

10 Ways to Improve Your High-Risk Pressure Ulcer Quality Measure Score

- 1. Make pressure ulcer prevention and management a facility wide priority.** Educate all staff with daily contact with the residents about pressure ulcers and the pressure ulcer quality measure (QM). Inform staff that QM information is posted on the Internet and is a public guide on quality nursing home care.
- 2. Prioritize new admission skin assessments and pressure ulcer risk.** Make sure all involved parties are informed of residents identified on admission as high risk and/or with existing pressure ulcers.
- 3. Develop a process to discuss the number and status of pressure ulcers in the facility** daily and/or weekly. Doing so reminds everyone that pressure ulcers are an important issue and will help stimulate the staff to be more involved in preventing them.
- 4. Pay attention to your protocols for prevention and monitoring stage one pressure ulcers.** Is there a turning schedule posted/available for high-risk and/or residents with pressure ulcers? Is the turning schedule followed? Are scheduled turnings recorded? Stage one pressure ulcers are a red flag that preventive interventions need to be revised.
- 5. Acknowledge who is responsible for the completion and accuracy of skin checks.** Use the QA/QI process and monitor the documentation for skin checks. Is it only documented by CNAs or is the licensed staff involved? Is the documentation available for once a week for four weeks following admission? Include a body diagram with the weekly documentation for accuracy.
- 6. Develop a protocol for appropriate use and type of pressure relieving devices** for wheelchairs and beds. Are support surfaces in place? Who is responsible for making sure the devices are in place immediately upon admission and assessment?
- 7. Get residents moving!!!** Wheelchairs have become the chair of choice in nursing homes and contribute to limited mobility. Transfer the residents who can be transferred to regular chairs. Start a daily walking program for residents who can walk. Remember residents who spend a lot of time in wheelchairs require position changes or reminders to shift their weight every hour.
- 8. Be sure your nursing staff is using good skin care products,** including peri-wash and barrier creams for residents with incontinence. Incontinence contributes to skin breakdown, as the pH of urine affects skin condition. Good peri-care includes the proper use of skin care products and the availability of the skin care products at all times.
- 9. Use a consistent product line for wound care treatments.** Many product suppliers have a protocol for treating various types of wounds, so there is little guesswork in deciding how to treat the wound as changes in the condition occur. Many product suppliers offer staff education in prevention and management of pressure ulcers.
- 10. Don't forget nutrition.** Nutrition is critically important in undernourished residents and can greatly influence wound healing. Develop a monitoring system for residents who need assistance at mealtime and nutritional supplements. Be sure to involve the dietician in your wound care meetings.

Visit The Illinois Foundation for Quality Health Care's Web site at www.ifqhc.org for resources to assist with your Quality Improvement efforts.



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