

**ABSTRACT:** The Year of the Skin: Our Journey to Reduce the Occurrence of HAPUs During Surgery

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**Background:** In 2013, our department cared for a patient who developed severe pressure ulcers.

**Purpose:** In response to this event in 2013, the OR team decided to spend a year focusing on identifying and implementing interventions to mitigate the risk of hospital acquired pressure ulcers (HAPUs) in surgical patients.

**Methods:** The OR team collaborated with PreOp and the Wound Care nurses to identify several opportunities for intervention, including utilization of the Braden Score, higher quality bed pads, improved documentation, and increased use of gels. Interventions the OR Unit Based Team and Wound Care nurses agreed upon included providing the OR team with access to the Braden Score in Epic, educating the OR and PreOp regarding proper preventative dressing placement, increased utilization of gel pads, purchase of higher quality bed pads, preventative dressing application for surgical cases predicted to be greater than 3 hours in duration, and further education regarding HAPU risk factors and consequences.

**Results:** For 3 months beginning in April 2014, chart audits revealed that the OR was successfully identifying and applying preventative dressings to approximately 65% of patients. After implementing the above interventions, chart audits revealed an increase to 100% identification and application of preventative dressings in October, an improvement we maintained for the next 3 months. Ultimately the team adopted an "Every Patient, Every Time" policy for the application of preventative dressings in order to accommodate unpredictable case lengths and ensure that all patients receive the highest quality care and protection.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** As a result of this multifaceted approach to preventing HAPUs, the entire perioperative team is more aware of the importance of identifying at-risk patients, adequate padding, and utilization of preventative dressings. The team continues to be passionate about protecting patients from HAPUs in the OR.