

# The physiotherapist's contribution in an interdisciplinary approach to patients at risk of falling in geriatric rehabilitation

## Background:

In Switzerland, it is estimated that about 1/3 of people over the age of 65 fall at least once a year and of those nearly 1000 people die as a result of their fall. In view of this high rate, the continuous improvement of the detection and management protocol for falls and associated injuries in geriatric rehabilitation is of great importance.

## Purpose:

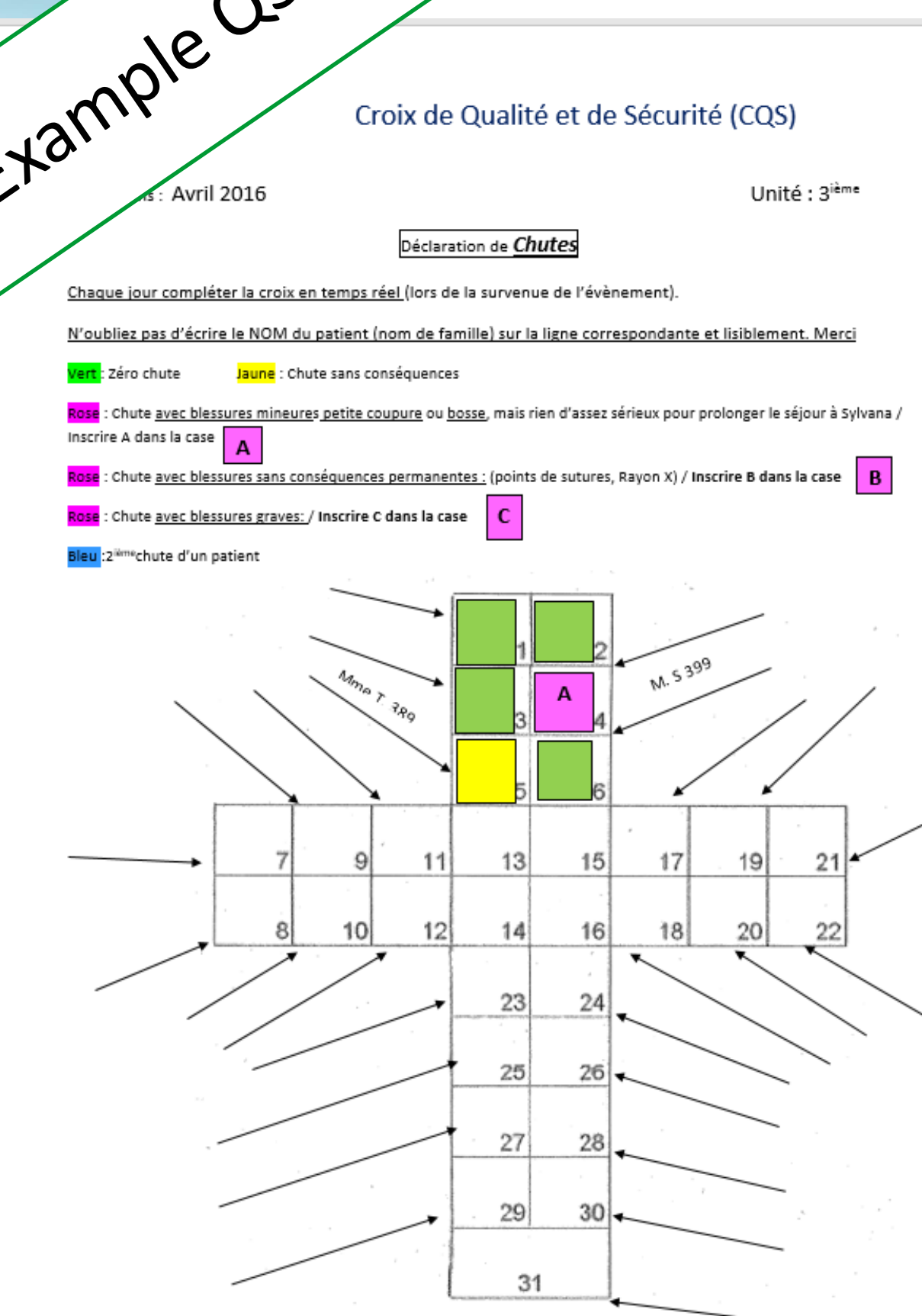
The implementation of practice guidelines and the coordination of an interdisciplinary approach aimed to prevent and reduce the number of falls and falls with serious consequences in a geriatric rehabilitation setting.

## Methods:

An interdisciplinary 16-week pilot project was implemented in a University Rehabilitation Center in a unit of 17 beds.

97 patients were admitted during the period of the project. Stages of a Knowledge Translation Model served as a methodological framework.

## Example QSC



## Results:

- ✓ Significant reduction of 40% in the number of falls with serious consequences.
- ✓ Reduction of 6% in the total number of falls.
- ✓ Better integration of practice guidelines by the healthcare team.
- ✓ New practices are perceived positively by the caregivers.

The physiotherapist screens each patient for fall risk at admission.

Nursing staff collaborates with the physiotherapist to complete screening at admission.

Patients at risk for falls participate in a multifactorial evaluation with specific recommendations from the interdisciplinary team.

Recommendations are documented and implemented by nursing staff.

An assessment of the number of falls and consequences is completed in real time using the Quality and Safety Cross (QSC). After every fall during hospitalization, an interdisciplinary analysis and debriefing is organized to determine modifiable factors to reduce the risk and probability of future falls.

Survey assessing practice and perceived satisfaction addressed to the healthcare team.

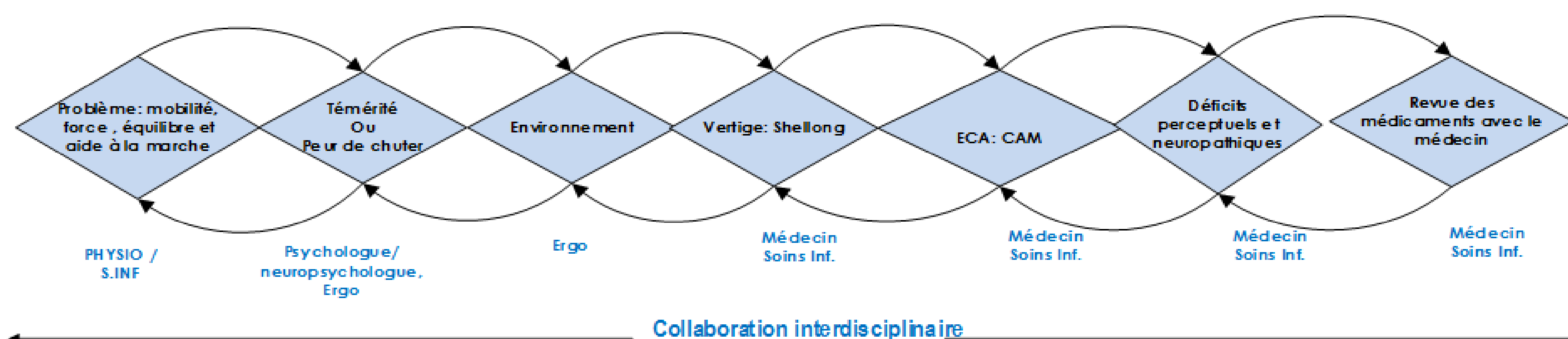


Figure illustrating the clinical approach

## Conclusions:

The integrated implementation of practice guidelines by a multidisciplinary team in a geriatric rehabilitation center decreased both the total number of falls and number of falls with consequences measured with the QSC.

The Knowledge Translation Model allowed a patient-centered approach. Furthermore, it facilitated the integration of new practice strategies and improved the perceived level of care delivered by the healthcare team.