LESSEON LEARNED

A FOCUS ON ZERO HARM

Lesson Learned: Heel Pressure Injuries

**SITUATION:** Covenant HealthCare has had an increase in heel pressure injuries. Between July-December 2019, more than half of the reported Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries (HAPI) were to heels.

**BACKGROUND:** When patients develop a HAPI, this can increase cost, increase in-hospital mortality, increase length of stay, increase readmission rates, and CMS considers them a **NEVER** event. Heels are difficult to assess, because they are a rounded surface. They are a bony prominence with no oil glands, so the skin gets dry, making them more susceptible to skin damage. Foot drop or contractures will change the ankle and pressure points. Floating heels means the heels are elevated off the bed with no contact on any surface, including pillows.

**LESSONS LEARNED:**

- **Pay attention to detail using STAR:** **Stop-Think-Act-Review** when you are doing skin assessments on heels. **STOP** and **THINK** about what you are seeing and feeling, comorbidities your patient may have, nutritional status, Braden score, and any medical devices being used in area. **ACT** by assessing all sides and surfaces of heels for color changes, blanching, and bogginess. To protect the heels **Float /Offload** them, see the pictures above. Whenever possible, check under and around medical devices being used. Get a WOC consult, as needed. Communicate to fellow caregivers, during bedside shift report, any areas of concern. **REVIEW** all skin areas, paying extra attention to the areas of concern.

- **Remember your HRO Training:** Don’t harm me, heal me, be nice to me.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Please share this Lessons Learned at your Safety Huddles and Department meetings

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