

Improving Compliance with NEWS Guidelines

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Introduction

The National Early Warning Score NEWS was developed by the Royal College of Physicians in 2012 and later updated in 2017 to standardize the process of recording, scoring and responding to changes in routinely measured physiological parameters in acutely ill patients. In SKMCH&RC, NEWS guideline is also used for patient clinical monitoring. In 2024, an Internal audit identified gaps in the implementation of NEWS guidelines, particularly for patients with a score of 5 or higher which indicates potential clinical deterioration requiring immediate action. This quality improvement initiative aims to enhance adherence to the NEWS escalation protocol, ensuring timely and appropriate responses for high-risk patients.

Process Flow

A NEWS score of 5 or more indicates potential clinical deterioration requiring immediate action.

Vital Signs recorded as per NEWS guidelines, with frequency based on the patient's clinical status.

The Registered Nurse (RN) notify the responsible medical team upon identifying a high NEWS score

A resident doctor conducts an immediate assessment of the patient

Patients with high NEWS scores are manage in a monitored care setting to ensure continuous observation and timely interventions.

Figure 2: Key Components of NEWS Protocol Implementation

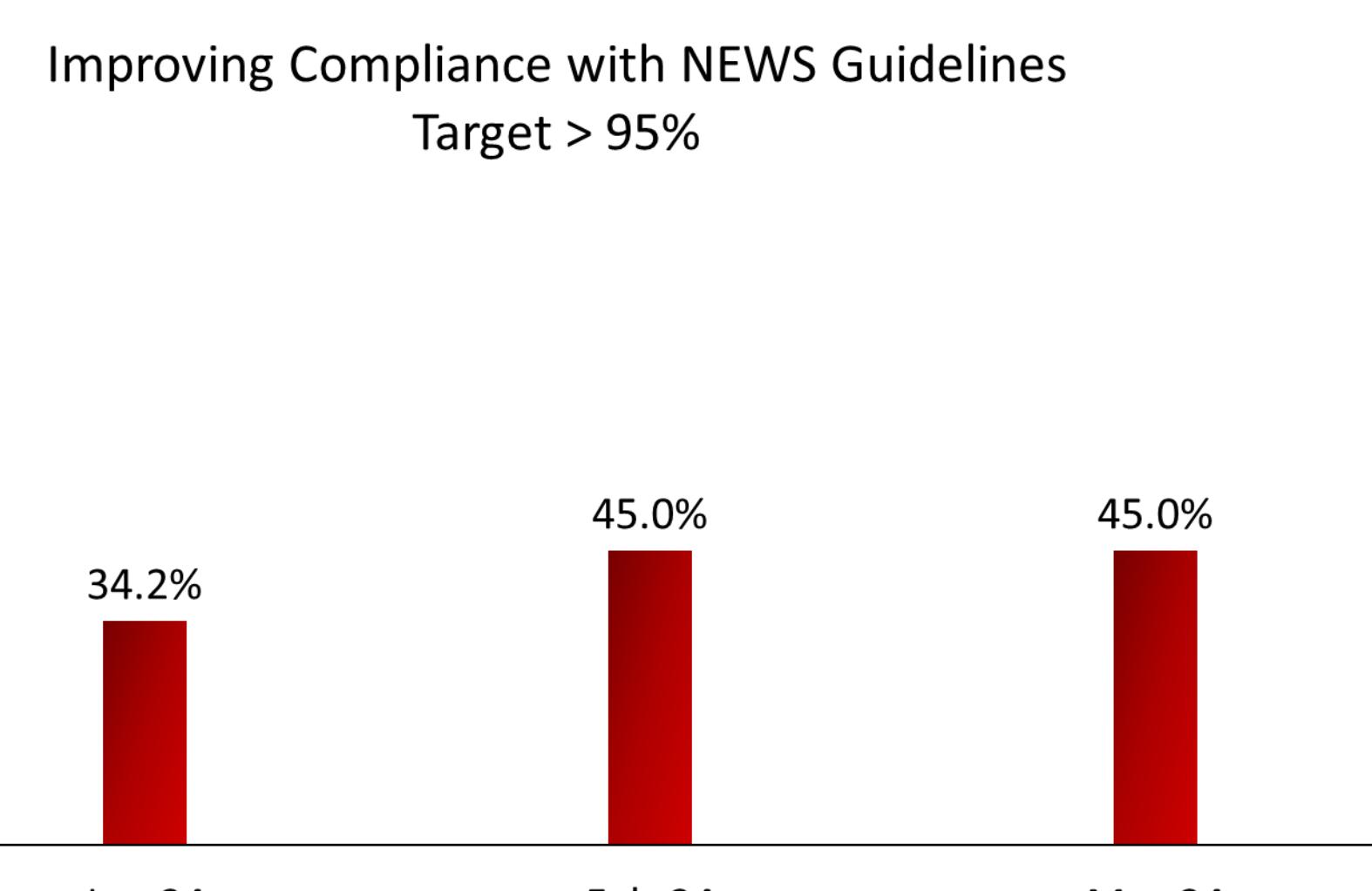
Improvement Strategies

Multiple strategies were proposed and implemented in inpatient areas to address process variations.

- Educational sessions were conducted by the CNM, TL, and NLP to improve staff understanding of the purpose and importance of NEWS monitoring.
- Staff were encouraged and reinforced to ensure adherence to NEWS guidelines.
- Daily spot checks were carried out to monitor compliance and allow for timely corrections.
- Reinforce adherence to existing NEWS guidelines through focused training, supervisory checks, and regular compliance audits to ensure standardized clinical practice.
- In case of any obstacles or delays, nurses were advised to immediately inform the CNM or TL.
- A structured NEWS audit tool was designed and implemented to systematically monitor patients with NEWS scores ≥ 5 .
- Staff were guided and reinforced to use the existing HIS report to identify high NEWS patients.

Baseline Data

Baseline data from January –March 2024 was reviewed to identify the NEWS guidelines compliance. The data revealed non-compliance with the NEWS guidelines. This led prompting the initiation of a structured quality improvement project. A Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) approach was finalized to monitor and enhance the compliance with NEWS guidelines.



Results

The implementation of quality improvement strategies aimed at enhancing the compliance of NEWS guidelines yielded significant improvements in compliance rates. The implementation of the strategies after approval of the PDCA from May 2024 with a steadily improvement. The post-implementation target was achieved in January 2025 with a median of 97% onwards.

The results reveal that enhanced adherence to NEWS guidelines, improved the coordination and communication among healthcare teams, and optimized utilization of hospital resources, timely decision making and care escalation as required. All these interventions resulted in significant improvement in all aspects of care coordination and provision.

Conclusion

These findings highlight the importance of quality improvement initiatives in healthcare settings. This initiative is the primary example of improved outcomes concerning different aspects of patient care and healthcare resource utilization. The PDCA approach is continues for sustaining the results and achieving the targets along with enculturation of the improved practices in the daily care practices through a standardize daily monitoring of NEWS data in the HIS by shift in-charges to support timely escalation of patient care.

References

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Causes of Variations

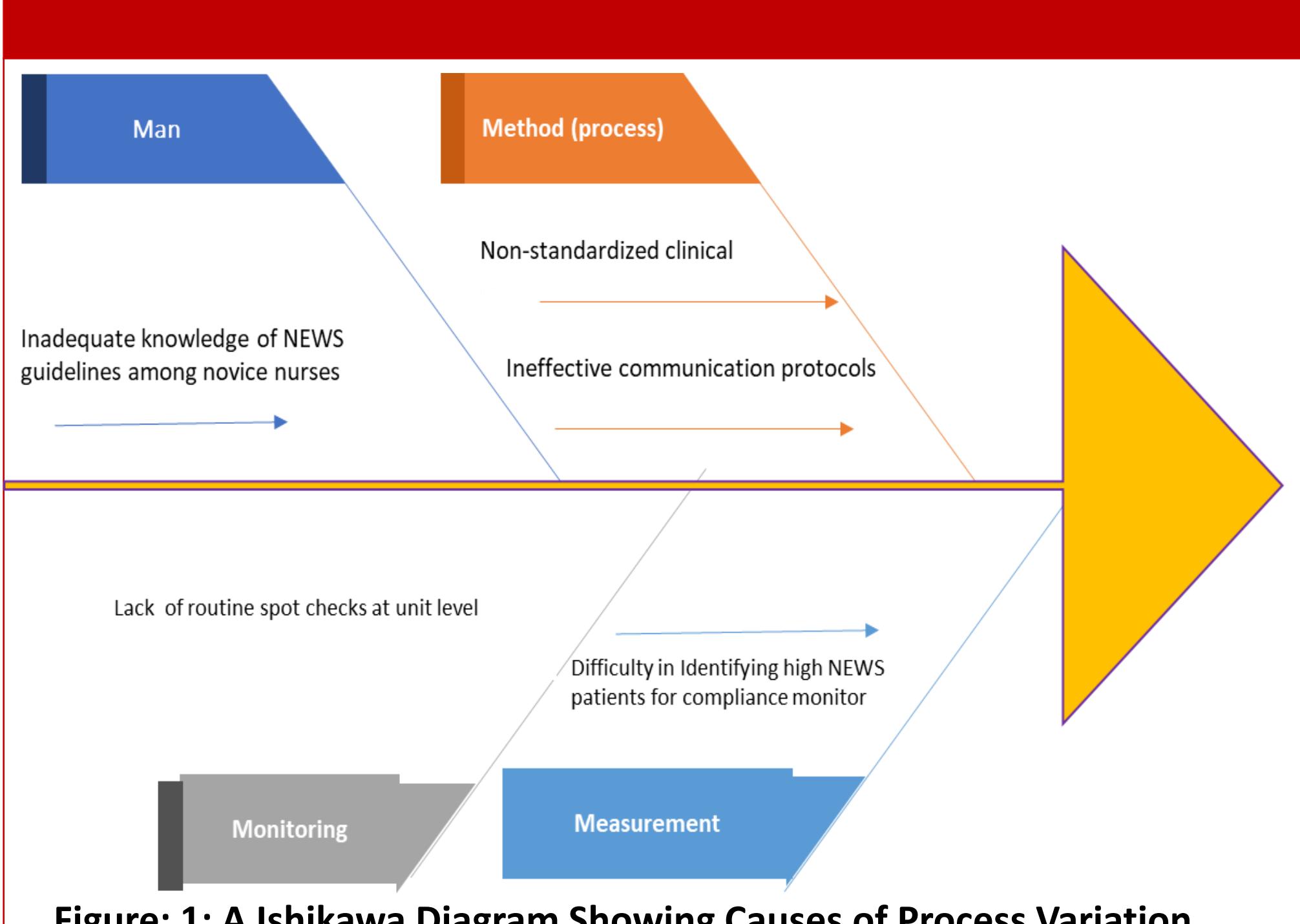


Figure 1: A Ishikawa Diagram Showing Causes of Process Variation

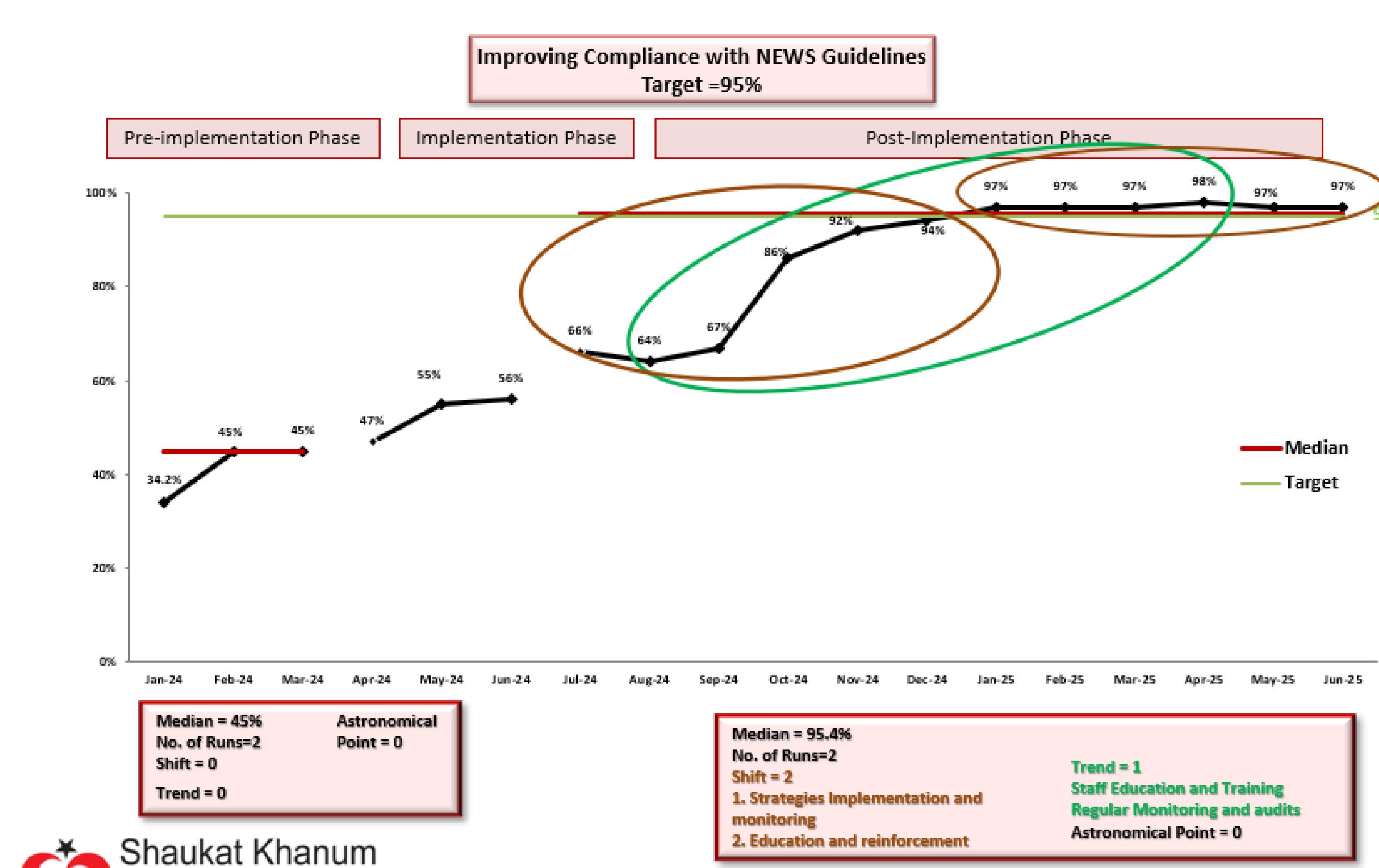


Figure 3: A run chart showing results of Reducing Deterioration via NEWS Compliance