

CS6.8 Complex Wound Management

Purpose

1. To assist SAVVY employees regarding safe and acceptable maintenance of skin integrity in the community by support workers.

Alignment with Practice Standards

1. Module 1: Rights and Responsibilities
2. Module 2: Provider Governance and Operational Management

Legislative Alignment

1. National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013

Key Responsible Executive

Chief Executive Officer

For More Support

Your People Manager

Policy Statement

1. As a part of any support service delivered by support workers the service provider will:
 - a. Assess initial care needs with the participant. Including (if required) clinical assessment of participant's skin condition and pressure sore risks.
 - b. Particular attention must be given to all diabetic participants in relation to skin integrity as there is a far greater risk of breakdown of skin ultimately leading to gangrene and limb amputation.
 - c. Determine the types of skin care interventions and maintenance tasks that the support worker may attend.
 - d. Develop plans with identified outcomes.
 - e. Provide written procedures on the provision of skin care, skin inspection and maintenance by the support worker – this may be included as part of the plan.
 - f. The Plan for pressure area or pressure sore management should be clearly documented in the home and only changed by the doctor or a registered nurse and access to policies and procedures made available to support workers.
 - g. Identify education needs for support workers. Provide relevant competency-based education and assessment processes for the support worker/s to ensure they are competent to perform the prescribed duties, tasks and interventions.
 - h. Monitor, review, evaluate and adapt as required the service, plans and outcomes with the involvement of the participant.

- i. Support worker duties will be delivered under the direction and supervision of a registered nurse.

Definitions

1. Carer is a person that provides supports to the participant at no cost (generally family or friend).
2. Competent means having been trained and assessed by a registered nurse or enrolled nurse or approved assessor as competent to safely and appropriately perform a specified task.
3. Infection Control means infection prevention and control measures aimed at ensuring the protection of those who might be vulnerable to acquiring an infection both in the general community and while receiving care, in a range of settings. The basic principle of infection prevention and control is hygiene.
4. Participant means the participant, consumer or person receiving the nursing or support.
5. Plan means a Care or Service Plan or Individual Plan (however titled – the plan) is a document developed in response to a request for service. It is developed by a registered nurse (or other appropriately, similarly skilled professional) from the service provider, prior to the commencement of service delivery. It outlines the expected outcomes of the requested care/services and the tasks, duties and interventions required to meet the care and service needs of the participant (within the parameters of the funding program). The plan guides and directs the individual support worker or registered nurse in their day-to-day delivery of the services.
6. Skin is the natural outer layer that covers a person. It comprises two layers of cells – the epidermis which is the thin outer layer and the dermis which is the thick inner layer.
7. Pressure Areas are specific areas of the body that put greater pressure on the skin. These are usually bony prominence areas such as the buttocks, heels, elbows and shoulders. Pressure to these areas compromise the integrity of the skin causing painful reddening areas that without appropriate care and treatment will lead to pressure sores.
8. Pressure Sore is a neglected pressure area that rapidly deteriorates into a pressure sore (also known as an ulcer or wound). The skin is broken, tissue deteriorates and the wound continues to enlarge.
9. Registered Nurse means a person who has completed the prescribed educational preparation, demonstrated competence for practice, and is registered and licensed with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) as a registered nurse.
10. Support Worker Competency means a support worker who has been trained and assessed as competent by an occupational therapist (or other appropriately, similarly skilled professional) to safely and appropriately perform a specified task as a support worker.
11. Wound means skin tissue damaged by trauma. This may be deliberate, as in surgical wounds of procedures, or be due to accidents caused by blunt force, projectiles, heat, electricity, chemicals or friction.

Delegations

Roles	Responsibilities
Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Endorse and ensure compliance with the CS 6.8 Complex Wound Management Policy and Procedure ● Be familiar with the organisation's legislative requirements relating to the policy
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manage and monitor compliance with this policy ● Support staff competence and compliance with this policy and procedure
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manage and monitor compliance with this policy ● Support staff competence and compliance with this policy and procedure
Staff, volunteers, contractors and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comply with the CS 6.8 Complex Wound Management Policy and Procedure ● Act in accordance with legislation and organisation's systems relating to the policy

Procedures

1. Service by a Registered Nurse
 - a. A Registered Nurse is required to:
 - i. Change the pressure sore dressing regime.
 - ii. Perform surgical and/or chemical debridement.
 - iii. Perform any pressure sore/wound/sinus packing.

2. Support Workers
 - a. Support workers may NOT:
 - i. Perform any duties that must be attended to by a registered nurse (as outlined above)
 - b. Support Workers may:
 - i. Perform any task on the plan, apart from those that must be performed by a registered nurse (or other suitably assessed person), after having completed competency training and being signed off as competent in the task by the service provider. Examples include:
 - Observe skin regularly.
 - Encourage or assist with repositioning.
 - Ensure bed clothes, clothes, seats and cushions remain smooth.
 - Encourage hydration.
 - Ensure skin is kept clean and dry.
 - c. Support workers must:
 - i. Follow the plan as provided by the service provider.
 - ii. Report to their supervisor of any changes or variations for advice.
 - iii. Not change the plan.

- iv. Identify, and report to their supervisor, any gaps in their ability to deliver the required service including difficulties in completing the tasks within the allocated time.

References to other SAVVY policies and external sources

1. CS 6.1 High Intensity Care
2. ACIA Guideline 015 - Maintenance of Skin Integrity by Support Workers in the Community
3. [Capability Framework for Support Workers](#) – for supporting people of any age with brain injury and/or spinal cord injury, ACIA 2015
4. An Overview of Skin and Pressure Area Management – In Adults with Spinal Cord Injuries, Rural Spinal Cord Injury Project, June 2005
5. Guidelines for the Prevention of Pressure Areas, Royal North Shore Hospital (2003)
6. Skin Integrity – Its maintenance and support, Eastern Health 2008, Victoria Australia
7. [Victorian Government Health Information. Skin Integrity](#)
8. [Wound Care, Clinical Guidelines](#) (nursing), The Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne
9. [Best Practice Statement: Care of the Older Person’s Skin](#) (2nd Edition) 2012, Wounds UK
10. Matching participant needs and support worker skills in the New South Wales Motor Accidents Scheme, Motor Accidents Authority NSW August 2003
11. Guidelines for Levels of Attendant Care for People with Spinal Cord Injury, Lifetime Care Support Authority NSW 2007
12. Pressure Injury Prevention and Management NSW Health, 24 March 2014

Summary of attachments

1. Nil

Version Control

1. 1 April 2023 - New Policy Creation