

GET MOVING: INCREASING PATIENT MOBILITY AND NURSE EMPOWERMENT

Aileen Espiritu-Tepper, DNP, NEA-BC
Rinka Shiraishi, MSN, RN, SCRNP
Cedars Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles

Statement of the Problem

- Patient mobility is a critical component of safe, high-quality inpatient care and is associated with improved outcomes (McLaughlin et al., 2023).
- On a 48-bed neurosurgical and spine unit, challenges were identified in timely patient mobilization, discharge delays related to immobility, and inconsistent ambulation practices.
- A root-cause analysis revealed limited staff understanding of the Bedside Mobility Assessment Tool (BMAT), uncertainty regarding nursing responsibility for ambulating patients, and overreliance on rehabilitation services.

Method Used to Address the Problem:

- The aim of this quality improvement project was to increase nurses' knowledge, confidence, and attitude regarding BMAT utilization and patient ambulation by at least 5%.
- A baseline Johns Hopkins Patient Mobility Survey identified knowledge deficits and lack of confidence.
- In June 2025, the unit launched the Safe Patient Mobility Initiative through a staff-engagement campaign called the "Mobility Olympics."
- RN mobility champions provided education and hands-on training on BMAT use and safe ambulation.
- Additional interventions included a laminated BMAT tools and mobility signage, a Mobility Toolkit binder with FAQs, escalation pathways, patient education scripts, and mobility resources. Mobility education flyers also included in the patient admission packets.

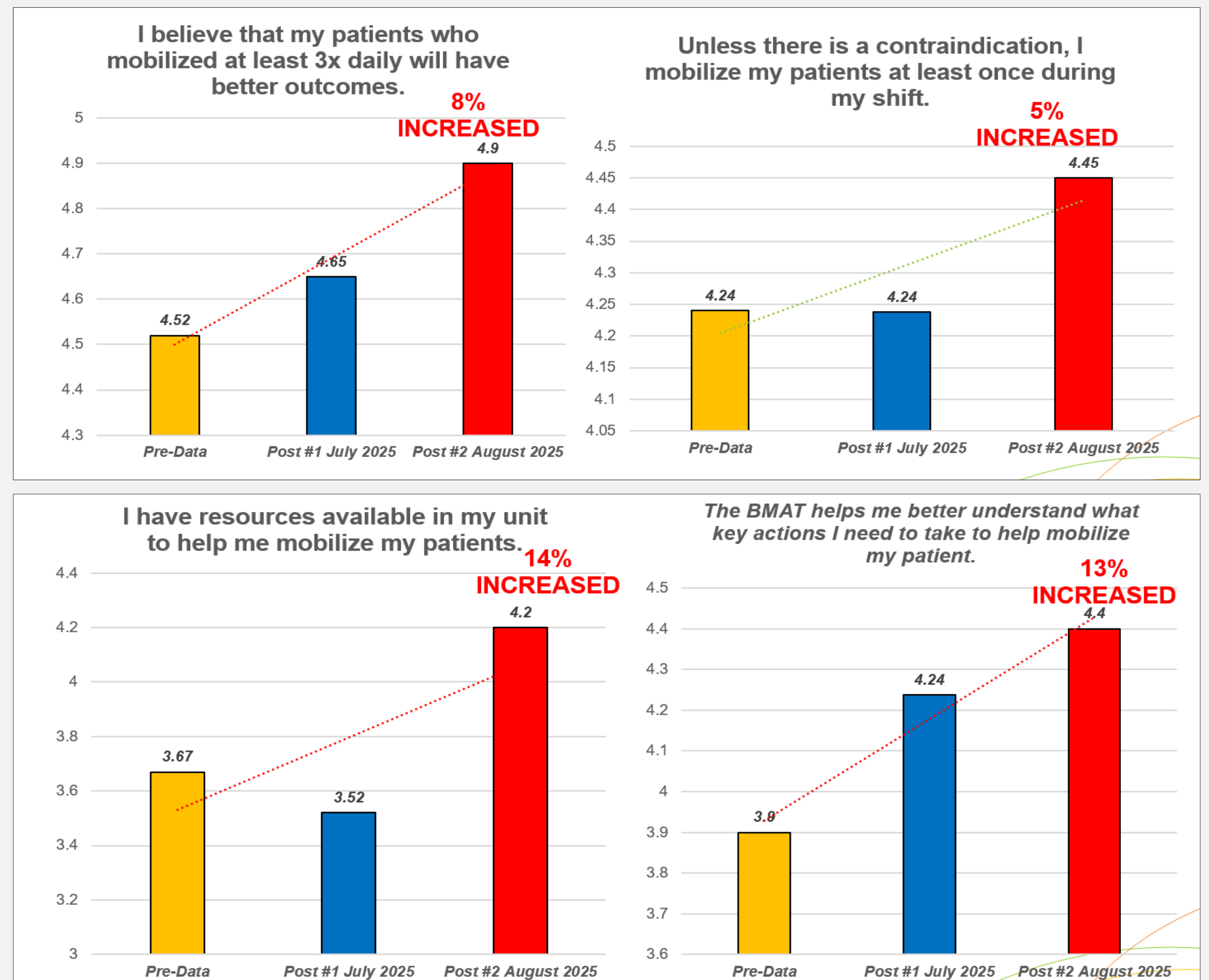
Description of Innovation and Resulting Change:

- The initiative utilized a nurse-led, multidisciplinary approach combining education, visual reminders, standardized resources, and staff engagement.
- By August 2025, nurses' understanding of the importance of patient mobilization increased by 8%.
- Staff mobilized patients at least once per shift increased by 5%. Knowledge of mobility resources improved by 14%, while understanding of BMAT assessment and interventions increased by 13%.

Implications and Significance:

- Findings demonstrate that empowering nurses through education, accessible resources, and clear expectations improves confidence, accountability, and engagement in patient mobility.
- Enhanced nurse ownership of mobility practices may contribute to safer care, improved patient outcomes, reduced complications of immobility, and more efficient discharge processes.

Pre- and Post-Get Moving Mobility Outcomes



Mobility in Action: Staff and patients participating in the unit's mobility initiative. *Photos used with permission.*

Recommendations and Future Questions:

Future efforts should focus on sustaining mobility education, integrating mobility metrics into routine practice, expanding the initiative to additional inpatient units, and evaluating long-term effects on patient outcomes, length of stay, discharge efficiency, falls, and readmissions.

References:

McLaughlin, K. H., Friedman, M., Hoyer, E. H., Kudchadkar, S., Flanagan, E., Klein, L., Daley, K., Lavezza, A., Schechter, N., & Young, D. (2023). The Johns Hopkins Activity and Mobility Promotion Program: A framework to increase activity and mobility among hospitalized patients. *Journal of Nursing Care Quality*, 38(2), 164–170.