

Repose Foot Care Solutions: A 12-month Strategy to Reduce Hospital Acquired Heel Pressure Ulcers at the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust

Joanne Gaffing – Lead Tissue Viability Nurse, University Hospital of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust

Introduction

Within the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT), heel pressure ulcers have accounted for more than 20% of all hospital acquired pressure ulcers over the past 12 months.

We wanted to improve the patient's overall experience and reduce spending on hospital acquired pressure ulcer treatment in the process. A hospital acquired heel pressure ulcer can lead to increased pain and immobility for patients and can negatively impact on their overall experience of a hospital stay and quality of life (Gorecki et al, 2009).

The Repose® range of offloading and pressure redistribution products from Frontier Medical (Figs 1-4) was selected to help prevent hospital acquired heel pressure ulcers, as they are clinically effective, multi-patient use and can last for many years, making it a cost-effective choice (Evans, 2009). The lead TVN had experienced Repose products in other Trusts, therefore the benefits were already known. A library search was conducted to gain up-to-date research for the use of the range and evidence of its ability to reduce pressure damage to heels.

Method

The idea to introduce the Repose foot care range to the Trust was taken to the UHMBT Nursing Supplies Group. This group meets as a forum to discuss new ideas which could increase the quality of patient care and provide cost efficiencies where possible. Initially, the introduction of the Repose range presented a cost pressure, especially as it was to be funded from individual ward budgets. A case was presented demonstrating Repose as a solution to reduce heel pressure damage and provide long-term benefits to care quality whilst delivering cost efficiencies to negate the additional investment. This led to a contract being set up and the Repose range being introduced across the Trust in February 2016.

The Tissue Viability Service undertook 'Roving Board' presentations in all departments where Repose foot care solutions were seen to be of benefit. This included every hospital ward across the Trust, along with X-ray departments,

Theatres and Podiatry. The products were well received in most areas and usage is continually increasing throughout the Trust. A training program, facilitated by the supplier, targeted the same departments, showcasing the products and leaving posters within each area (Fig. 5).

The contract was also promoted via the Procurement Department, as well as the Harm-Free Care Operational Group. Repose products also featured throughout the Tissue Viability Services 'Wound Workshops' and Tissue Viability Link Nurse study days. To ensure continued compliance, a further wave of training is planned. The change has been encouraged, allowing products to be put in place prior to the heel breaking down, with the message of 'Prevention is better than cure' constantly promoted.



Figure 1. Repose Foot Protectors



Figure 2. Repose Sole Protector



Figure 3. Repose Wedge



Figure 4. Repose Foot Protector Plus

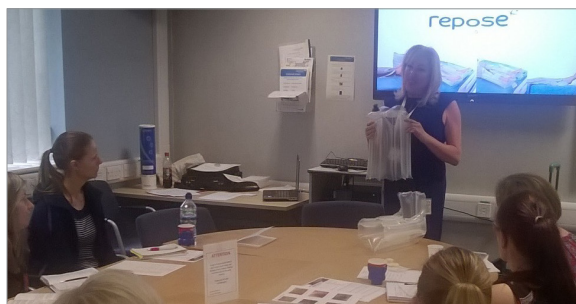


Figure 5. Repose Training Session

Results

Following the initial introduction of the Repose range in February 2016 through to July 2016, the number of hospital acquired heel pressure ulcers remained static. However, although the contract was established in February, the first wave of roll-out training did not commence until May and the 'Roving Board' presentations continued up until June 2016 – meeting the target to reach each department.

A small increase in pressure ulcer prevalence was seen in June, but that could be attributed to the increased awareness and reporting, after the influx of training. From July, a two-month downward trend was identified, with the proportion of heel pressure ulcers reducing from 20% to 15%; the overall target initially being 10%.

Discussion

There have been numerous challenges with the roll-out of the Repose foot care range. The initial investment put off some department managers, although the majority have agreed that it is a lower cost than that to treat a pressure ulcer. Also, there has been a learning curve for some areas in that Repose products are reusable across multiple patients.

Conclusion

The aim was by February 2017 to reduce hospital acquired heel pressure ulcers to less than 10% of total pressure ulcers. Currently heel pressure ulcers account for approximately 15% of total hospital acquired pressure ulcers and it is hoped the downward trend will continue.

The implementation of the Repose foot care range has increased the quality of pressure area care that we can offer patients, together with an increased knowledge surrounding both pressure area care and Repose products.