A hands-on teaching aid for pressure ulcer prevention

Finding new, exciting and innovative ways to teach pressure ulcer prevention is a constant challenge for tissue viability nurses. We decided to purchase a toy doll to use as a teaching aid at our trust to educate staff in a “hands-on”, practical way and to raise awareness of pressure ulcer prevention. We named the doll Sally Sore (Fig 1).

Clinical areas
The tissue viability team visit all clinical areas and provide short training sessions using Sally Sore to provide practical demonstrations, including:
- 30-degree tilt;
- Use of slide sheets;
- Skin assessment;
- Intentional rounding.

The teaching aid promotes discussion around pressure ulcer prevention and the presence of the team in clinical areas gives staff the opportunity to ask questions.

30-degree tilt
The 30-degree tilt is a repositioning technique that can be achieved by rolling patients slightly onto either side using pillows for support.

The traditional 90-degree lateral rotation of patients is no longer advocated as it can result in complete anoxia to weight-bearing areas and may contribute to pressure ulcer development. This position was also very restrictive – patients were often unable to reach drinks and social interaction could be limited when they were positioned away from other patients.

Sally Sore toured clinical areas on a mock bed and, with the help of specially made appropriately sized pillows, allowed staff to practise the technique with the support and supervision of the tissue viability team.

Skin assessment and intentional rounding
Policy at our trust is that skin assessments should be carried out:
- Within six hours of hospital admission;
- On transfer;
- At least daily thereafter for patients with a pressure ulcer risk score of ≥10.

Using Sally Sore, the tissue viability team is able to identify “at-risk” areas and demonstrate methods of pressure ulcer prevention such as heel elevation and regular repositioning.

An intentional rounding chart is completed for all inpatients, which incorporates the ASKIN tool. Sally Sore is used to reiterate the importance of documenting actions carried out in relation to all sections of the ASKIN tool.

Engagement
Sally Sore has her own Twitter page – @SallySore – to promote her activities, and over 140 followers who are equally passionate about pressure ulcer prevention.

Conclusion
In conjunction with link worker days, annual moving and handling training, and biannual pressure ulcer prevention training, Sally Sore on Tour has helped further raise awareness of pressure ulcer prevention in an enjoyable, interactive way. Her appeal is wide reaching and spans many disciplines. She has enthused new healthcare support workers, registered nurses, matrons, therapists and medical staff to consider their role in pressure ulcer prevention.

Although it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of Sally Sore as a tool for promoting pressure ulcer prevention, the reaction has been positive. This teaching aid has given us the opportunity to raise awareness, provide practical demonstrations and discuss the importance of clear, concise and accurate record keeping. Sally has become an integral part of our ongoing campaign to eliminate avoidable pressure ulcers in the trust.

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Keywords: Pressure ulcer/Prevention/Teaching/Training