



## Partnership to Advance Tribal Health (PATH) Huddle Series

### Preemptive & Proactive: Anticipating and Addressing Risk to Prevent Patient Harm June 15-July 27, 2022

This six-part huddle series tackles a new harm topic each week to support health care teams in providing safe and high-quality care. This is the fourth huddle in the series. [Read about the series and upcoming topics.](#)

<b>Session title</b>	Healing the Wound: Reducing and Managing Hospital-Acquired Pressure Injuries
<b>Session date</b>	July 13, 2022
<b>Session facilitator(s)</b>	Julia Drishinski, RN, CPHQ, PATH Quality Improvement Advisor Sharon Phelps, RN, PATH Associate Program Director
<b>Next session</b>	The Needless Error: Avoiding Vaccination Administration Mistakes

## Key Takeaways

Hospital-acquired pressure injuries (HAPI) are identifiable, preventable and serious in their consequences to patients.

- 2.5 million patients a year develop a pressure injury (PI).
- 60,000 patients die every year as a direct result of PIs.
- Patients with PIs experience excess length of stays and higher 30-day hospital readmission rates.
- Healthcare-acquired pressure injury (HAPI) rates are increasing, while other harm events are decreasing.
- Complete an assessment of your overall PI program. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has a [Pressure Injury Toolkit](#) that includes easy-to-use checklists to assess and identify gaps and provide guidance to developing program components moving forward.
- Use validated screening tools such as the Braden, Norton or Waterlow. It is beneficial to seek input from frontline staff to review options and then choose a fitting product.
- Early intervention is key in managing tissue injury. Assess for at-risk patients and intervene early.
- Ensure baseline and ongoing assessments are occurring.
- Provide updated, ongoing staff and patient education.

**Take action to assess and prevent “never” events.**



The CDC classifies hospital-acquired pressure injuries (HAPIs) as a never event. These events are painful and harmful for patients and are costly errors in the provision of health care services. Ensure you are checking these actionable steps off your list to effectively manage tissue injury.



- ✓ **Early intervention is key in managing tissue injury.** Screening and identifying patients who are at risk for pressure injury is the initial clinical step to prevent harm. Along with an implemented individualized care plan, perform a risk assessment, obtain a baseline and conduct ongoing tissue assessments.
- ✓ **Maximize mobility, and reduce shear, friction and pressure.** Encourage patients to perform pressure relieving maneuvers independently as able, and post positioning reminders for the entire team. The patient should have an individualized positioning schedule. Utilize any wound and therapy trained staff as able in the care planning for the patient and standardize processes to identify what pressure relieving products are acceptable for use in the organization.
- ✓ **Maximize the patient's nutritional status.** Assess the patient's nutritional status with a standardized tool and develop a process to implement a dietitian consult. Encourage adequate hydration and support the patient's hydration preferences as able. The inclusion of tele- or e-consult with dietitians may be necessary in rural areas.
- ✓ **Maintain skin integrity.** There are several useful interventions staff can use to protect underlying tissue. It is important to choose products that absorb in high moisture environments (avoid alkaline products). Also, only use agreed upon barrier products, and avoid materials that cause friction when used such as rough textured turn sheets.



## Steps to Developing Pressure Injury Program

**Step 1. Administrative/Policy and Procedure:** Assess whether there is a clear administrative commitment to safety and policy support, which can be written into the program. You will want to know whether there is a policy and procedure document based on current evidence, which should include the tools and treatment protocols and whether the facility screens all patients for risk.

**Step 2. Staff:** Identify patients at risk, and then continue with a baseline assessment and ongoing assessments. Educate staff about the tools and interventions utilized in the program. We will be discussing these topics more in later PATH learning sessions.

**Step 3. Patient and Family:** Involve the patient and family early in their care. This strengthens success in preventing harm.



## **PATH is taking action!**

Your feedback matters! Your participation in polls, chat communication and post-event evaluations indicate how the PATH team can best support your facilities and help your peers with possible challenges. Keep up the great participation! We learned that some facilities have seen an increase in pressure injuries during and post-pandemic, mostly in the home care of elderly patients who are discharged. Some infrastructures do not have home care services, and the public health nurses are unable to provide wound care. There is a continued need for safe and timely wound care, along with greater availability of wound care equipment tools.

## **References and Resources**

[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality: Preventing Pressure Ulcers in Hospitals Toolkit](#)

This guide contains easy-to-use checklists provided by AHRQ.

[CMS| Eliminating serious, preventable, and costly medical errors-never events](#)

[Hospital-Acquired Pressure Injury \(HAPI\) Prevention for Patients and Staff During the Era of COVID-19](#)

This is an event video recording provided by HSAG. You will need to enter your name and email address to gain access to the video.

[Making Sense of Skin Color in Clinical Care](#)

This journal article describes how skin color varies across racial/ethnic groups and how to better apply information to clinical practice.

[National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel](#)

This website provides free educational resources to improve patient outcomes in PI prevention and management.

[Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Classification System for Dark Skin Tones](#)

Provides graphic for assessing dark skin tones

[Preventing Pressure Ulcers \(Allina Health\)](#)

Describes a pressure ulcer/injury and discusses where they form, risks and signs of pressure ulcers, how to prevent them and what to tell your health care team; this is a patient education guide.

[Preventing Pressure Ulcers, A Patient's Guide \(Oklahoma Foundation for Medical Quality-OFMQ\)](#)

This booklet (4 pages) describes where pressure ulcers/injuries form and how to tell if a patient is at risk of getting a pressure injury. It also lists steps to take to prevent them or keep them from getting worse and suggests how patients can work effectively with their health care team. This is a patient education guide.

[Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers/Injuries: Quick Reference Guide 2019](#)

This is a free, updated guide with detailed PI recommendations.

[The Roadmap to Success: Hospital-Acquired Pressure Injury \(HAPI\)](#)

Developed by HSAG HQIC, this roadmap revisits the evidence-based practices and strategies to effectively prevent PI. The roadmap includes tools and resources for each step of your HAPI prevention journey.