

Skin care management: A new experience in a 21 bed nursing home

Paulina Drzewiecka, Tissue Viability Link Nurse, Barrington Lodge Nursing Home, Cheltenham

Introduction

Patients that require interventions for skin protection and hydration / moisturising required to have multiple products prescribed. With the recent introduction of a new generation skin protectant that is indicated for use on both intact and injured skin as well as clinically dry skin, could treatment regimens change?

Background

In nursing homes regular skin care regimens and the application of emollients and skin protectants are carried out by Healthcare Assistants whereas wound dressing changes are normally considered the responsibility of the Qualified Nurse.

The introduction of Proshield Plus skin protectant has simplified procedures and removed all confusion around which product to use and when. Proshield Plus is clinically indicated for both prevention and protection of intact and injured skin associated with incontinence (excoriation and partial thickness wounds) and for clinically dry skin.

Method

The objective of this case series was to evaluate Proshield Plus in regard to both its skin protection and hydrating effects.

Case Study 1

Mrs P is an 89 year-old lady who is very underweight, (36.1kgs) and has extremely bony prominences along her spine. Mrs P's waterlow score is currently 20, indicating that she is at very high risk of developing pressure ulcers, and since admission to the nursing home in 2010, she has been nursed on both a dynamic air mattress and cushion to reduce the risk of her developing any pressure damage. However in June 2012, an area of redness mid-spine with exceptionally dry skin surrounding a category one non-blanchable pressure ulcer was identified (Photo 1).

Previously a 7 day wear time foam dressing would have been applied for protection, however it was felt that regular assessment was required to identify any immediate changes in the skin therefore a dressing could be considered as an expensive choice of protection. Proshield Plus skin protectant was chosen for protection against friction and shear and to provide hydration to the skin.



Photo 1



Photo 2

Results

Visible results in just 1 week

Following daily application of Proshield Plus skin protectant, there was a visible improvement in the appearance of the dry skin, within just 7 days (Photo 2), although the redness (category one pressure ulcer) remained. Appropriate pressure relieving interventions continued and were reviewed weekly as per the nursing homes policy.

Case Study 2

Mrs B is a 79 year old lady who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2000, she was admitted to the nursing home following frequent falls and urinary tract infections.

The skin on Mrs B's lower limbs was very dry with micro cracking, peeling and a lack of elasticity (Photo 3).

Previously, emollients were used yet the skin still remained very dry and dehydrated. Due to previous positive experiences with Proshield Plus skin protectant and its noticeable effects on rehydrating dry skin, a decision to apply it to Mrs B's lower limbs was taken.



Photo 3



Photo 4

Results

During the 7 day initial treatment period, the skin improved in the following areas: comfort, softness, hydration, elasticity and colour (Photo 4).

Conclusion

Within the nursing home Proshield Plus skin protectant has become more popular, proving to be a very effective alternative to traditional skin protectant regimens. Proshield Plus skin protectant provides excellent protection and hydration with the added benefit that the area can be monitored easily, and Healthcare Assistants can apply it at regular intervals during the day.

The two case studies demonstrate that the hydrating properties within the Proshield Plus skin protectant clearly has a positive effect on clinically dry skin, however it is important to remember when treating and preventing areas at risk of pressure damage, that the most important factor is to reduce and/or relieve pressure with appropriate devices and/or offloading. Products such as the Proshield Plus skin protectant are only part of a holistic treatment regimen.