Improving Pressure Ulcer Prevention Programming at the Front Lines - Nursing Assistants Do Make a Difference

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Study # LIT1065

Presented at the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Society’s™ (WOCN®) 45th Annual Conference, Seattle, WA, June 2013.

This study was sponsored by:

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WK1328954/LIT1065/2.5M/AM7
INTRODUCTION
The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) results identified staff need for improving education in the prevention of pressure ulcers and skin injury. In planning our goals for 2012, we found nursing assistants were the most often delegated for hands on bedside care and the least often offered educational opportunities. At the time of introduction of new skin care products, we qualified for an online prevention program* directed at nursing assistants.

PURPOSE
Our goal was to build a strong foundation to enhance the skills of our nursing assistants by providing consistent pressure ulcer prevention education and testing their skill improvements over time.

METHODS
• The mandatory 2 hour nursing assistant pressure ulcer prevention program provided a 5 module online education on identification, prevention of and treatment of pressure ulcers, skin care, incontinence, nutrition and positioning. The information was deemed to be consistent across the these modules, and the content of education met the scope of practice of the subjects.
• Subjects were all nursing assistants, this choice is consistent with the NDNQI/IHI recommendations.
• Wound care staff and product representatives demonstrated the proper use of skin care products. Proper turning, off-loading, and availability of redistribution surfaces were explained with in-services and during individual teaching opportunities.
• Staff progress was tracked and included pre and post test scores.

RESULTS
A standard Two Sample T-Test was conducted using NCSS 2007 Statistical Package comparing pre and post scores on only those participants that completed both test sequences. A total of 94 participants completed both pre and post tests. The mean average pretest was 79%, while post test the mean was 89%. Statistical analysis of the pre and post educational testing scores showed a statistically significant improvement (P=0.048 for a two-tailed analysis and p=0.024 for a one-tailed analysis).

DISCUSSION
We believe that the baseline knowledge of our staff was already maintained at a fairly high level (a score of 79% pre test score is reasonably high in our opinion) even before the PUPP education program was implemented. The ability to further improve on these scores is worthy of note. We also have observed a higher degree of nursing assistant enthusiasm in the preventative aspects of the education. We can report that they are more vested, than ever before, in pressure ulcer prevention.

REFERENCES
2. Howe L. Education and empowerment of the nursing assistant; validating their important role in skin care and pressure ulcer prevention, and demonstration of productivity enhancement and cost savings. Adv Wound Care, 2008;21(6):275-281.

*PUPP program (Pressure Ulcer Prevention Program), Medline Industries, Inc.

IN APPRECIATION
A special thanks for support and guidance to Taffy Arias, BSN, MBA, RN, our Chief Nursing Officer. And a warm and proud thank you to all the nursing assistants at Porter Regional Hospital for making a difference - everyday.

There is something about wheeling someone out the door of the hospital and they get up from the wheelchair and turn to you and give you a hug and say, “Thank you.” That’s when I know I have made a difference in someone’s life. It’s a feeling I just can’t describe.

Cristie Phillips, CNA - 5300 Unit

Terry Postma, BSN, RN, CWS, CFCN is pinning Laurie Shireman, NA.