



Effective Health Care

Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers

Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers will go forward for refinement as a systematic review. The scope of this topic, including populations, interventions, comparators, and outcomes, will be further developed in the refinement phase.
- When key questions have been drafted, they will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective Health Care (EHC) Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.

Topic Description

Nominators: 1 health care professional association, 1 individual

Nomination Summary: From health care professional association:
The nominator is interested in an evidence review to address the prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers.

Staff-Generated PICOS:

Population(s): Patients at risk of developing pressure ulcers and patients with pressure ulcers

Intervention(s): Identification of patients at risk for, prevention, and treatment of pressure ulcers

Comparator(s): Various measures used to assess risk; various treatment regimens (e.g., mechanical debridement, chemical debridement, semipermeable dressings, topical applications, hyperbaric oxygen, and surgical flaps) including treatment teams and protocols; and various prevention strategies including specialized mattresses, undergarments, creams, and nursing routines

Outcome(s): For measures of risk: validity and reliability; for prevention and treatment strategies: effectiveness, benefits, and harms

Setting(s): Hospital or long-term care setting

From individual:

The nominator is mainly interested in treatment of pressure ulcers with dressings and is particularly interested in treatment stratified by the stage of the wound.

Staff-Generated PICOS:

Population(s): Patients needing treatment for pressure ulcers, especially those who are immobile

Intervention(s): Basic wound care dressings alone

Comparator(s): Wound care dressings with a cytolytic agent or antibiotics (e.g., silver, cadexomer iodine, medical-grade honey), wet to dry dressings versus semi-occlusive (impermeable to fluids but partially permeable to gases like oxygen and water vapor) or fully occlusive (impermeable to fluids and gas, e.g., films, foams, hydrogels, and hydrocolloids)

Outcome(s): Healing time, progression to more advanced stage, prevention of sepsis and osteomyelitis

Setting(s): Hospital

**Key Questions
from Nominators:**

From health care professional association:

1. How can we identify patients at risk for pressure ulcers in the hospital or long-term care setting and what is the evidence for the validity and reliability of various instruments for estimating these risks?
2. How effective are the various pressure ulcer prevention strategies? (for example specialized mattresses, undergarments, creams, nursing routines)
3. What are the benefits and harms of pressure ulcer treatment regimens including the evidence for treatment teams and protocols?

From Individual: None

Considerations

- The topic meets all EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Pressure ulcers represent a significant disease burden in many different health care settings in the US. Prevention and early detection are necessary for the successful management of pressure ulcers. Standard, adjunctive, and novel therapies for the prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers have proliferated and are readily available to clinicians, patients, and caregivers.
- Searches carried out in preparation for this report identified no current, publically available guidelines based on a systematic review of the evidence on prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers. Therefore, this topic will move forward as a new systematic review by the EHC Program.