

Stop The Pressure is constantly evolving Student Nurse Event Lincoln 15th October 2013

When NHS Midlands and East committed to "Eliminate avoidable grade 2, 3 and 4 pressure ulcers..." in 2011 it faced a very large challenge. How do you motivate frontline staff to take the simple actions required to prevent and treat pressure ulcers?

In 2012 an integrated engagement campaign, "Stop the Pressure"² (www.stopthepressure.com) was launched by the SHA and was led by Ruth May (Regional Chief Nurse) and Lyn McIntyre (Deputy Nurse Director) to educate and motivate frontline staff in acute and community settings to help prevent pressure ulcers.

Stop The Pressure uses a combination of online materials, printed materials, events and social media to generate and deliver the knowledge and enthusiasm needed to change the way individual staff think and work and was developed in conjunction with the NHS Midlands and East Communication Team, led by Jeremy Peters and Vicki Diaz. The use of Twitter was a notable success and the #StopThePressure hashtag has grown into a rallying point for pressure ulcer prevention across the country and even overseas.

In April 2013 NHS England took responsibility for the Stop The Pressure campaign which continues to be managed by Ruth and Lyn.

Since the campaign was launched the incidences of new grade 2, 3 and 4 pressure ulcers have declined by 49% and there has been a 50% reduction in grade 2 pressure ulcers across the region (measured by the NHS Safety Thermometer). This is such a remarkable result that Ruth and Lyn wanted the campaign to reach a far wider audience to replicate and build on this success.

When 2nd year student nurse Charlotte Johnston responded to Tweet made by Ruth May and suggested that student nurses should be included in the campaign a new door was opened.

NHS England, NHS Improving Quality, and Haelo (innovation and improvement centre) joined forces to organise a conference for over 500 student nurses at the University of Lincoln where Charlotte is studying. The aim was to introduce Stop The Pressure to the next generation of nursing staff and to inject the campaign with the drive and enthusiasm shown by Charlotte.

The conference took place in Lincoln on 15th October and it was a tremendous success. The students and their lecturers spent the day listening to experts, practitioners and a particularly insightful interview with a patient and his wife. The afternoon session started with a mass game playing session where 50 board games were played simultaneously by the delegates. A group of nursing students also designed a Student SSKIN which was presented and launched on the day.

The use of Twitter during the conference was encouraged by the organisers and the results were phenomenal with over 300,000 people receiving Tweets about the event.

The conference was so successful that several more are being planned for other teaching establishments and Stop The Pressure will be linking up with NHS Change Day 2014 to ask people to pledge changes they are going to make to prevent a pressure ulcer.

Photographs of the Lincoln event, presentations and the Student SSKIN can be viewed in the Student Area of this website.