WOUND MANAGEMENT AND TISSUE VIABILITY
SPECIALIST MODULE

Module Title: Critical Issues in the Assessment & Management of Individuals with Pressure Ulceration

Level of Learning: 9 NQAI

Pre-Requisite: Primary Degree or Equivalent

Credit Rating: 10

Module Coordinator: Ms Julie Jordan O’Brien

Module Lecturer: Specialists in wound management and tissue viability will be included at different stages of this module

Rationale of Module
Accurate nursing assessment is the key to effective pressure ulcer prevention, treatment and management. A comprehensive assessment identifies pressure ulcer aetiology and the factors which may prevent or delay healing. Pressure ulcer assessment, management and prevention is a multidisciplinary activity, hence early intervention by the appropriate professionals potentiates the likelihood of a successful outcome for the patient. This module will provide nurses with evidence based information to undertake an in-depth nursing assessment in order to give guidance on best practice in pressure ulcer management.

Module Aims
This module aims to provide nurses with a structure to the nursing assessment and management of patients presenting with pressure ulceration. Various aetiologies of wounds require individual approaches in terms of nursing assessment, management and prevention. This module also aims to enable students to critically evaluate effective strategies necessary to promote inter-professional, collaborative management of patients affected by pressure ulceration. This module will ultimately support the development of advance cognitive knowledge and critical thinking skills requires to develop critical understanding and competency achievement in relation to the prevention, assessment and management of individuals affected by pressure ulceration.

Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Critically discuss the causes and patho-physiology of pressure ulceration.
- Critically evaluate the epidemiology of pressure ulceration and its impact on health service provision
- Critically analyse the techniques used in the assessment of individuals with pressure ulceration
- Critically evaluate the strategies in the management of individuals with pressure ulceration
- Critically evaluate the organisation of pressure ulcer services and interdisciplinary team working
- Critically discuss the strategies available for the prevention of pressure ulceration
**Teaching Learning Activities**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact hours</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course work preparation</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent learning time</td>
<td>160</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Indicative Syllabus:**

**Overview / epidemiology**
- The prevalence and incidence of pressure ulcers and associated skin damage
- Methodology of epidemiological studies
- National/International guidelines and targets for pressure ulcer prevention
- The economic costs associated with pressure ulcers.

**Anatomy**
- Anatomy of the skin and related structures

**Pathophysiology**
- The aetiology of pressure ulcers
- Risk factors associated with pressure ulcer formation
- Capillary closing pressure-mechanics, measurement, clinical relevance.

**Principles of patient care**
- Assessment – physical, psychological, social
- Identification of patient centred management objectives
- Care planning
- Evaluation of outcomes
- Use of evidence based practice/clinical guidelines
- Referral criteria
- Interdisciplinary team working.

**Assessment**
- General assessment process including the use and limitations of pressure ulcer risk assessment tools such as Norton, Braden and Waterlow
- Specific assessment - pressure ulcer assessment including the use of pressure ulcer grading schemes and methods of wound assessment
- Reliability and validity of assessment tools
- Skin assessment – skin resilience to pressure/shear/friction, assessment of dark skin.

**Risk factor management**
- Prevention – auditing / monitoring pressure ulcer prevalence and incidence
- The provision of education for patients and carers

**Prevention of Pressure Ulcers**
- Prevention strategies including repositioning techniques, selection and use of pressure redistributing equipment including mattresses, overlays, beds and cushions
- Skin care such as the use of emollients
- Nutritional support in preventing pressure ulcers
- Use of guidelines and evidence-based practice in pressure ulcer prevention
- The role of the multi-professional team in preventing pressure ulcers

*Julie Jordan O’Brien September 2014*
Wound management of pressure ulcers

- Management strategies for pressure ulcers including the use of wound management products and adjunct therapies
- The use of guidelines and evidence-based practice to treat pressure ulcers
- Assessment of wound bed, surrounding skin including the problems of undermining and sinus formation
- Principles of cleansing
- Selection of cleansing agents
- Debridement and wound bed preparation including surgical debridement, dressings promoting autolytic debridement, use of biosurgery and topical negative pressure therapy
- Dressing selection including product availability relative to local circumstances and different healthcare settings
- Advanced wound care products/techniques
- Pain management to ensure effective assessment and evaluation of outcomes including the use of analgesia
- Care of the surrounding skin e.g. the use of protective skin wipes.
- Evidence base to support complementary wound therapies e.g. aromatherapy

Management of infection

- Assessment /presentation - clinical signs/symptoms, silent infection
- Superficial infections and cellulitis
- Deep infections - surgical drainage
- Methods of identify infecting agents - culture and swab techniques, biopsy
- Radiological and other investigations – Isotope scans, Magnetic Resonance Scans
- Use of topical antiseptics - indications, type and duration of treatment
- Adjunct therapies and their relevance and practical application.

Specialist Interventions

- The use of surgery to treat pressure ulcers

Systematic and local pharmacological management

- Analgesia e.g. local, systemic
- Nutritional supplements e.g. mineral and vitamin supplementation
- Antibiotic therapy for infection - indications, type and duration of treatment

Rehabilitation services

- Structure and management of rehabilitation services
- Integrated hospital and community care
- Inter-disciplinary, multi-professional approach
- Patient follow-up services.

Psychosocial aspects of care

- Impact of pressure ulcers on the individual & society
- Factors affecting compliance with treatment including case examples of individuals who have effectively failed to comply with treatment strategies
- Effective patient education strategies
<table>
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<th>Type of Assessment (Continuous/Terminal)</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Assignment</td>
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**Indicative Reading List:**

**Websites**
- [www.epuap.org](http://www.epuap.org) - guidelines currently available in a range of European languages
- [www.npuap.org](http://www.npuap.org)
- [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) – pressure ulcer risk management and prevention guideline; Working Together to Prevent Pressure Ulcers – Guidance for Patients and Carers; pressure relieving devices guidelines; pressure ulcers (treatment) guidelines
- [www.nchta.org](http://www.nchta.org) – [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)

**Suggested Reading list**


Julie Jordan O’Brien September 2014


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