

1 Problem

What	Problem(s)	Patient overdose, death
When	Date	March 8, 2012
	Time	11:20
Where	Different, unusual, unique	Patient left in care of healthcare assistant
	State, city	Milton Keynes, England
	Facility, site	Local hospital
	Unit, area, equipment	Accident & Emergency Department
	Task being performed	Treatment of overdose

Impact to the Goals

Patient Safety	Patient death
Employee Impact	Nursing shortages?
Compliance	Inquest into patient's death
Organization	
Patient Services	Insufficient patient treatment

2 Analysis

Basic Level Cause Map - Start with simple Why questions.

Basic Cause-and-Effect

A combination of being placed on her back while unconscious (which allowed her airway to become obstructed) and not being administered the antidote for the drugs on which she had overdosed led to the death of a patient in a Milton Keynes hospital from respiratory arrest. Because of the myriad failures in patient care, an inquest was performed.

More Detailed Cause-and-Effect

Through the patient's eleven hours within the hospital's Accident & Emergency (A&E) Department, only 2 formal observations were recorded. One set of observations was recorded on a glove, which was later lost. Abnormal results from these observations were not passed along from the healthcare aid who was responsible for the patient, likely due to nursing shortages.

3 Solutions

The coroner involved in the case has requested the Secretary of State for Health implement changes that would require seriously ill patients to be observed by nurses rather than healthcare assistants. The hospital has stated that they "have conducted an investigation to ensure lessons are learned" and "will be continuing to improve our service in regard to emergency patients". The hospital was commissioned training for their healthcare assistances to improve their skills.

PATIENT DEATH

Airway obstructed after inadequate care after overdose Cause Map

"There was a failure to undertake and report on her regular observations and a failure to recognize her deteriorating condition or the seriousness of her situation that resulted in a lost opportunity to render further effective treatment before she went into respiratory arrest."

- Coroner Tom Osborne

Cause Mapping is a Root Cause Analysis method that captures basic cause-and-effect relationships supported with evidence.

CAUSE MAPPING

Problem Solving • Incident Investigation • Root Cause Analysis

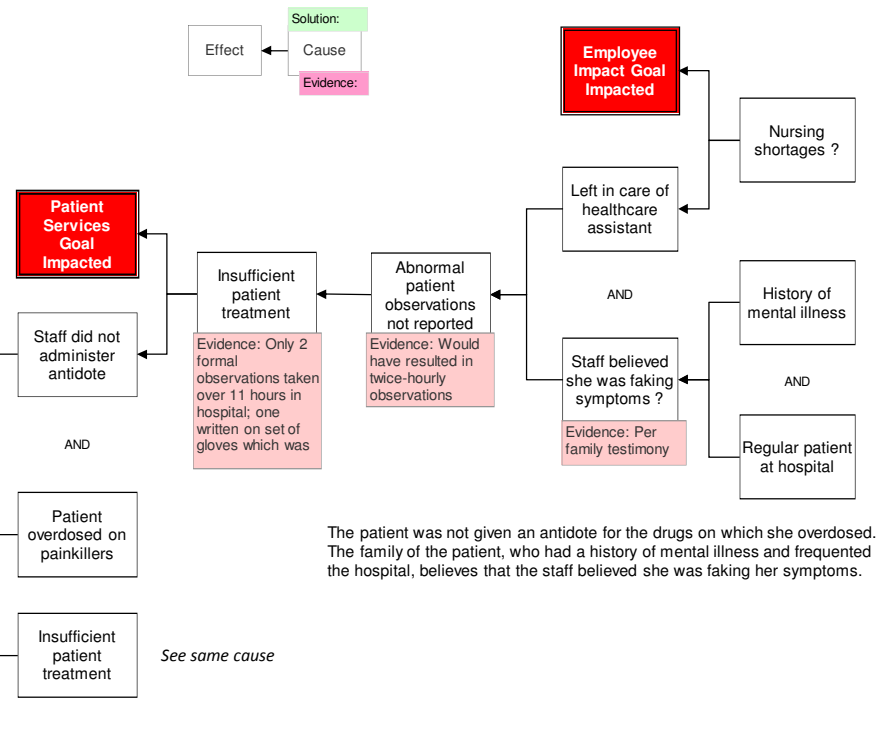
Step 1 Problem - What's the Problem?

Step 2 Analysis - Why did it happen?

Step 3 Solutions - What will be done?

More Detailed Cause Map

Add detail as information becomes available.



The patient was not given an antidote for the drugs on which she overdosed. The family of the patient, who had a history of mental illness and frequented the hospital, believes that the staff believed she was faking her symptoms.

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