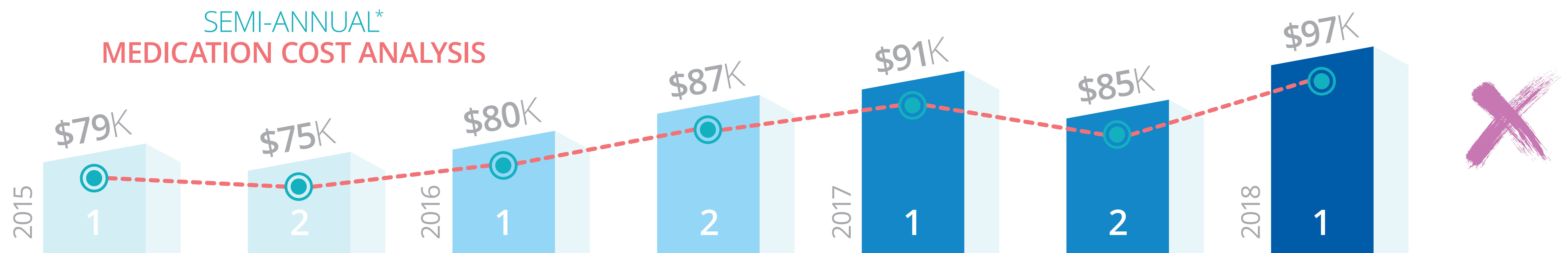


A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

Empowering Nursing Staff to Reduce Medication Costs at a Skilled Nursing Facility

BEFORE



IMPROVEMENT METHODOLOGY

Cost reduction in health care is traditionally the unpleasant undertaking of upper management and is often equated to reduced services and job loss at the front line. In 2018, Louis Brier Home & Hospital, a 215 bed residential care facility faced the challenge of cost-cutting due to monthly medication expenditures exceeding provincial funding (*Figure 1). As a solution, a cost containment project was undertaken by the home, utilizing direct-care staff to achieve the desired financial target.

AIM

To achieve a 20% reduction in drug costs over a 6 months period.

METHOD

Formal quality improvement methodology was employed. Monthly data measures (e.g. medication costs) using run charts were used to track outcomes and empower direct-care staff.

Successful inter-professional collaboration was achieved through team meetings and care conferences.

Change ideas included: reducing medication waste, switching to lower cost (equally effective) medications and deprescribing.

RESULT

This initiative successfully reduced drug costs by 20% (**Figure 2).

CONCLUSION

Resident health outcomes tracked over the evaluation period confirmed that none of the medication changes had a negative impact on resident health outcomes.

The key to the success was the development of effective inter-professional collaboration using a patient-centered approach.

AFTER

