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.

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.

**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

**REFERENCES**
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