Implementation of the Wound Treatment Associate © Program in the ICU to Reduce Pressure Ulcers

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Introduction

•An analysis by the Patient Safety Committee of hospital acquired events, insurance carrier actuarial data, and Patient Safety Organization benchmarking studies revealed an increase in number and severity of pressure ulcers. The greatest number of pressure ulcers was occurring in the Surgical and Medical ICUs. Review of documentation revealed inconsistent staging and poor skin assessment. Concurrently, there was an increase of claims and litigation related to pressure ulcer occurrences.

•This research study is based on the hypothesis that daily skin assessments of patients in the high-risk areas of Surgical ICU (SICU) and Medical ICU (MICU) performed by nurses with advanced wound care training will result in a decreased occurrence of avoidable pressure ulcers.

Objectives

•Reduce the number of preventable hospital acquired pressure ulcers in the MICU and the SICU.

•Reduce the percentage of avoidable pressure ulcers in the Trauma population.

•Increase the accuracy of the documentation to allow for enhanced tracking and trending of pressure ulcers both present on admission and hospital acquired thereby reducing the total healthcare cost associated with potential and actual litigation.

•Increase knowledge of staff working in the target ICUs related to wound staging.

•Provide advanced training to a core group of ICU staff nurses utilizing the Wound Treatment Associate program (WTA).

Methods

•A knowledge assessment pre-test was given to the MICU and SICU staff followed by a one hour inservice on Pressure Ulcer identification and prevention. A presentation was made to GMEC by the Wound Care Manager on Pressure Ulcer staging

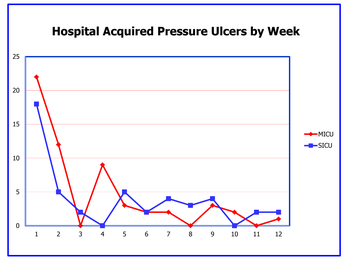
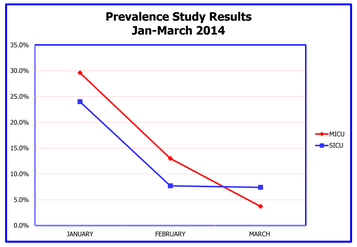
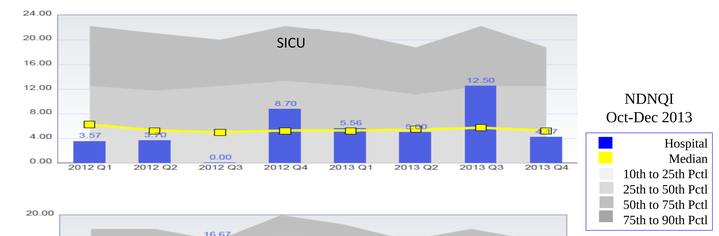
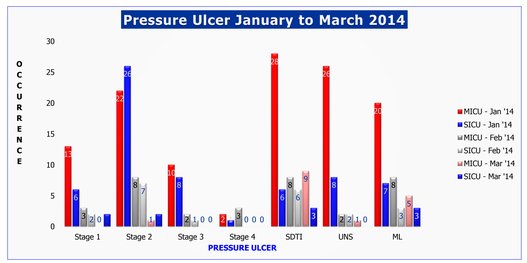
•Pressure Ulcer prevention and staging classes were held for all MICU and SICU staff.

•A core group of ICU nurses, 4 on day shift and 4 on night shift, were selected to attend the WTA program. The WTA program is 48 hours blended learning experience consisting of 20 hours of on-line training and 28 hours of practicum supervised by 2 Certified Wound Ostomy Nurses with the assistance of the Wound Care Team. This course provides advanced training in skin assessment, pressure ulcer prevention and wound management.

•The WTA trained ICU bedside staff nurses then participated in a three-month-study where 913 cumulative patients located in the MICU and the SICU (58 beds) received a daily full skin assessment. Patients with skin breakdown were recorded on the staging tool and reported to the Wound Care Team for treatment follow-up. The bedside nurses were informed of the skin breakdown and to initiate an occurrence form for trending. Results of the daily assessments were analyzed weekly by the Safety and Data Analysis Committee. Documentation of wound staging was assessed and just-in-time training was given to nurses and physicians as needed.

Results/Goals

Success will be determined based on collected data compared to quarterly NDNQI and UHC, and annual National Trauma Data Bank benchmarks.

- Increase NDNQI percentile ranking from the current 50th to 10th percentile.
- Increase UHC percentile ranking from current 50th percentile to 10th percentile. (results not yet available)
- Reduce pressure ulcers in Trauma population from 3.3% to 0.3%. (N/A)
- Increase post-test score in knowledge assessment test by 20%. (Pending)

Preliminary Results