

Questions to ask When Looking for Possible Contributing Factors

Environmental Factors

- What were the staffing levels at the time of the event?
- What was the skills mix at the time of the event?
- Was there an unusual workload or was the unit involved operating within the planned for workload?
- Did any characteristics of the shift pattern have a bearing on the event (overtime, time of day 12hour vs. 8 hour shift)?
- Was required equipment available and operating properly? If not operating properly, was a replacement or technical support available?
- Was the assistance/direction/support of management/administration available and helpful?

Personal Factors

- What was the knowledge and skill level of the persons involved/associated with the event? Were they adequate for the responsibilities?
- Do the individuals involved have communication difficulties?
- Do the individuals involved have physical/cognitive/mental health difficulties that influenced the event?

Task Factors

- Did the structure of the organizational system or organization of activities/tasks have any influence on the event?
- Were practice guidelines/protocols available; were they required; and, were they followed?
- Were standards of practice met?
- Were there any barriers to implementing them?
- Were the results of any relevant study/tests available? If so, were they accurate?

Team Factors

- Was written and verbal communication appropriate, thorough and concise? If not, what impediments were encountered?
- Was there adequate direction/supervision?
- Did the persons involved/associated with the event seek assistance/direction/supervision in appropriate circumstances and at appropriate times (e.g. when unsure of how to proceed) and was it accessible?
- Are there structural or process impediments to teamwork? Does the team structure lend itself to cooperation and a good working relationship?

Other Factors

Patient Factors

- Were there factors associated with the patient's medical history, condition or complexity that contributed to the event?
- Were there language and communication difficulties?
- Did the patient's personality and/or social factors contribute to the event?

Organizational and Management Factors

- Were there management decisions or resource constraints that contributed to the event?
- Was there an organization culture (culture of safety) that positively or negatively impacted the event?

Review and Solutions

To be completed by person(s) involved in event

Report # (pre-printed from 1st page): _____

(Please print clearly)

What happened? Write a short synopsis of your recollection of events and the actions taken.

Signature: _____

What are the possible Contributing factors to this event?

In completing this section, ask yourself the listed questions then document your responses to those that are applicable.

Work/Environmental Factors

Were the staffing levels, skills mix or overall patient acuity a factor? Was the support of management/supervisor available and helpful?
Was required equipment available, was it operating properly? If it was not operating properly, was a replacement or technical support available?
Were there interruptions, distractions or other environmental noise involved? Was the physical workspace adequate and in good order?

If broken and/or unsafe equipment is identified as a contributing factor, remove immediately from service, tag "Do Not Use" and send to the appropriate department for service as per Policy #40.70.010

Team Factors

Were there any communication breakdowns, either verbal or written?
Was help or expertise needed? Was help or expertise asked for? Was it available when asked for?
Was a team leader required and was the leader available?

Staff/Personnel Factors

Would any specific training, experience, knowledge, actions or cooperation with others have helped?

Please complete Work Related Injury/Near Miss form if there is or potential for staff injury.

Task Factors

Were required practice guidelines or protocols available? Were they followed? Are there barriers to following them?
Was there a clear understanding about the task being performed? Was there time to perform the task?
Were the needed decision making aids (lab results, reference values, experts) available?

Patient/Family Factors

Did the patient's condition or complexity contribute to the occurrence?
Were there language and communication difficulties?

What would be needed to help prevent a similar situation?
