

<b>PROCEDURE No: 535</b>	Version 4.0	Page 1	Last Up-dated: 01 August 2006
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<b>NURSING CARE - PRESSURE SORE MANAGEMENT</b>			

## 1. CONSIDERATION:

Treatment of pressure sores is the same as for any other wound. The underlying related pathology as well as the wound itself must be assessed to provide the most appropriate treatment.

If pressure sores develop their management must demonstrate that staff have up to date knowledge, efficiency and effectiveness to be used for the best interest of the residents. Pressure sores must be correctly classified, graded, described and measured in size, exudate etc., as the process is evaluated.

## 2. PHYSIOLOGY OF WOUND HEALING:

When the body tissue is damaged by trauma, pressure, surgery or other invasive procedures, the body acts quickly to protect and heal itself. Regardless of the cause of the wound, all wounds pass through three recognisable physiological stages to achieve healing. Surgical wounds can be said to be healing by primary intention, healing is usually rapid and requires little or no nursing attention. However, larger chronic wounds including pressure sores, and wounds left open to heal by secondary intention, will require more nursing intervention.

Wound healing is designed to return the body to as near normal as possible.

## 3. GRADING PRESSURE SORES:

Grading of pressure sore and wounds will enable the staff to prescribe the appropriate plan of care and will assist in monitoring and evaluating the progress of the prescribed plan of care.

## 4. ASSESSMENT OF WOUNDS:

A full assessment of the wound must be completed at the initial assessment stage and thereafter at every dressing change. The assessment of wounds should include:

- Nature of wound bed
- Exudate, including colour and type
- Odour
- Pain
- Appearance of the wound margin
- General appearance of the surrounding skin
- Presence of infection

These should be clearly documented in the client's care plan using a wound assessment chart.

A tracing of the wound or photograph may also assist with the assessment.

### 4.1 WOUND CARE DRESSINGS:

The characteristics of an ideal dressing are to:

- Provide the optimum environment for wound healing: moist at the wound dressing interface.
- Allow gaseous exchange of oxygen, carbon dioxide and water vapour.
- Provide thermal insulation.
- Impermeable to micro-organisms
- Free from particulate contamination.
- Non-adherent
- Safe to use