



Occupational
Health and
Safety Agency
for
Healthcare in
British Columbia



INSTITUTE OF HEALTH
PROMOTION RESEARCH

THE UNIVERSITY OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA



health research FACTS

Effectiveness of the George Pearson Repositioning Sheet for Repositioning Patients in Bed

Why the Study?

To determine whether workers' risk of injury in repositioning patients is reduced with the George Pearson repositioning drawsheet.

The leading cause of injury among care staff in healthcare is overexertion due to patient handling.

Using low-friction sheets to reposition patients in bed reduces the risk of injury to caregivers. Less effort is required to slide patients up or across the bed, and the sheet minimizes lifting.

From Barriers to Using the Sheet

Soon after the study began, informal interviews revealed that the drawsheets were not commonly used. Staff were asked to participate in focus groups and respond to questionnaires to determine why they were not using them.

How Did We Determine the Barriers?

Interviews were held with 10 % of random nursing staff to develop a 'mid-study' questionnaire.

The mid-study questionnaire was then administered to all staff at the three facilities. The questions addressed: 1) the ease of use of the repositioning sheet and/or other assistive devices used for repositioning, 2) perceptions of discomfort, 3) work organization factors, and 4) demographic questions. Focus groups were held to provide additional details as to why the sheet was not being used.

What Did We Find?

We found that the barriers faced by care staff were:

- 1) a lack of understanding about when and how the sheet should be used.
- 2) increased workload as a result of using a new device.

Staff felt that the drawsheet was too wide; excess material had to be tucked under the mattress. They also found that the drawsheet was more difficult to slide up the bed than from side to side.

Recommended modifications to the sheet include:

- Reducing the width of the sheet from 80 inches to 72 inches,
- Changing the grain of the fabric of the sheet to make it easier to move the patient up in bed.

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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The Occupational Health and Safety Agency for Healthcare (OHSAH), which operated from 1998-2010, was a precursor to SWITCH BC. Conceived through the Public Sector Accord on Occupational Health and Safety as a response to high rates of workplace injury, illness, and time loss in the health sector, OHSAH was built on the values of bipartite collaboration, evidence-based decision making, and integrated approaches.

This archival research material was created by OHSAH, shared here as archival reference materials, to support ongoing research and development of best practices, and as a thanks to the organization's members who completed the work.

If you have any questions about the materials, please email hello@switchbc.ca or visit www.switchbc.ca