

Reducing the Incidence of Self-Harm at Highfield

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Background/ Introduction

- Highfield is an acute mental health unit caring for young people aged between 11 and 18.
- Self-harm is a significant concern for both young people, families and clinicians. There is sometimes a contagious effect within the adolescent group of self harming behaviours.
- The team believed that self-harm was particularly high among young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

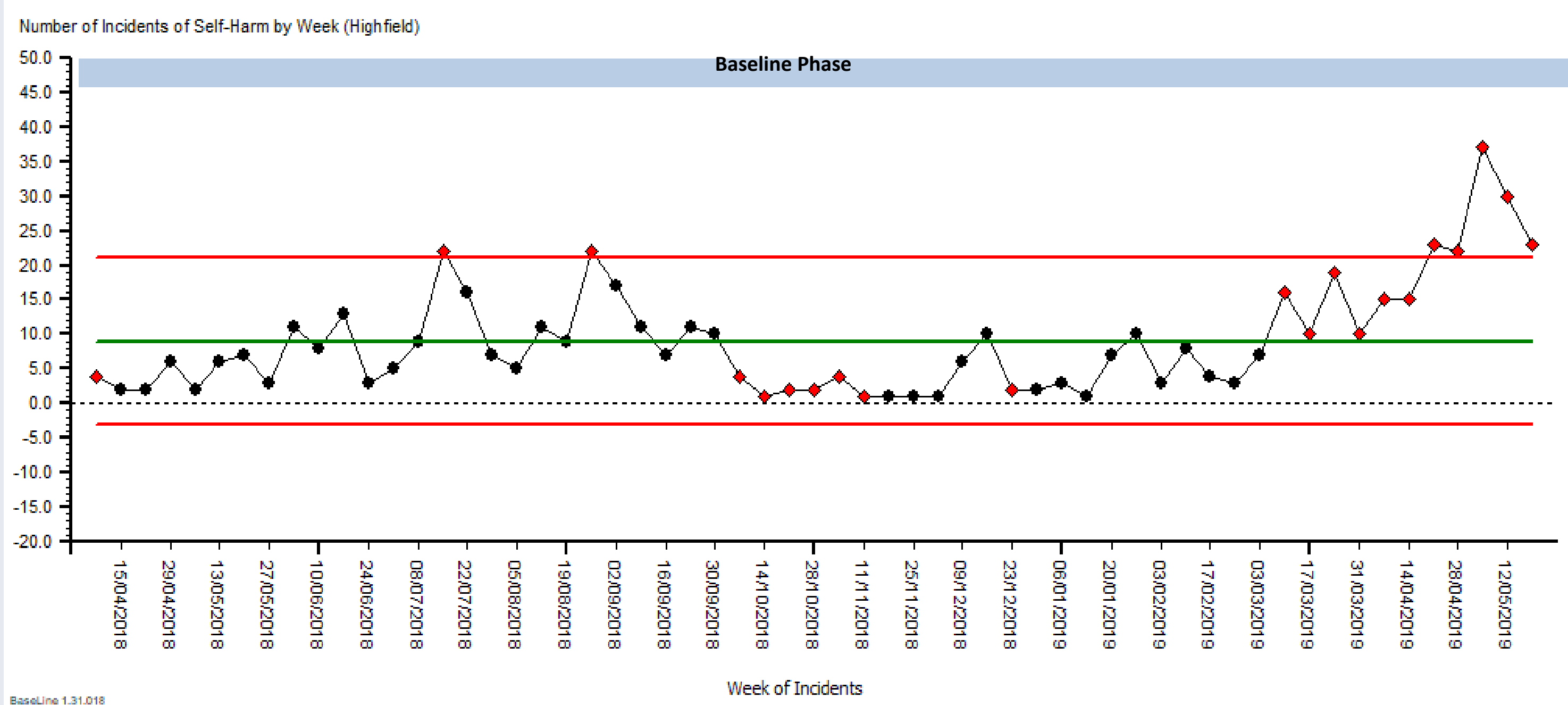
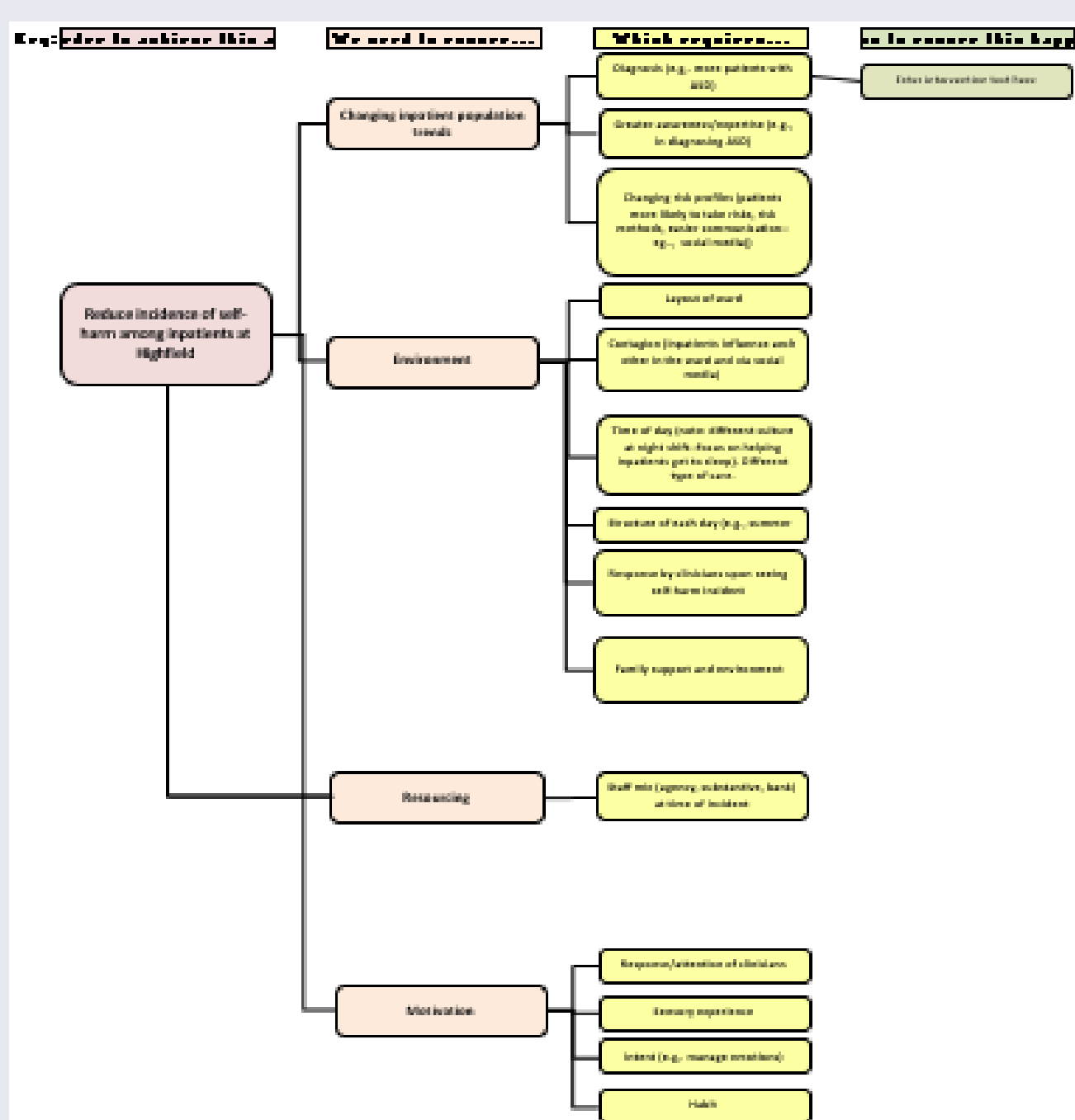


Aims/objectives/audit standards

Reduce incidence of self harm among young people at Highfield

Method

- The team at Highfield and OHI collaborated to form the QI project.
- Data was gathered to understand the frequency of incidents of self-harm and correlations with diagnoses. A literature search was also undertaken.
- A driver diagram was created to better understand causes for self-harm and possible interventions to address it.



Progress Made

- The team carefully reviewed incidents data and found that incidents of self-harm are found with young people with a range of conditions. Incidents did not primarily involve young people with ASD although they had high levels of self harm along with those with depression. The team are reviewing data at a patient level to determine the effects of individual patients on overall incident levels.
- The team identified a test of change: To set a comprehensive assessment at admission for young people at risk of self-harm and set an estimated discharge date. Implementation for this change was postponed in June 2019 due to the unsettled nature of the wards.
- A new test of change begins in June 2019: To introduce a new shift time (11.30-20.30) for a nurse dedicated to providing positive engagement. This person would not respond to incidents but purely focus on those who were trying to engage in the programme.

Reflections

- Initial qualitative feedback from the young peoples is very positive with them feeling more supported and contained by the staff when they are engaging in other activities.
- It has increased staff morale on the ward with the team really wanting to engage with the project and feeling that they are really having more positive therapeutic time.