

E&NH0634

Hospital-acquired pressure ulcers at all time low



Left to right: patient, Rebecca Vistartas; Joanna Walker, tissue viability clinical nurse specialist; Bridget Pykerman, tissue viability nurse; and Dianne Brett, lead tissue viability nurse

Stevenage, UK – 2 February 2018 – Hospital-acquired [pressure ulcers](#) – also known as bed sores – on the Trust’s inpatient wards are now at an all-time low. In 2010, pressure ulcers were reported at the rate of one nearly every day. Just seven years later, one occurs every two weeks (in 2017 there were just 31 cases reported across the whole 12 months).

It has been six years since the Trust recorded the most severe form of pressure ulcer – called a grade four. At the same time, over half of wards at the Lister hospital have not had a hospital-acquired pressure ulcer in over a year.

2/Hospital-acquired pressure ulcers at all time low

The Trust's lead tissue viability nurse, Dianne Brett, said:

“For most of our patients, there is so much that can be done to prevent pressure ulcers being acquired when in hospital. What many of us forget is that our skin is an organ and like any other organ in the body, it is prone to failure – especially in older patients who may have many health problems already. Our much improved performance means that patients are able to recover more quickly and go back home following their hospital admission – with the real benefit being the number of people for whom life returns to as normal as possible.

-ends-

About the Trust's tissue viability service

- Preventing pressure ulcers removes the need for care package assessments to be done, or for others threatening their ability to live independently.
- Good nursing practice using the SSKIN bundle – which sets out five steps that assist with the reduction of pressure ulcers – revolves around keeping patients under constant review, especially those deemed to be most at risk and early detection of potential ulcers and treating them so that they do not develop in the first place.
- The Trust's tissue viability nurses work with their ward-based colleagues to educate and train them on the techniques they need to follow to help prevent pressure ulcers from developing. They also review patients deemed to be at most risk, advising on the best approach to follow – such as the use of heel protectors, slide sheets and special mattresses.

The East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

The Trust provides a wide range of acute and tertiary care services from four hospitals, namely the: Lister in Stevenage; New QEII in Welwyn Garden City; Hertford County in Hertford; and the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre in Northwood, Middlesex

For more information about the Trust, go to the [website](#).

For more information, please call the communications team on: 01438 285362 or 01438 285940; for out-of-hours calls, please page the duty press officer on 07659 103839.

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