Skin Tears: An Opportunity To Adopt Best Practices at UPMC McKeesport

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ABSTRACT

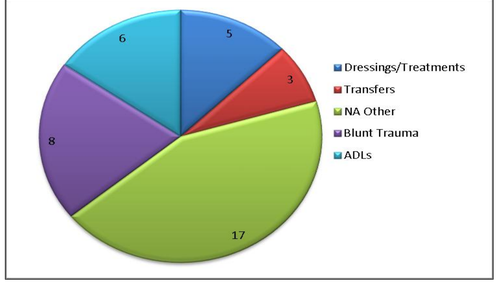
In a small community hospital with limited healthcare resources, nursing leaders at UPMC McKeesport decided to examine an ongoing problem in their organization and explore ways to better support their geriatric patient population and sustain quality care delivery.

A Gap analysis revealed that there were opportunities to improve risk assessment, prevention, and treatment of skin tears in the organization.

BACKGROUND

Through incident reporting, it was found that patients were vulnerable to skin tears in all areas of the hospital. In 2013 there were 35 reported skin tear events, 57% took place in nursing departments, and 37% were reported in ancillary/diagnostic areas. To date, 2014 data reveals similar circumstances. Blunt trauma, falls, the performance of activities of daily living, dressings/ treatments, patient transfers and equipment injuries (wheelchair, side rails, bed) are the leading causes of hospital acquired skin tears according to www.woundcarejournal.com.

2014 SKIN TEARS



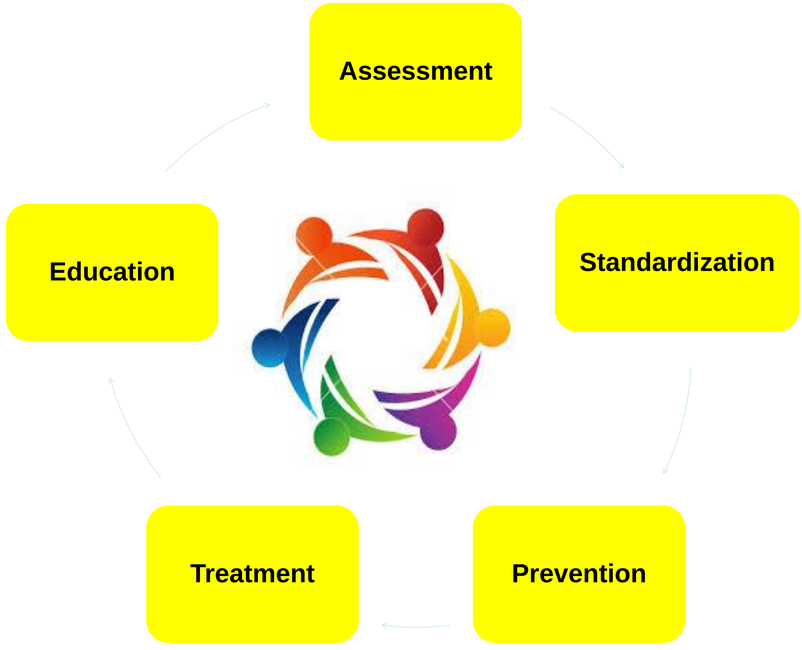
GOALS

Identify who is at risk

Avoid preventable risk and trauma

Create an interdisciplinary hospital awareness of geriatric patient skin susceptibilities

Embed evidence based geriatric protocols throughout the organization



BEST PRACTICE

Educational blitz to employees in all departments (diagnostic, treatment, physical therapy)

All equipment stock rooms hold a standardized inventory of skin care supplies: tape, lotion, intravenous dressings, adhesive remover

Proper positioning, turning, lifting, and transferring techniques used to prevent friction and shear

Usage of assistive and protective devices on patients at risk for skin injuries

Daily documentation of known skin tears in medical record

Concise non-punitive reporting on all patient skin tears to Risk Management department

OPPORTUNITIES

Disseminate best practices through organization

Facilitate awareness of skin tear risk, prevention and treatment in diagnostic and treatment areas

Capture details of causative factors of skin tears and modify strategies accordingly

Facilitate and sustain awareness of skin tear protocols

Skin Resource Nurse

Unit based nurses with enhanced knowledge and skills in the management of skin conditions, wounds and pressure ulcers

Skin Resource Nurse Focus:

- Real time consultant providing just in time education during skin care rounds
- Procurement of accurate skin impairment documentation including pressure ulcer staging and treatment
- Gathers and monitors unit based data
- Ensures appropriate use of skin care products and specialty mattresses to facilitate healing of impairments

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