

Objective

To reduce healthcare acquired pneumonia through improved oral care during hospitalization.

Background

An increase in healthcare acquired pneumonia cases was identified in 2020 by the Infection Prevention nurse. A staff nurse presented research on the correlation between improved oral care in hospitalized patients and a decrease in healthcare acquired pneumonia. A multi-disciplinary team determined that the oral care provided to inpatients was insufficient.

Prior to the project, patients were provided with a standard toothbrush and toothpaste at admission. Oral care was not encouraged or documented.

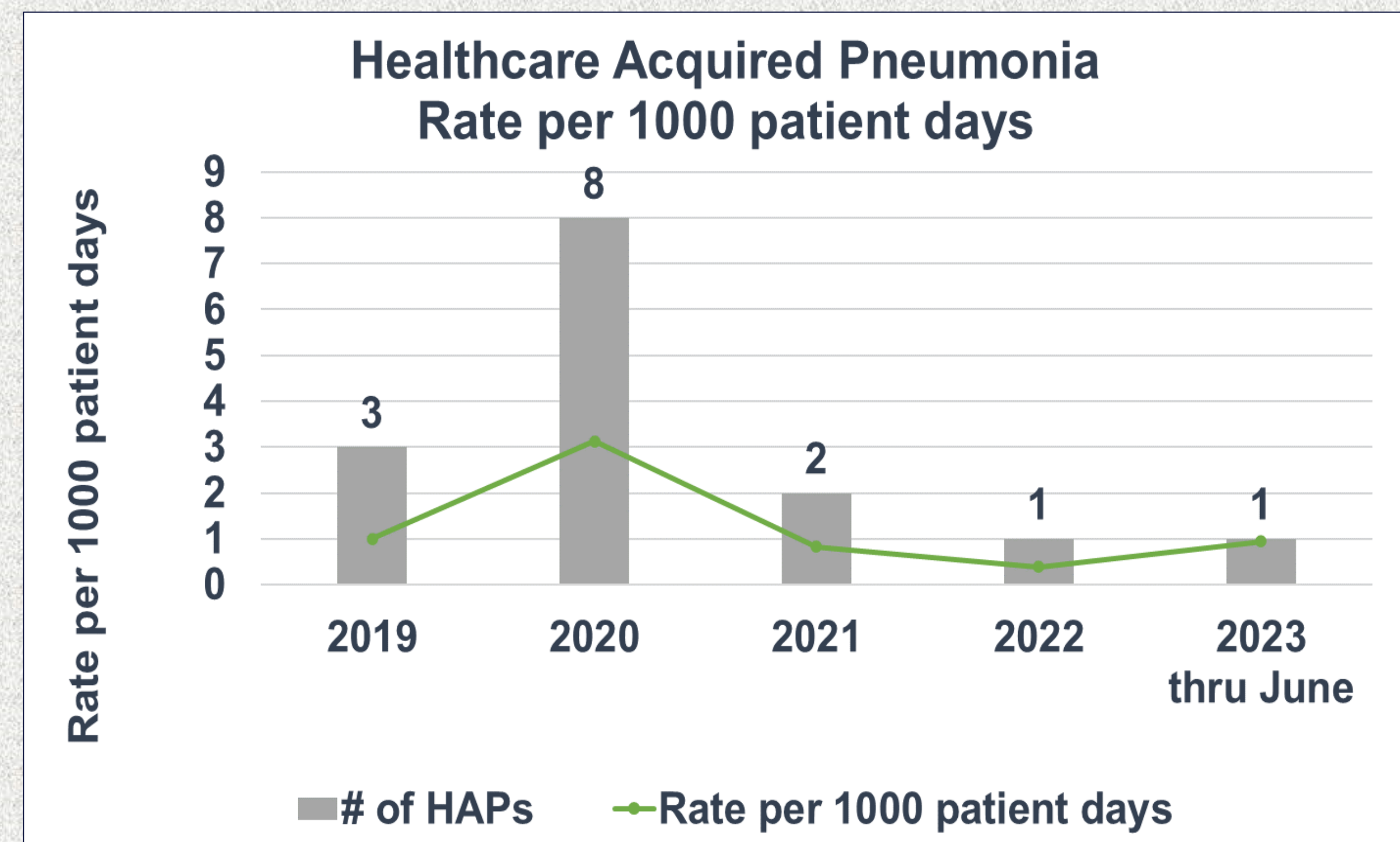
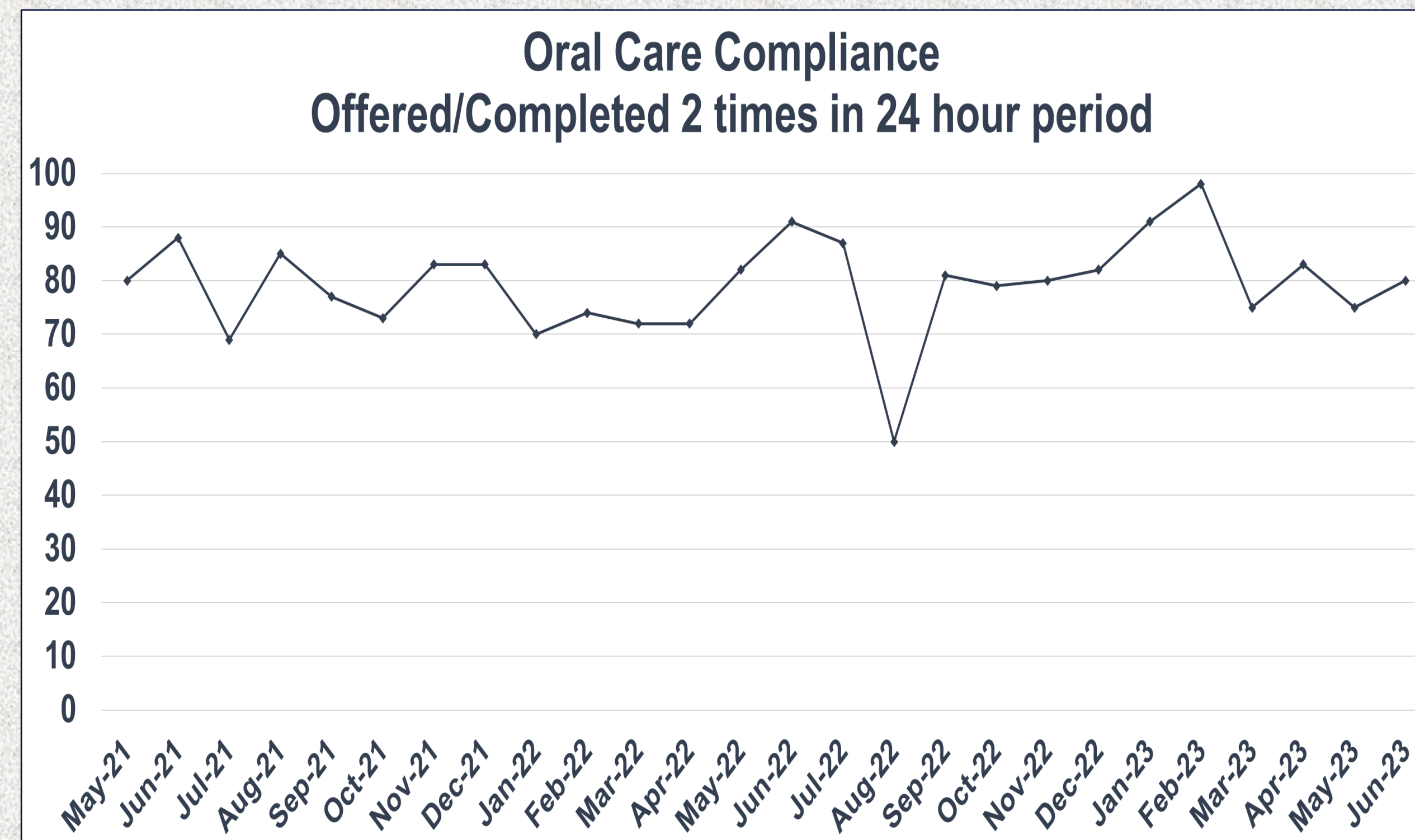
Actions Taken

- ❖ Self oral care kits containing a bristle/sponge toothbrush, optional suction connector, moisturizing antiseptic rinse, and a self-contained spittoon were obtained from our supplier.
- ❖ The supply representative provided training to staff on proper use of oral care kits.
- ❖ A nursing task was added to the admission order set to aid in oral care prompting and documentation in the medical record.
- ❖ The Infection Prevention nurse began auditing five charts a week for documentation of oral care.
- ❖ Ongoing monitoring of oral care compliance by Infection Prevention and Quality Committee.
- ❖ Ongoing education and training with nursing staff on the importance of oral care and proper use of kits.

Reducing Healthcare Acquired Pneumonia Through Improved Oral Care

Knoxville Hospital & Clinics
Infection Prevention & Med Surg

Metrics



Analysis

The use of an oral care kit with antiseptic rinse has been shown to reduce the risk of a healthcare acquired pneumonia. KHC Med Surg nursing staff have successfully implemented oral care kits for hospitalized patients.

The healthcare acquired pneumonia rate decreased 74% from 2020 to 2021. Oral care was one piece of a larger focus on prevention and surveillance of healthcare acquired pneumonia.

Next Steps

- ❖ Continued education and training for nursing staff on the importance of oral care to decrease risk of healthcare acquired pneumonia.
- ❖ Increase oral care compliance to three times in 24-hour period.
- ❖ Reduce the burden of manual chart auditing by leveraging reporting in the electronic health record.

