Preventing Pressure Ulcers

Everyone is at risk

The Facts

- Pressure ulcers can affect people of any age, especially those that are unwell.
- If the pressure is not relieved regularly, skin can become damaged, ranging from a blister to a deep open wound.
- Most pressure ulcers are preventable.
- Pressure ulcers may cause pain, infection and serious illness.
- Early identification will prevent long periods of discomfort and treatment.

Identify the warning signs

Check areas of redness with the blanching/non blanching technique

- Press an area with your thumb for 2 seconds then release.
- If area remains red, reposition off the affected area and report to GP or Nurse.
- This is harder to detect on darker skin tones
- Check these areas. Are they discoloured? Are they harder? Or are they warm/cool to the touch?

How can you help?

- Assess the patients risk (ie Waterlow and clinical judgement).
- Skin - regularly check the skin, whilst undertaking personal care, please check for redness over any bony area. Early inspection means early detection.
- Surface - make sure they have the right support and/or equipment. Remember to take this with you wherever you go.
- Keep moving - Reposition regularly.
- If Incontinent, keep skin clean and dry.
- Nutrition - the right diet and plenty of fluids are essential for skin health.
- Give information/education to everyone involved

Prevent this
Please help me move

Provide support if your patient is not independent with repositioning

If you are in bed:
- Change your position every 2-3 hours, moving between your back and your sides.
- Use pillows to stop knees and ankles from touching each other, particularly when you are lying on your side.
- Try to avoid creases in the bed linen.
- If you are sitting up in bed, be aware that sliding down the bed can cause a pressure injury to your bottom and heels.
- Ask for assistance and / or equipment if required.

If you are in a wheelchair:
- Relieve the pressure by leaning forward, or leaning side to side for a few minutes every half hour.
- Ensure appropriate pressure relieving equipment has been assessed and provided by Bowley close.

If you are concerned please inform the GP or Community Nursing Team.
GP Tel no: ________________________________
CN Team Tel no: ________________________________