Reducing Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries in Patients With Darker Pigmented Skin

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Background
- High rates of Hospital-Acquired Pressure Injuries (HAPIs) nearly 2.5 million patients annually
- HAPIs increase risks of prolonged hospitalization, readmission, infections, and severe pain.
- Preventing HAPIs remains a top priority in acute care facilities.
- Staff nurse knowledge gap identified regarding skin assessment tools (Gunowa et al., 2018)
- Braden Scale, commonly used for skin assessments, is designed primarily for lighter-skinned populations, leading to inaccuracies in assessing darker skin tones.
- Disparity in skin assessment practices results in delayed identification, prevention, and treatment of HAPIs, particularly in individuals with darker skin.
- Individuals with darker skin may experience more severe injuries due to inaccurate assessments.

Purpose
To improve the accuracy of skin assessments for patients with darker skin tones by implementing an evidence-based, standardized skin assessment protocol and training program.

Methods
- Assembled interdisciplinary committee: wound care specialists, skin care educators, staff development specialists, and nursing.
- Created skin assessment protocol—unique needs of dark-pigmented skin patients.
- Used electronic survey to explore nurse perceptions, knowledge, confidence, and beliefs regarding assessing dark skin tones.

Evidence-based Training Program Development:
- Training program based on project’s survey results and new protocol.
- Educated nursing: accurate assessment of high-risk individuals’ skin, particularly those with darker skin tones.

Data Collection Approach:
- Mixed methods approach:
  - Quantitative data: Hospital-Acquired Pressure Injury (HAPI) rates and pre- and post-training nurse survey responses (Likert scales).
  - Qualitative data: Survey responses subjected to thematic analysis.

Data Analysis:
- Descriptive statistics to assess HAPI rates and changes in nurse knowledge on skin assessment.

Results
- This project is in data analysis.
- HAPIs, the rate of occurrence of pressure injury, calculated for each hospital unit and the overall facility.
- 2 types of measures, the prevalence, and incidence of pressure injuries.
- Pre & Post education surveys being collected.

Discussion
- Preliminary pre-survey results showed nurses did not get enough training and education on assessing patients with darker skin tones.
- Confidence in assessment and documentation need to be addressed in training program.
- Measured changes subsequent the completion of the education training program pending post survey results still to be determined.

Challenges and Limitations:
- The project encountered several limitations, including a low population of darker skin patients admitted to the facility and a limited number of participants.
- Despite these challenges, the initiative strives to contribute to narrowing healthcare disparities and improving patient outcomes.

Implications for Practice
- Enhancing skin assessment practices for individuals with darker skin tones is a crucial step towards improving patient care.
- Educational Training on how to assess and document dark skin tone patients is a first step to prevent HAPIs and improved patient outcomes.
- Further work and implementation to other facilities is required to deduce the direct impact of this education on patient related outcomes.

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