Skin Champion Program: A Nurse-Initiated, Evidence-Based Program to Reduce Hospital-Acquired Pressure Ulcers

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Introduction

A Skin Champion Program was initiated in 2009 to address an increasing number of hospital acquired pressure ulcers (HAPU) at a 500-bed community hospital. It is estimated that nosocomial pressure ulcers occur in 12% of acute care patients with estimated direct costs ranging from $500 to $40,000 per wound (Stoelting, et al., 2007). As of 2008, CMS will no longer reimburse for “preventable” HAPUs. The Skin Champion program is an inventive way to partner the Wound, Ostomy, Continence Nurse (WOCN) specialty with staff nurses to integrate evidence-based practices at the bedside, assisting in the prevention of hospital acquired pressure ulcers, improving patient outcomes, and enhancing staff satisfaction.

Method

The methods utilized in developing the Skin Champion program stem from the Iowa Model of evidence-based practice (EBP); a model theory adopted by the institution that serves to guide the process of developing evidence-based practice changes (Polit & Beck, 2008) and the NICHE geriatric resource nurse model of care.

Program Goals

- Decreases HAPUs, costs, & length of stay
- Establishes infrastructure process for ongoing quality improvement
- Enhances staff satisfaction

Program Impact

- Easily replicated on other units and throughout health system
- Brings evidence-based practice to the bedside
- Decreases HAPUs, costs, & length of stay
- Establishes infrastructure process for ongoing quality improvement
- Enhances staff satisfaction

Outcomes

- Revision of nursing orders
- House-wide practice change: incontinence care and bad making
- Developed Incontinence Associated Dermatitis (IAD) Policy
- House-wide, multidisciplinary education for practice change
- Significant decrease in hospital-acquired IAD consults

Role Responsibilities

- Completion of education program
- 12 hours/month peer to peer teaching (paid above scheduled unit hours)
- Braden Risk Assessment review with staff
- Unit-based educational bulletin boards
- Quarterly unit journal club
- Participation in quarterly pressure ulcer prevalence study
- Participation in monthly WOCN meetings
- $250 quarterly stipend when all hours met
- Participation in quarterly pressure ulcer prevalence
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References


Nursing Management, 34(4), 382-388.

Never underestimate the power of a small group of dedicated people changing the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead