Unit-Based Skin Care Champions
Achieving and Sustaining Reduction in Pressure Ulcers
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PURPOSE
Incorporating pressure ulcer prevention into nursing practice in the acute care setting can be challenging. The goal of the unit-based skin care champion model is to educate and empower the local nurse to impact practice within the work unit via education and data sharing.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
There are several components to a successful pressure ulcer prevention program. In 2001, Duke University Hospital launched a unit-based skin care champion program as an integral part of a pressure ulcer prevention program. The unit-based skin care champion role was developed by a multidisciplinary team. Registered Nurses and Nursing Assistants were solicited from each inpatient unit, specially trained and empowered to educate their staff and monitor unit acquired pressure ulcer trends. A Wound Management expert is assigned to each unit for the purpose of mentoring and facilitating of unit education.

SIGNIFICANCE
Preventing pressure ulcers in the acute care setting has become a national focus. The national incidence of hospital related pressure ulcers has not been significantly reduced over the past several years. The unit-based skin care champion model can provide both positive and sustainable results.

KEY STRATEGIES FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS
• Monthly NDNQI pressure ulcer data collection by the unit-based Skin Care Champions.
• Unit targets updated annually; monthly performance to targets communicated.
• Expectations for “Zero” Avoidable pressure ulcers.
• Timely data sharing related to all unit acquired pressure ulcers.
• Ongoing skills development via:
  - Online educational modules
  - Quarterly and annual educational workshops
  - Leadership focus, support and recognition critical.

RESULTS
Hospital-acquired Pressure Ulcer Rates Post-Program Implementation

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE
• Significant sustained reduction in hospital-acquired pressure ulcers can be achieved in the acute care setting through implementation of a pressure ulcer prevention program.
• Ongoing educational support, regular feedback of data, and access to clinical experts are all vital to the success.
• Real time communication to each unit’s clinical team for all nosocomial pressure ulcers.
• Role commitment results in;
  - Enhanced skill development resulting in unit “expert” resource
  - Career development
  - Ownership for patient outcomes

EVALUATION
The implementation and ongoing development of a unit-based “Skin Care Champion” program can create both positive patient outcomes and professional growth opportunities for the Registered Nurse. Ongoing data sharing, leadership support and unit ownership are all key to continued program success.

REFERENCES