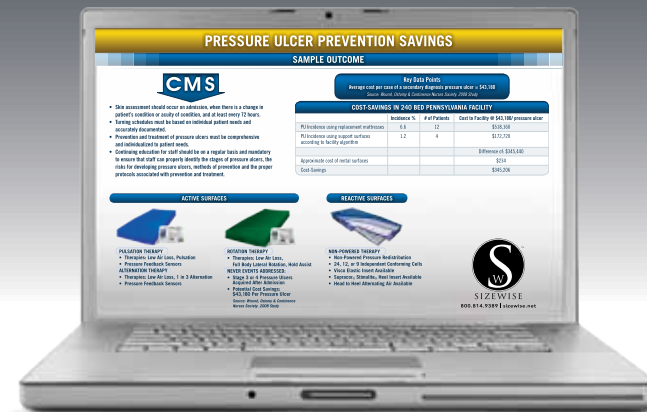


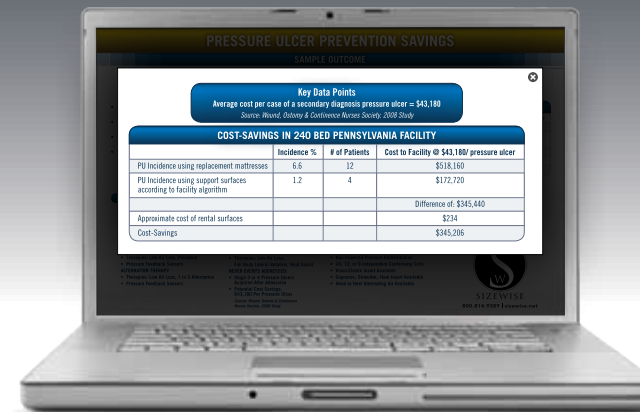
Promoting Pressure Ulcer Prevention Through Cost Savings Benefits

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[Pressure Ulcer Savings Prevention Sample Outcome]



[Key Data Points]



Healthcare facilities

are currently revising policies to reduce spending due to cutbacks from CMS reimbursement and other economic factors. Pressure ulcer prevention programs are being impacted by these new policies. Frequently, support surface spending is targeted as a method of cost containment. The reduction in the availability of specialty support surfaces can lead to increased pressure ulcer incidence.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the use of support surfaces can actually reduce the cost of patient (resident) care, help in the prevention of pressure ulcers and ultimately result in a decrease in hospital acquired pressure ulcers and a cost savings benefit to the facility.

A 240 bed medical center in Pennsylvania purchased non-powered replacement mattresses in an effort to reduce pressure ulcer incidence

without the added expense of renting specialty support surfaces. Facility wide, the pressure ulcer incidence rose to 6.6% over three months. This percentage represented twelve patients who developed a pressure ulcer during the hospital stay. Since there was no reimbursement for a hospital acquired pressure ulcer, the cost for each pressure ulcer was absorbed by the facility. Based on the average cost of pressure ulcer treatment of \$43,180 (as reported by the Wound/Ostomy/Continence Society in a 2008 study), the approximate cost to the facility was \$518,160.

Pressure ulcer prevention protocols were evaluated and it was decided to reinstate the use of rental specialty support surfaces. New algorithms were created based on the Braden score, diagnosis, patient co-morbidities and pre-existing conditions. Depending on at-risk needs, patients were placed on a low air loss rental support surface, an alternation therapy rental support surface or a rental mattress that included both therapies.

Cost for the rental products ranged between \$18.00 and \$38.00 per day with an average length of use at 9 days. Overall cost of rental support surfaces was approximately \$234.00. Pressure incidence fell to 2.1%. This percentage represented four patients who developed pressure ulcers. The approximate cost to the facility was \$172,720.

Savings to the facility for the reduction in number of pressure ulcers was \$345,440. With the actual cost of the rental products deducted, realized savings was \$345,206. Although support surface selection and use are not the only components of a pressure ulcer prevention protocol, results associated with proper support surface selection and use demonstrated a cost savings for the facilities.

As we continue to monitor the cost of pressure ulcer prevention and care, we must become aware of the impact we can have on cost containment and cost savings based on recording of hospital acquired pressure ulcer incidence. Careful selection and use of specialty support surfaces, along with key clinical protocols, can prove to increase overall patient outcomes with skin issues such as hospital acquired pressure ulcers while also contributing to financial savings to the facility.

Poster presented at the 2011 WOCN & NPUAP Conferences.

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