Decreasing Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries (HAPIs) Through Microclimate Reduction

**BACKGROUND**
- HAPIs are preventable, and yet they continue to decrease patient quality of life, contribute to morbidity, mortality, and increased costs in the healthcare industry.
- Pressure and tissue tolerance (microclimate / friction / oxygen perfusion) contribute to the development of HAPIs.
- More linen placed under a patient increases microclimate as well as diapers that expose skin to corrosive toxins.
- Prevention strategies have included repositioning schedules, lift technicians, pillows, and pressure reduction boots.

**PURPOSE**
- The purpose of this project was to reduce occurrence of HAPIs and related complications through practice change and education.

**METHODS**
- Design: Evidence-based practice project
- Procedure:
  - Educated staff over 2 weeks regarding appropriate linen use and the elimination of adult briefs.
  - Adult briefs removed from supply rooms.
  - Algorithm for proper linen use provided.
  - Dedicated staff completed random audits of linen and adult brief use.
  - Audits included assessment of Braden Scale < 18 and EMR audited for appropriate skin order sets and/or care plans.
  - Real-time feedback given to staff and re-education provided.

**RESULTS AND OUTCOMES**
- Medical Telemetry has had zero stage II or greater HAPIs for four consecutive months.
- Unit adult brief expense decreased by $80/month.

**FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**
- Continue project for another 6 months.
- Implement interventions and eliminate adult briefs throughout the hospital.
- Update algorithm to include exceptions for when adult briefs are permissible (ambulating etc).
- Annual re-education regarding linen use / microclimate reduction and pressure injury prevention strategies.

**DISCUSSION**
- Removing adult briefs from use decreases microclimate and skin exposure to toxins from waste and prevents skin breakdown.
- Utilizing minimal linen also decreases HAPIs.
- In-person education of changes in practice along with real-time audit and feedback results in higher compliance with standard work.

**REFERENCES**
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