

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

Joanne Gaffing Matron - Infection Prevention & Tissue Viability, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust

Introduction

Within the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust, heel pressure ulcers remain a concern, even following a programme of pressure ulcer prevention measures implemented in February 2016¹. This included the introduction of pressure relieving and off-loading equipment across the Trust in the form of static, air filled Repose Foot Protectors, Foot Protector Plus and Repose Wedge in conjunction with an education programme. It was previously reported that by August 2016, heel pressure ulcers had reduced from 20% of hospital acquired pressure ulcers, to 15% but the overall aim was to reduce to 10%.¹

The Tissue Viability Team wanted to improve patient experience further, whilst reducing spend on hospital acquired pressure ulcers. To continue the decrease in heel hospital acquired pressure ulcers, the two wards with the highest incidence of heel damage were targeted.

Method

A meeting was held to discuss potential solutions between the Lead Tissue Viability Nurse, Matron, and the Ward Managers. It was found that patient non-concordance was leading to a low uptake of using Repose Foot Protectors and so the strategy was to introduce Repose Wedge (Fig. 1) as a standard piece of equipment, ensuring that all patients automatically received pressure off-loading to the heel.

Repose Wedge was chosen due to its versatility – it is suitable for all levels of risk, up to category 4 pressure damage and patients who have larger or restless limbs. As a reusable product, it is also more cost-effective than disposable products².

However, there was a cost implication associated with this plan - 60 products were required. As an unbudgeted expense, alternate funding was sought from charitable funds. This was a lengthy process, taking six months before agreement, purchase and fitting to each bed.

Results

Repose Wedge was introduced in May 2017 with the 10% target being met on these two high risk areas. However, in June 2017 and July 2017, we have seen a slight increase in incidence once again, meaning that the 10% target has not



Figure 1. Repose Wedge

Percentage HAPU Heels / Feet

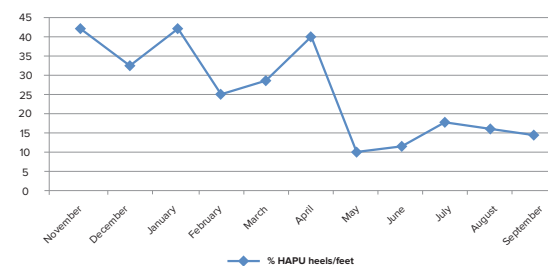


Figure 2. Hospital Acquired Pressure Ulcers Heels/Feet

been met across these two areas, although a definitive decline in heel pressure ulcer incidence can be observed (Fig. 2).

As there is a lower overall trend than for the previous five months, this demonstrates the implementation of Repose Wedge on the wards has had a positive effect on hospital acquired heel pressure ulcers.

Discussion

There have been challenges associated with the roll-out of Repose Wedge on the two wards with two heel pressure ulcers developing in July. On investigation, these were due to patient non-concordance. There were also instances where Repose Wedge had not been positioned to allow for heel off-loading by both patients and clinicians even though intensive ward training programme for both parties was undertaken pre, inter and post implementation.

Conclusion

The overall aim of introducing Repose footcare products into the Trust was to help to reduce hospital acquired heel pressure ulcers to 10% of total pressure ulcers within 12 months of implementation (February 2017). Upon investigation, as to why the target was not met, it was found to be due to patient non-concordance with the use of Repose Foot Protector and Foot Protector Plus plus the low uptake of these products in some areas. Following the introduction of Repose Wedge, heel pressure ulcers have accounted for between 10% and 18% of total hospital acquired pressure ulcers, meeting the Trust's target of 10%, but not yet maintained. The increased concordance and the versatility of Repose Wedge is felt to have contributed to the improved outcomes.

Longer term it is hoped that the adoption of Repose Wedge in other high incidence areas will result in the further reduction of hospital acquired heel pressure ulcers. As of June 2017, the Trust is at the lowest incidence for two years.