

Pressure Ulcer Safety Cross Guidance for care homes

Key Points

- One box should be coloured daily.
- Record all pressure ulcers, regardless of their grade. (including grade 1)
- Ensure all staff are aware of the cross and know how to complete it.
- Place in a visual area, so everyone will see it on a regular basis. This will provide an 'at a glance' view of, e.g. the number of residents who are developing a pressure ulcer in your care home. This will enable you to think about what changes you need to make to result in an improvement.
- Remember, you want to care for residents in such a way that you reduce the number of pressure ulcers occurring (i.e. red boxes).
- Please be honest with your data; this is data for improvement not judgment.
- Link the data you collect to an improvement.

Why Use the safety cross?

- The data collected on the Safety Cross can be used to:
- Raise awareness on how many pressure ulcers are acquired in your care home.
- Improve resident safety.
- Promote good practice
- Provide real time incidence data.
- Link the data to an improvement aim

Filling out the Safety Cross

- Each safety cross represents one calendar month, each box represents a single day. Each colour represents an outcome of a single day. Where possible, only one colour should be used per day
 - Green** = no new pressure ulcer found.
 - Orange** = admitted with pressure ulcer.
 - Red** = new pressure ulcer found.
 - Pink** = pressure ulcer carried forward from previous month – this will only be recorded in Day 1.
- Each box should be coloured at the end of the day (i.e. midnight) using colour pen or stickers. For days coloured in orange or red, record the number of pressure ulcers found on that day in the small box on that day.
- The Pressure Ulcer Lead has responsibility for ensuring the safety cross is completed. However the task of completing the safety cross can be delegated to any member of the team.
- You only record an ulcer once on the day it is identified. On reverse of the Safety Cross record note the date, Patient ID, PU location and Grade. This is on the reverse to keep the residents details confidential.

What do I do with this data?

- There are three fundamental questions to think about in using the Safety Cross the answers to which form the basis of improvement;
- What are we trying to accomplish? (e.g. reduce care home acquired pressure ulcers by 50% within the next 18 months)
- How will we know that a change is an improvement? (i.e. use the safety cross to enable us to see our incidence locally and act on it)
- What changes can we make that will result in improvement?
- All safety crosses should be kept for the records and the results displayed on a run chart over time.
- The safety cross does not replace the reporting systems that you already have in place.
- It is good to let staff and residents know on a daily basis how many days have gone by without a new pressure ulcer developing in your care home. You can do this by simply stating in a public area '*It has been ___ days since a pressure ulcer developed in this care home*'.