Safe, Timely, Nurse-Led: Transforming Bronchiolitis Discharge Processes

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Identify

Identify Nurse-Led Discharge Barriers

- Recognize key challenges in bronchiolitis readiness

Explain

Explain Conditional Discharge Benefits

- Describe impact on workflow, LOS, and care team confidence

Apply

Apply Across Populations

- Identify additional patient populations suited for this approach

When a Patient Is Ready… But the Process Isn’t

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What if nurses could safely activate discharge the moment a patient meets criteria?

Why This Matters

Bronchiolitis is the #1 leading cause of hospitalization in infants

- **18% of all pediatric hospitalizations**
- **Significant cost burden**
- **High volume hospital strain**

Remien et al., 2023

(Suh et al., 2022)

Bronchiolitis Conditional Discharge Project

Revised: 11/1/2025

Global Aim:
Discharge healthy infants with bronchiolitis when medically ready

SMART Aim:
50% of healthy infants with bronchiolitis will have a conditional discharge order placed

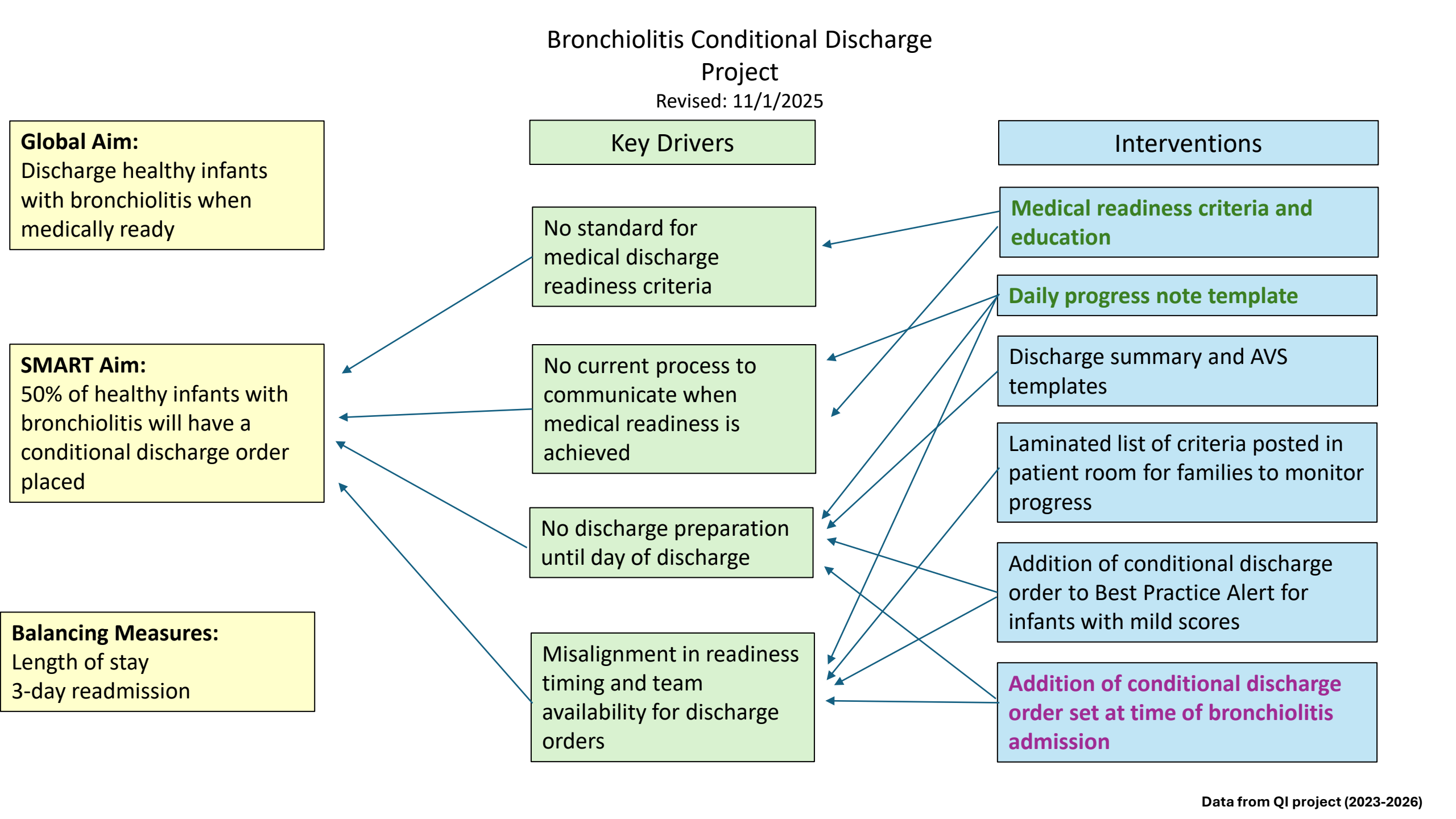
Balancing Measures:
Length of stay
3-day readmission

Key Drivers

- No standard for medical discharge readiness criteria
- No current process to communicate when medical readiness is achieved
- No discharge preparation until day of discharge
- Misalignment in readiness timing and team availability for discharge orders

Interventions

- **Medical readiness criteria and education**
- **Daily progress note template**
- Discharge summary and AVS templates
- Laminated list of criteria posted in patient room for families to monitor progress
- Addition of conditional discharge order to Best Practice Alert for infants with mild scores
- **Addition of conditional discharge order set at time of bronchiolitis admission**



Data from QI project (2023-2026)

Quality Improvement Project

Key Drivers	Interventions
No standard for medical discharge readiness criteria	Consist interdisciplinary readiness criteria and education
No process to communicate when medical discharge readiness is achieved	RN daily progress note template
Misalignment between discharge readiness and team availability	Addition of conditional discharge order upon admission

Nurse-Led Bronchiolitis Conditional Discharge

Global Aim

- Discharge healthy infants with bronchiolitis when medically ready

SMART Aim

- 50% of healthy infants with bronchiolitis will have a conditional discharge order placed upon admission

Outcome Metrics

- % of conditional discharge orders placed
- Length of stay

Intervention Overview

Three Key Changes

- Conditional discharge order added to the bronchiolitis order set
- Structured nursing education
- Standardized nursing documentation

Nursing Care Plan Summary

Goal Outcome Evaluation:

Progress: Moderately Stable (4/13/26 0630)

Outcome Evaluation: Patient was able to wean off oxygen to room air overnight and maintain O2 sats >88%. Mild PBST scores. Patient still requiring wall suction. Nose Frida given to parents, but they have not tried it yet. NG in place for poor feeding. Taking about 50% of feeds PO and the remainder via NG.

Plan of Care Reviewed with: Parents

Recommendations forward:
-Educate family on Nose Frida and have them attempt suction before next feed.
-Attempt to wean off wall suction.
-ATC Tylenol for comfort

Barriers to Discharge:
-Poor PO and NG feeds
-Still requiring wall suction
-Parents need education on Nose Frida Suction

Example care plan note created by Molly Moran BSN, RN, CPN

Patient Population

Photo from Microsoft Commons

Inclusion

- Infants age 30 days–23 months
- Hospitalized for bronchiolitis
- Discharged home

Exclusion

- Prematurity <32weeks
- Congenital heart disease
- Chronic lung disease
- Neuromuscular disease
- Apnea
- ICU admission

Conditional Discharge Criteria

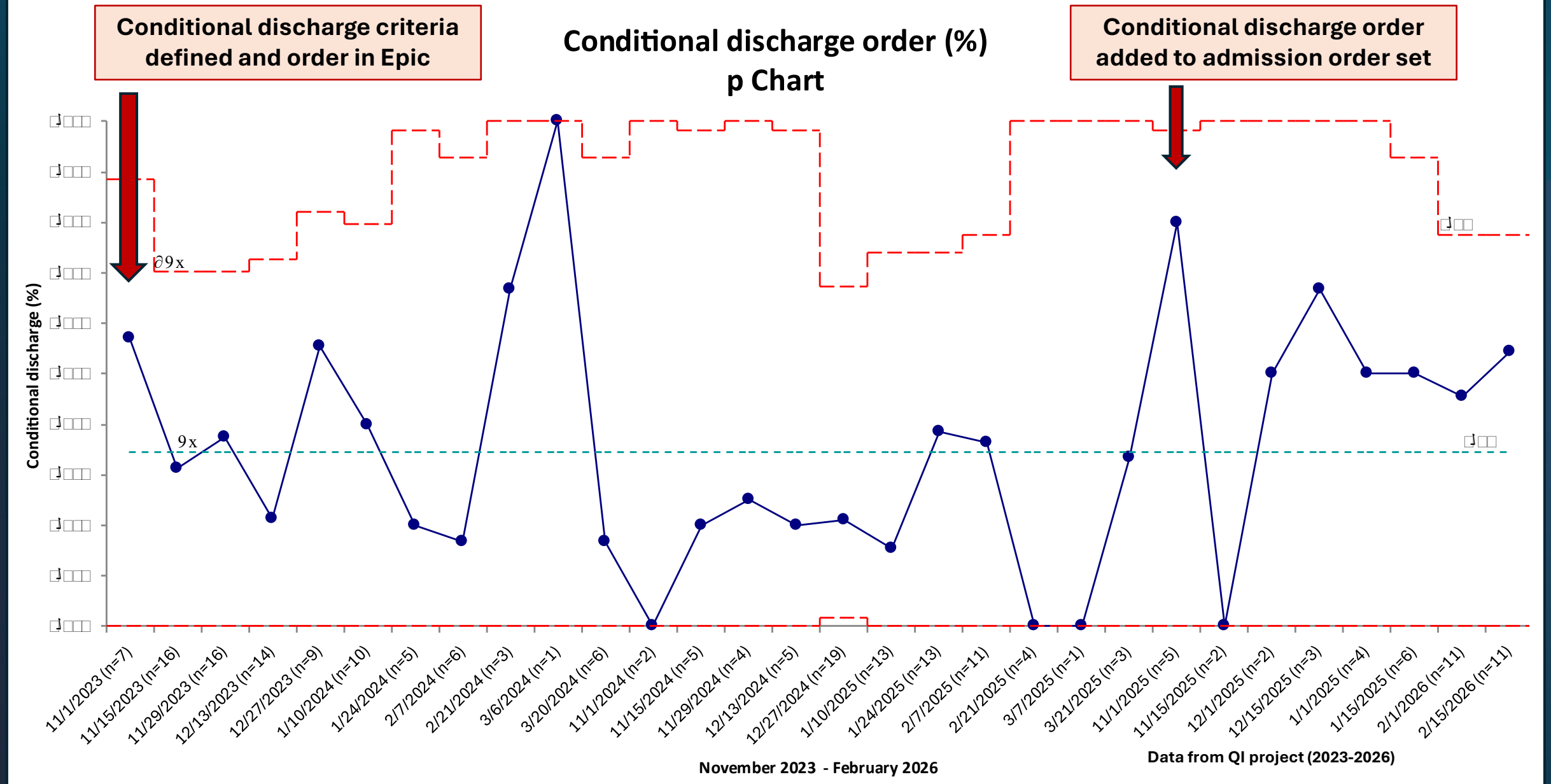
Patients must meet ALL criteria:

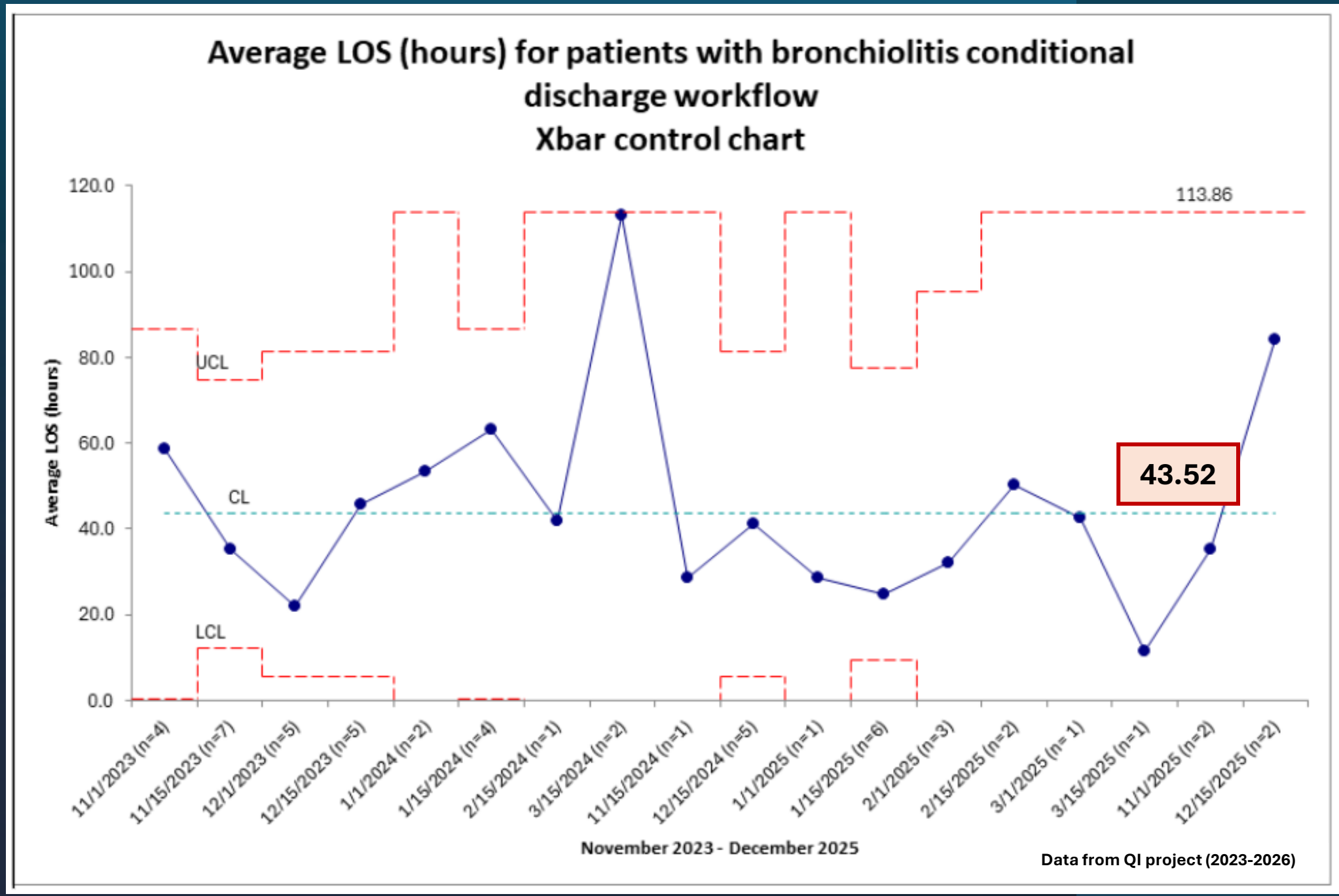
- Room air >4 hours
- SpO_2 >88%
- Two mild bronchiolitis severity scores
- Adequate oral intake
- Caregiver demonstrates suctioning
- Family comfortable with home care

Photo from Microsoft Commons

Workflow

Admission → Conditional Discharge Order Placed → Nurse Monitors Criteria → Criteria Met → Nurse Initiates Discharge


Conditional discharge criteria defined and order in Epic
Conditional discharge order (%)
p Chart
Conditional discharge order added to admission order set
Conditional discharge (%)
9x
9x
11/1/2023 (n=7)
11/15/2023 (n=16)
11/29/2023 (n=16)
12/13/2023 (n=14)
12/27/2023 (n=9)
1/10/2024 (n=10)
1/24/2024 (n=5)
2/7/2024 (n=6)
2/21/2024 (n=3)
3/6/2024 (n=1)
3/20/2024 (n=6)
11/1/2024 (n=2)
11/15/2024 (n=5)
11/29/2024 (n=4)
12/13/2024 (n=5)
12/27/2024 (n=19)
1/10/2025 (n=13)
1/24/2025 (n=13)
2/7/2025 (n=11)
2/21/2025 (n=4)
3/7/2025 (n=1)
3/21/2025 (n=3)
11/1/2025 (n=5)
11/15/2025 (n=2)
12/1/2025 (n=2)
12/15/2025 (n=3)
1/1/2025 (n=4)
1/15/2025 (n=6)
2/1/2026 (n=11)
2/15/2026 (n=11)
November 2023 - February 2026
Data from QI project (2023-2026)


Average LOS (hours) for patients with bronchiolitis conditional discharge workflow
Xbar control chart
120.0
100.0
80.0
60.0
40.0
20.0
0.0
Average LOS (hours)
113.86
UCL
CL
LCL
43.52
11/1/2023 (n=4)
11/15/2023 (n=7)
12/1/2023 (n=5)
12/15/2023 (n=5)
1/1/2024 (n=2)
1/15/2024 (n=4)
2/15/2024 (n=1)
3/15/2024 (n=2)
11/15/2024 (n=1)
12/15/2024 (n=5)
1/1/2025 (n=1)
1/15/2025 (n=6)
2/1/2025 (n=3)
2/15/2025 (n=2)
3/1/2025 (n= 1)
3/15/2025 (n=1)
11/1/2025 (n=2)
12/15/2025 (n=2)
November 2023 - December 2025
Data from QI project (2023-2026)

Results (Preliminary Findings)

Improved discharge planning clarity

Increased RN confidence in discharge readiness

Earlier identification of discharge-ready patients

9-hour decrease in LOS during evaluation period

(Financial impact currently being analyzed with finance partners)

Key Takeaways

Conditional discharge criteria can:

✓ Improved Patient Experience
✓ Reduce delays
✓ Empower nurses
✓ Improve workflow efficiency
✓ Maintain patient safety
✓ Reduce LOS

Core message

- *Nurses are uniquely positioned to identify discharge readiness*

Future Directions

Next Steps:

- Expand to additional diagnoses
- Continue LOS monitoring
- Measure caregiver satisfaction
- Evaluate financial impact

Photo from Microsoft Commons

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