UT Southwestern geriatric fracture initiatives result in expedited care and shorter hospital stays
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A multidisciplinary effort to improve care for older patients who arrive at the emergency room with a hip fracture has decreased the time before they have surgery, shortened hospital stays, and resulted in better follow-up care, UT Southwestern physicians reported in *Geriatric Nursing*.

In February 2021, UTSW launched an orthopedic surgery fracture liaison service, Returning Seniors to Orthopedic Excellence (RESTORE), focused largely on prioritizing early pain management and reducing time to surgery for geriatric patients with hip fractures. A team led by Megan Sorich, D.O., Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, then integrated the RESTORE program with the existing nursing program—Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE)—which aims to standardize early ambulation, delirium assessment and management, hospital room protocols for better orientation and healing, and improve follow-up visit adherence.

Data on 117 patients treated since the RESTORE program launched shows that time to surgery declined from 44 hours to 18, and attendance at post-discharge follow-up visits rose from 40% to 70%, compared to a 30% national average, according to the article. Length of stay dropped from 8.72 days to 7.6 days.

Dr. Sorich said other hospitals could benefit by implementing similar programs. She said the key to success, after buy-in and support from hospital administrators, is having stakeholders in the geriatric medicine team as well as orthopedic surgery team invested in the program from the start. It is also a tremendous advantage to have all hip fracture patients located on the same floor, which UTSW has done.

"This ensures continuity of care between the
nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, care coordinators as well as the hospital team," she said.

**More information:** Megan Sorich et al, Building a comprehensive geriatric fracture program and using evidence-based Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) best care practices, *Geriatric Nursing* (2022). DOI: [10.1016/j.gerinurse.2022.05.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gerinurse.2022.05.007)

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