



## ”BLOCKED” Sign to Prevent Patient Falls Due to Peripheral Nerve Blocks

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### OTAY MESA ASU



### BACKGROUND

- The Kaiser Permanente Otay Mesa Ambulatory Surgical Unit (ASU) performs over 8,000 cases per year. In order to facilitate fast turnovers and improved patient outcomes, the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) is implemented.
- With ERAS, there is a multimodal analgesia approach that includes giving the patient Acetaminophen, NSAIDS, Gabapentin, and a peripheral nerve block (PNB) when indicated.
- The pre-op and PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit) nurses use a team approach to nursing care. Because of this, not all staff are aware that the patient has received a block, making the patient a fall risk.
- In 2016 to 2018, there have been 2 patient falls and 1 near-miss due to this reason. One of the falls resulted in the patient returning to the OR to repair the damage from the fall – and that was a sentinel event.

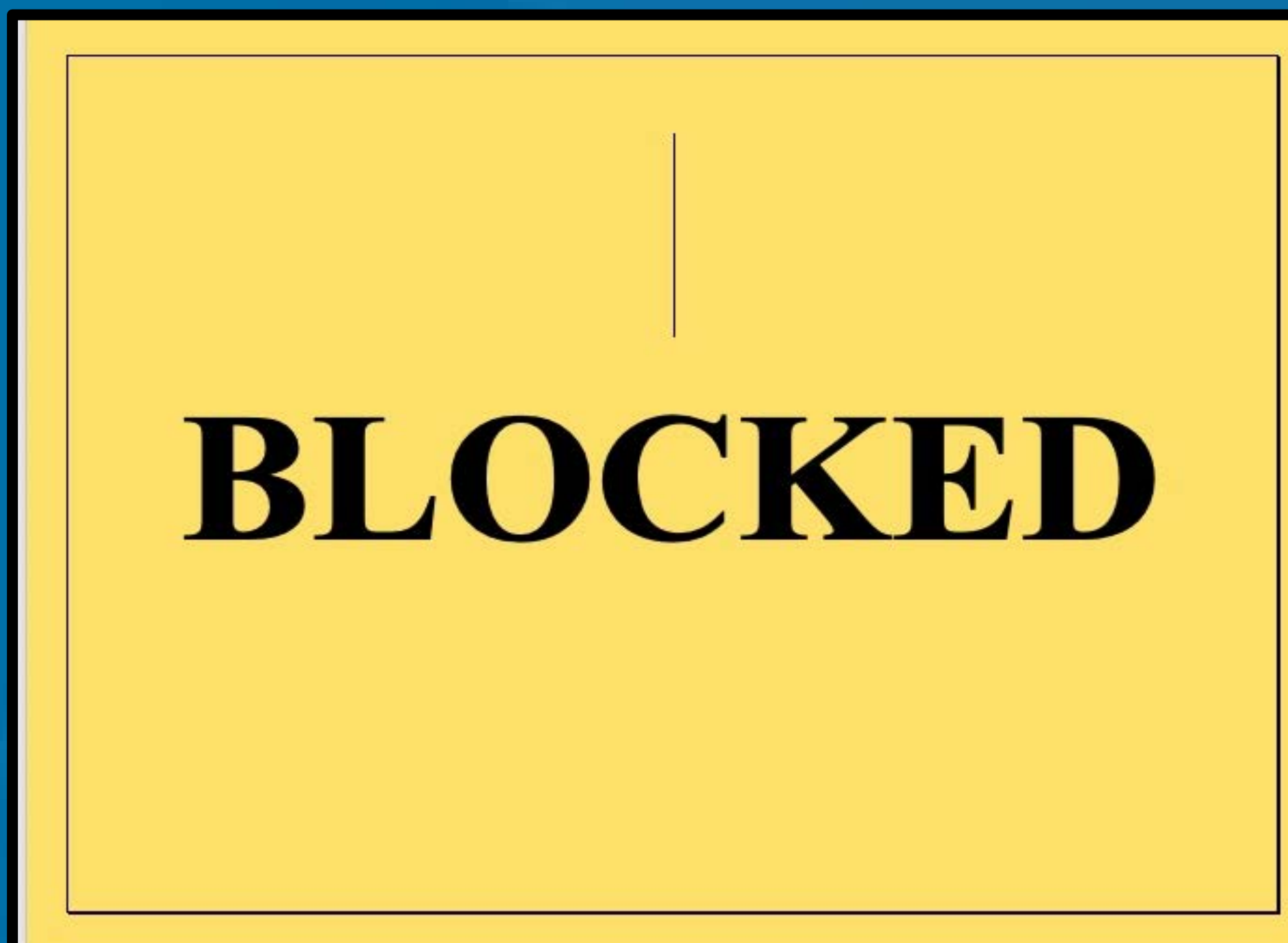
### PICO

Among the patients who received peripheral nerve blocks in the Otay Mesa Surgical Unit, will the use of BLOCKED sign compared to current practice prevents falls incidence.

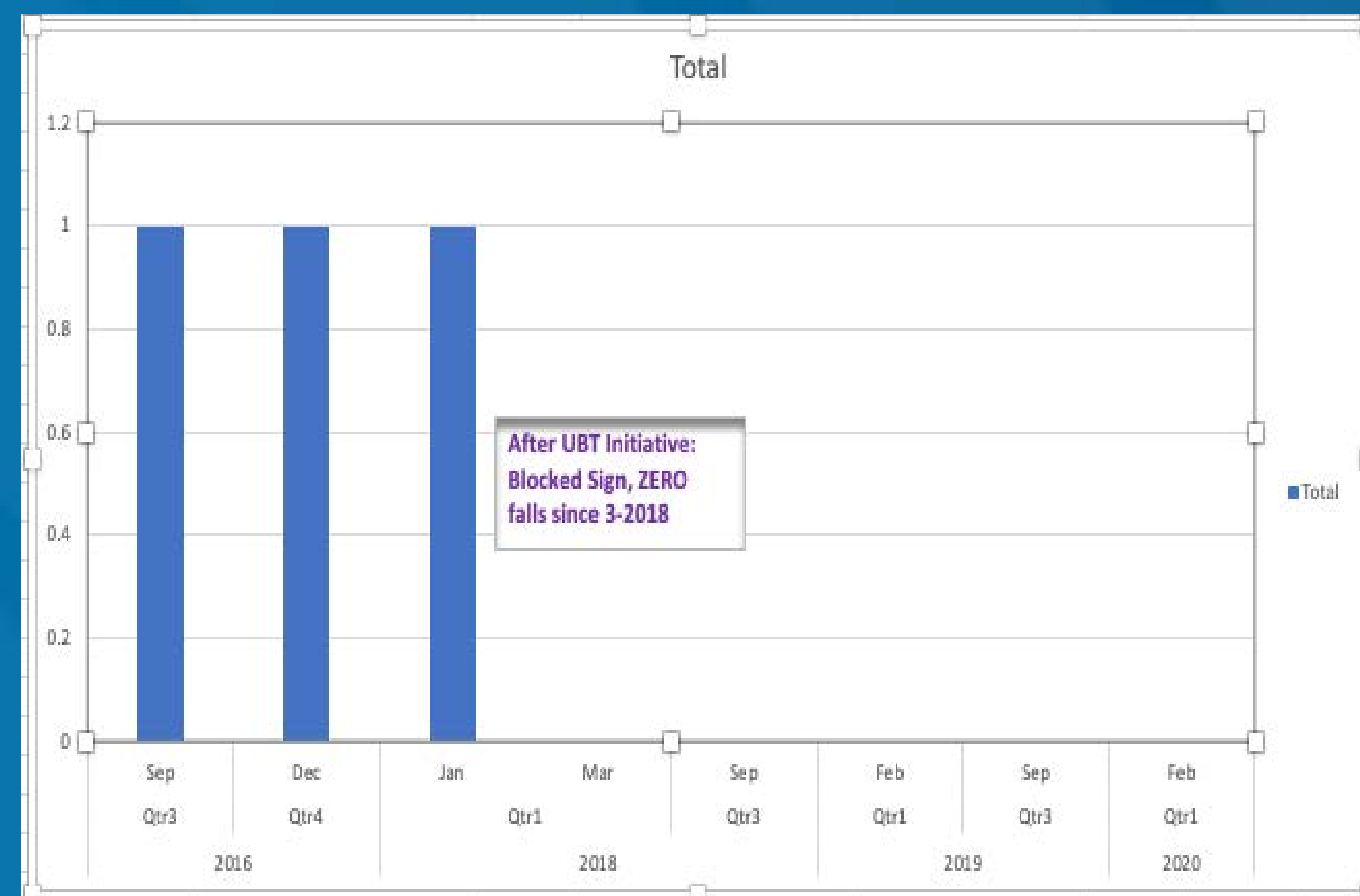
**FALL PRECAUTIONS**

### INTERVENTIONS

- A collaboration by the pre-op and PACU nurses resulted in the creation of a “BLOCKED” sign. This is a bright yellow laminated sign with “BLOCKED” in bold font written on it.
- The BLOCKED sign is being hung on the IV pole of patient’s gurney who received peripheral nerve block. Since the patient will use the same gurney throughout the perioperative cycle, this sign aims to alert the staff that the patient has received a block therefore, must be cautious when attempting to ambulate the patient.
- The BLOCKED sign is only being removed once the patient is discharged.



### RESULTS



### CONCLUSIONS

- Since the execution of this project in 2018, there has not been a patient fall due to PNB’s.
- The bright yellow sign gives sufficient alert to do a safety pause before ambulating the patient.
- It also signals staff to ask for moving help or to use a mobility aid to assist the patient as needed.

### IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Patient falls could cost the organization about \$14,000 per occurrence (“How Much do Patient Falls Cost in Your Medical Facility? | MarketScale”, 2020) which may not be reimbursable since falls are considered a “never event.”
- The organization might receive a low patient satisfaction score which could affect reimbursement as well.
- The use of “BLOCKED” sign has been adapted to two other Kaiser ASU’s in San Diego who have reported the same results.

### COST OF A PATIENT FALL IS

**\$14,000**

### OR MORE PER OCCURRENCE

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**ZERO PATIENT FALLS**

**SINCE IMPLEMENTATION IN 2018**

