

# Decreasing Medication Errors to Improve Patient Safety

## Background

Starting in early 2023, Nursing Administration noticed a high occurrence of medication related incidents. Education was increased on placing orders in EMR and use of the Electronic Medication Cabinet with no noticeable decline in medication related incidents. It was then identified that the overall rate of medications being scanned at bedside was very low. Computers with barcode scanners were installed in each inpatient room and education provided to nursing staff on the importance of bedside scanning to reduce medication errors.

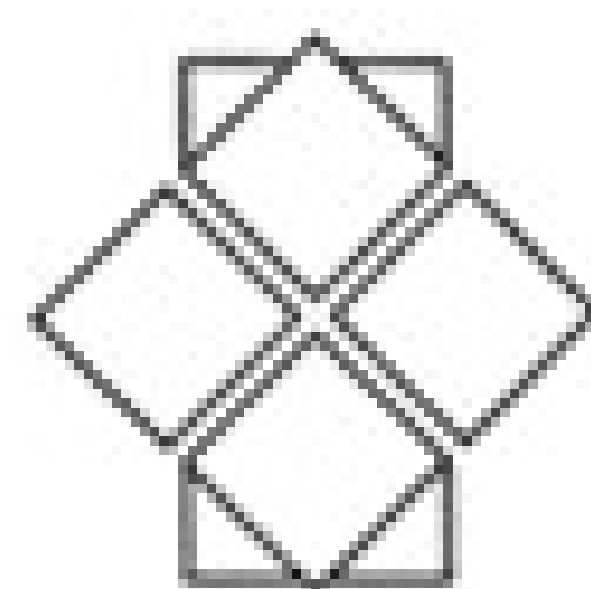
## Objective

Improve medication scanning rate to greater than 90% monthly to improve medication safety and decrease the number of medication related incidents.

## Changes Tested

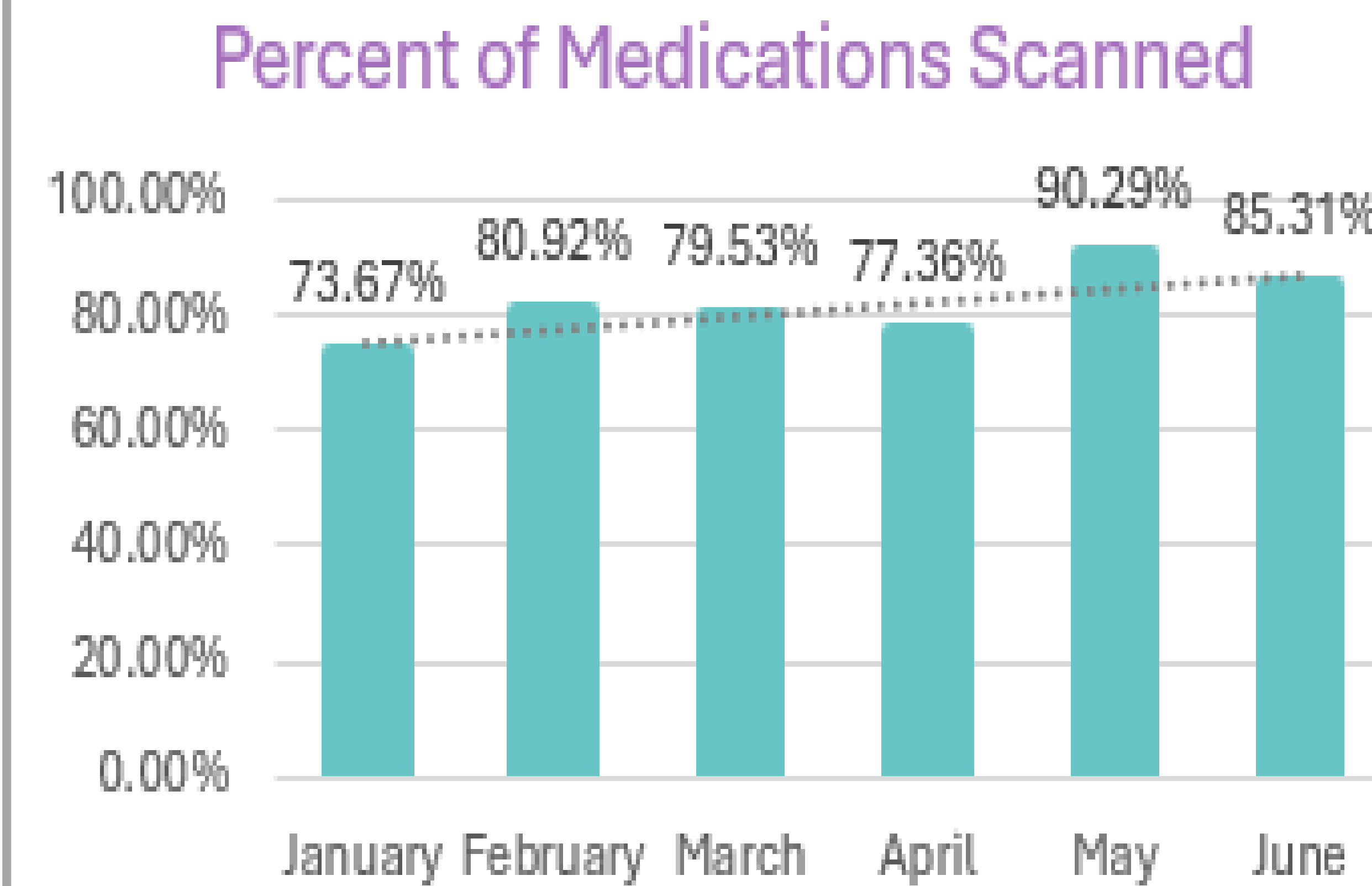
To improve scanning rates, our objectives were to identify barriers, increase education, and monitor compliance.

- ❖ Identify medications which were not scanning properly.
- ❖ Increase education to all nursing staff on importance of medication safety.
- ❖ Monitor compliance with individual nurse scorecards.

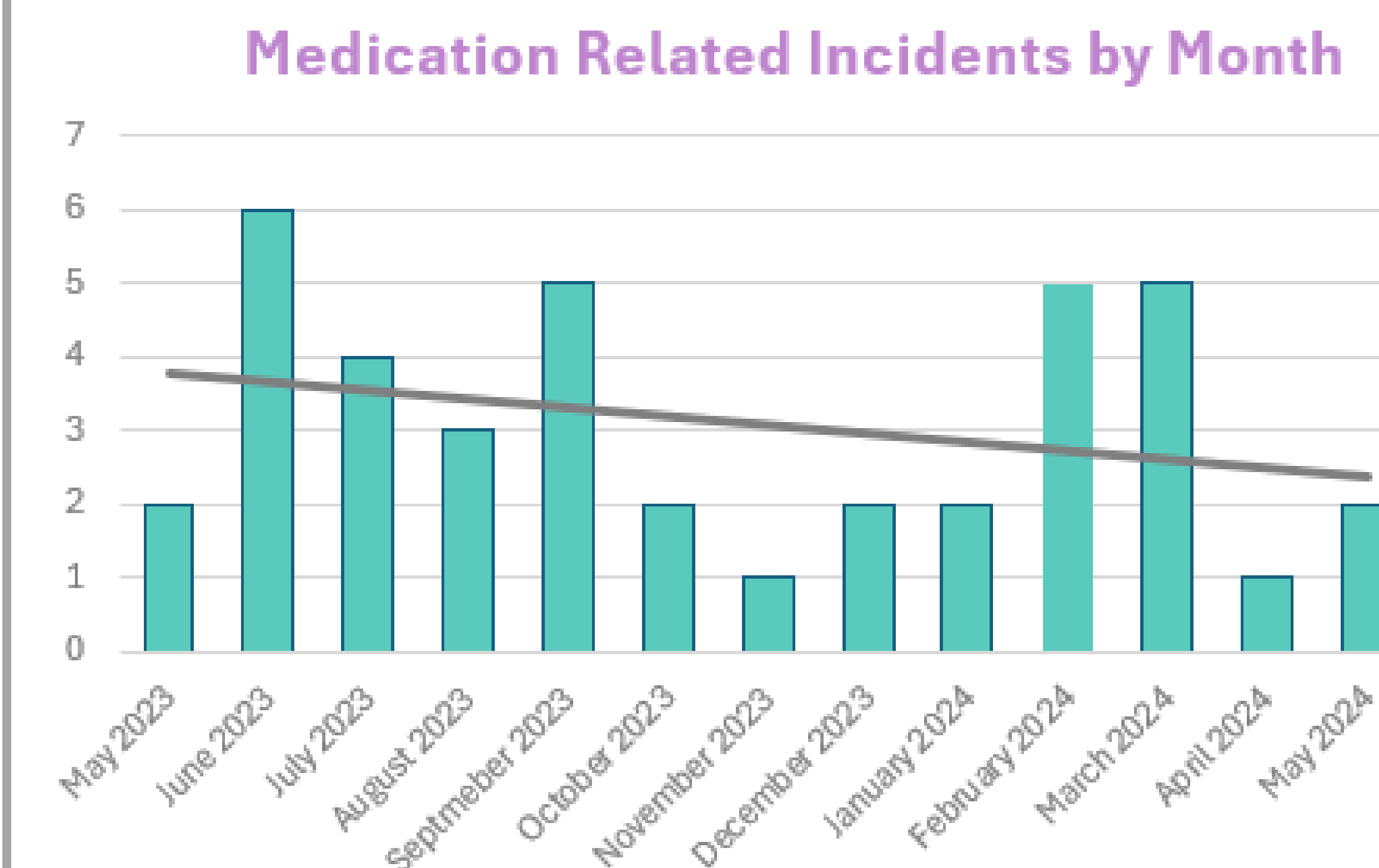


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## Results



In 2023, the initial reports for medication scanning compliance were around 50%. With increased education on Culture of Safety practices and providing nurses with individual scorecards, we are starting to see an upward trend in medication scanning rates as well as a decrease in medication related incidents. This rate has increased to as high as 90.29% in May 2024.



## Lessons Learned

Decreasing barriers to equipment was key as well as increasing the presence of the hospital pharmacy nurse on inpatient units to ensure all medications can be scanned.

- ❖ The local retail pharmacy now sends the hospital pharmacy nurse a list of NDC numbers to ensure proper scanning of all medications on ISB unit.
- ❖ Continuous formulary review and updates are conducted to ensure medications on the unit can be scanned correctly.
- ❖ Increasing education on Culture of Safety to all staff including Acute and ISB nursing.

## Next Steps

- ❖ Nursing Administration has recently started providing individual scorecards to each nurse with patient bracelet scan rates as well as medication scanning rate.
- ❖ Individual education and discipline will be provided monthly to nurses who have a positive scanning rate less than 90%.

## Team Members

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- ❖ OCHC Nursing Department
- ❖ Heidi Courson, Director of Risk and Quality

## Contact

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