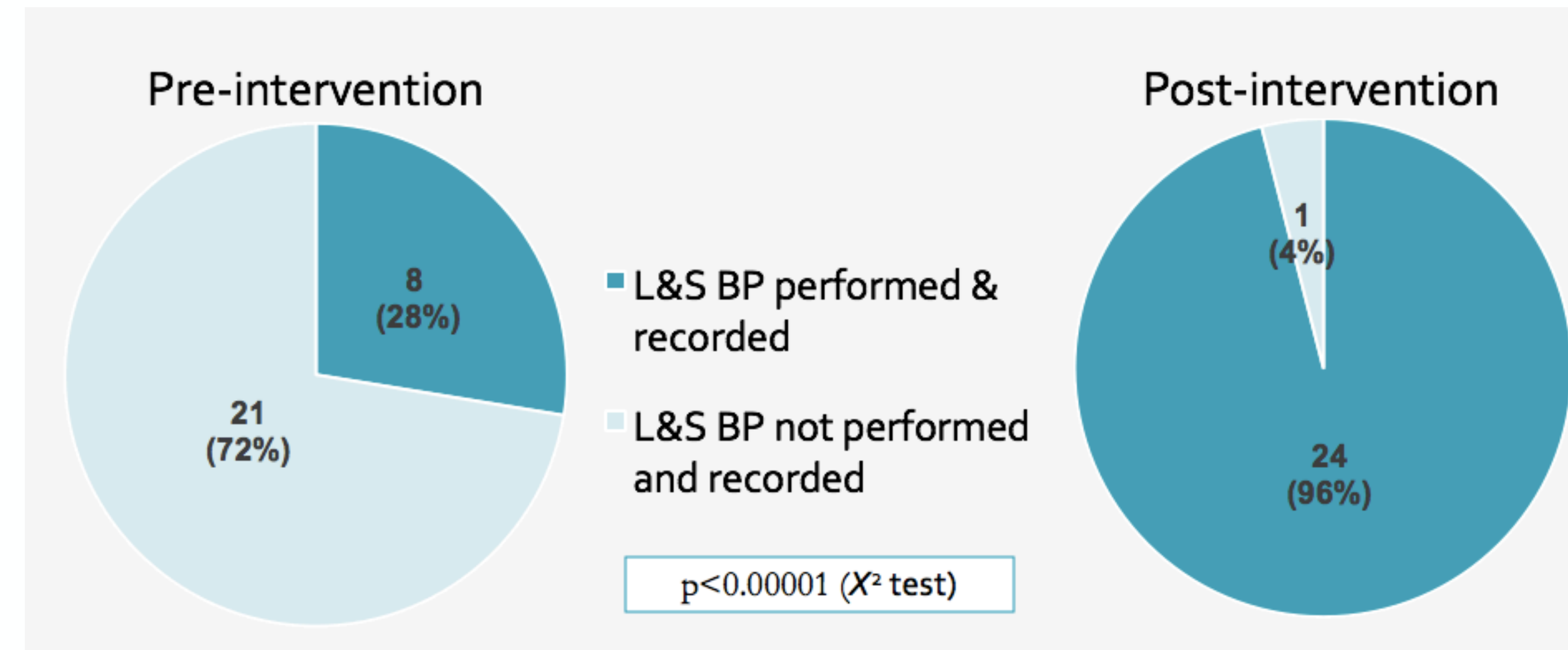
AFTER 3 MINUTES OF STANDING:

BP ____ / ____ HR ____

SYMPTOMS EXPERIENCED:

Recorded by Role Documented on Patient Track

Results



Summary of Results

- Percentage of patients with plan for L&S BP remained the same at 93%.
- 68% increase in lying and standing blood pressures performed post-interventions. 25.5% increase in correct technique used and documented post-interventions.
- Using the stickers ensured that correct technique was used and documented, compared to only 12.5% when documenting in notes and 0% when documenting on our electronic system, Patientrack.
- Post-interventions, only 37.5% of patients diagnosed with postural hypotension had lifestyle advice given and documented.

Conclusion & Recommendations

- Our results demonstrate that educational interventions and a standardised sticker to ensure clear documentation can significantly improve diagnosis of PH.
- The standardised sticker and patient advice leaflet are currently being officialised by the local Falls Prevention Team and Documental Control teams.
- A re-audit will take place after official introduction of the stickers and leaflets to the wards, to assess whether these further improve correct diagnosis of PH and provision of lifestyle advice to patients.

REFERENCES

- [1] Royal College of Physicians (2015). National Audit of Inpatient Falls [Internet]. Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership; 2015 p.1-60.
[2] Royal College of Physicians (2017). How to measure a lying and standing blood pressure (BP), Measurement of lying and standing blood pressure: A brief guide for clinical staff.