

STOP Pressure Ulcer Day 2017 in Helsinki and Uusimaa Hospital District – getting students aboard

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Pressure ulcers are one of the biggest patient safety challenges facing healthcare worldwide. HUS - The Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa, Finland - is a Joint Authority formed by 24 municipalities. The Pressure Ulcer Prevention working group in HUS was established in 2012. The goal is to standardize procedures of assessing Pressure Ulcer (PU) risk, choosing interventions, documenting and follow-up. Multiprofessional group has developed simple Pressure Ulcer Prevention (PUP) guidelines (Finn. Estä Painehaava toimintamalli) to be used in all levels of patient care. The newest guideline is for patient transfers in ambulances. PU Prevention is one of the focus areas decided by HUS administration along with preventing falls, assessing risk of malnutrition and assessing pain.

The PUP guidelines have been introduced to HUS health care personnel by numerous training days and meetings during recent years. A web-based course was developed as introduction material for the personnel. PU prevalence days have been arranged with auditing the usage of the guidelines' recommendations. The responsibility of implementing and using the guidelines is laying on the nursing personnel. Each unit has nurses responsible for PU prevention, who should keep the importance of the cause in the minds of busy personnel. Nursing management's role is very important as they are the people guiding their unit's values – if they take the matter seriously so will their personnel. The problem is that there are multiple tasks in the minds of nurses during their work shift and the pace is hectic. The need of prioritizing tasks may lead to leaving assessing the risk of PU in the category of "if I have time". In Finland, the hospitals and other health care facilities do not get sanctioned for PUs and it is not mandatory to use PU risk assessment.

Worldwide STOP Pressure Ulcer Day every third Thursday of November is an excellent chance to remind of the importance of preventing PUs in all levels of care. There is no unified way in our hospital district how to do it, though. In recent years we four Authorized Wound Care Nurses from plastic surgery and vascular surgery have tried to take responsibility of organizing the day in at least 4 main hospitals Meilahti and Töölö in Helsinki, Jorvi and Espoo hospital in Espoo and Lohja hospital. The task is huge as there are multiple units in each hospital and the amount of personnel is big.

In 2017 the PUP working group decided to ask the help of nursing teachers and students of the local Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. The idea and main organizing responsibility was Opri Kuokkanen's who contacted Metropolia and started the negotiations. Organizing the day was a project on the Innovation-course from Metropolia. A group of 7 students (third year nursing and midwifery) chose to do it. A written contract was made and approved by Metropolia and the PUP working group.

At first 3 Wound Care Nurses (Opri Kuokkanen, Gunilla Lindholm and Tiina Pukki) met with the project students and their teacher in August with a short introduction to what is PU and how important it is to prevent them, what is STOP Pressure Ulcer Day and where to find more information about PU prevention. Then we discussed what the earlier STOP days had been like, what went well and what didn't and what ideas we thought the students could work with. Any wild idea was welcomed.

The students developed 3 different ideas for STOP Day and presented, 'pitched', them to us in the beginning of September. We decided which idea was the best and the students started to work that idea. The project students were invited to the meeting of the PUP working group in the beginning October to present the final plan and it was met with enthusiasm. The students then had time to make all the necessary arrangements for the STOP Day with the help of 4 authorised Wound Care Nurses (Opri Kuokkanen, Gunilla Lindholm, Tiina Pukki and Lizbeth Saine) from each participating hospital. Numerous emails were sent to make it all happen.

As there are hardly any theoretical studies on chronic wounds incl. PUs in Finnish nursing studies, a course in PU was needed. An afternoon at Metropolia was arranged where one Wound Care Nurse from the PUP working group presented the theory of PUs and prevention. One industry party presented different aids in PU prevention. The project students presented the plan for the STOP Day. The teacher presented the practical arrangements, who would go where.

The idea was to divide 100 nursing students who were on their last practical period before graduating to groups of 3-8 to circle in the hospitals of Meilahti, Töölö, Jorvi, Espoo hospital and Lohja on bed wards, ICUs, surgical units, out-patient clinics and A&E. The students would have a movable stand with different tasks for the personnel. The personnel were asked to mark all PU risk areas with stickers on one of the students. The personnel were asked to show how to relieve pressure of a patient sitting in wheel chair and advised if they were uncertain. A questionnaire of how PU risk was assessed in the unit, what class were the PUs in 3 photos presented and what were PU risk factors from a list of factors false or true. A boon of sweets and a pen with STOP Day logo were given to all participants. Posters of the PUP guidelines were given to the units. All participants were eligible in a draw to have a delicious cake delivered to their own unit in each 4 hospitals. Couple of students stayed in the main lobby of the hospital by a stand to get attention of passers-by, be they laypersons or personnel. The project students were the bosses of the day and organizing a group of people was part of their education process. Wound Care Nurse in each hospital was there to make sure students would not have problems in the hospitals.

An email to chief nurses and nurse managers of the hospitals was sent well before the STOP Day to inform about the run of the day and ask if they would welcome the students. Half an hour was spent in each unit. It is not easy to get personnel to stop by a stand during the busy work shift but the students were industrious. Good discussions were had and the students learned more. They were not supposed to teach the personnel as much as raise awareness for the cause and make the staff think why the guidelines have been developed. Some participants were not so interested in the cause, some were very interested.

From the questionnaires it was concluded that the procedures of assessing the patient's PU risk may vary a little with individual nurses but the idea is there - observing the patient's ability to move, skin condition, nutrition, co-morbidities etc. The PUP guidelines seem to be widely known. Assessing the PU class from a photo is never quite that easy but the class II photo was assessed as class III mostly. A little bit of mix-ups was noticed in the risk factors but mostly they were recognized. Incontinence was not considered a risk factor in some answers. In the general feedback the STOP Day was considered a good reminder of the issue.

The enthusiasm of the executing students varied. Some were complaining that the whole day spent on the STOP Day was too much out of their valuable practical period. Others were more committed. Everybody did do what was asked and the day went fast. The project students were committed and did their job well even if some were more shy leaders than others. On the whole the STOP Pressure Ulcer Day 2017 was worth it even if the last thought was 'never again' as it was much extra work and stress for us Wound Care Nurses. In 2018 we have to think up something else again. The need to raise awareness to Pressure Ulcer Prevention is always there.



Wound Care Nurses Gunilla Lindholm and Opri Kuokkanen and nursing teacher Hannele Hokkanen planning the STOP Day.



The project students presenting the STOP Day plan to the executing students at Metropolia.



Participant in the ICU marking PU risk areas on the model student.



A stand in Meilähti hospital lobby.



JÄTETÄÄNKÖ PAINEHAAVAT HISTORIAAN?

**Hei sinä terveydenhuollon ammattilainen!
Tunnistatko painehaavan?**

Sairaanhoidon opiskelijat kiertävät
16.11.2017 klo 10-14 sairaalan osastoilla ja
muistuttavat painehaavojen ehkäisyn
tärkeydestä pienillä aktivoivilla tehtävillä.

**Liity Facebook-tapahtumaan:
STOP Painehaavoille -päivä**



The advertisement of STOP Day. Shall we let pressure ulcers be history?