

Global Wound Care Congress

September 12-13, 2016 San Antonio, USA

A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A SPECIALISED SEATING PROGRAMME IN REDUCING PRESSURE INJURY INCIDENCE FOR CLIENTS IN LONG TERM CARE

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While guidance is available on most aspects of pressure injury prevention and management, there has been little information on addressing these issues in seated patients. The issues most often addressed include the use of pressure-redistributing beds and mattresses, risk assessment, repositioning and management of established pressure injury. The role of specialised seating can often be overlooked. This research investigates the effectiveness of a specialised seating programme and its impact on pressure injury incidence in long term care.

Method: A mixed methods, design was ethically approved and employed. Participants were recruited from three long term care settings before random allocation. The Control Group continued to use their existing seating while the intervention group was provided with seating tailored to their individual needs following a thorough assessment. Participants were observed for pressure care, saturated oxygen levels, posture, function and comfort.

Results & Discussion: The significant results proved that no participant in the Intervention Group presented any red skin areas whilst using Seating Matters specialised seating, resulting in an 88.3% reduction in pressure injuries. In the Control Group, there was a 5% increase in pressure injuries whilst using their existing seating and those with redness noted at the beginning of the trial remained following the 12 week trial period. Other notable results revealed that oxygen saturation levels increased by 95%, as well as increased functionality and a reduction in sliding or falling from the chair.

Conclusion: This research demonstrates that prescribed seating can contribute to a reduction in pressure injury incidence for patients in long term care. It highlights that the needs of each patient are different, requiring individualised evaluation of seating needs before making recommendations for an appropriate seating system. This research has attempted to address an area which is often overlooked, providing evidence based daytime pressure management through therapeutic seating to compliment therapeutic surfaces at night.

Biography

Martina Tierney, an Occupational Therapist since 1983, worked in various settings, including rehabilitation, mental health, nursing and community care. She focused on the provision of specialist seating throughout her career. As Clinical Director at Seating Matters, Martina oversees the Clinical Team is working on research, education and clinical trials. Through these key areas, she is at the forefront of Seating Matters' vision; to change the world of healthcare seating. She continually pushes the boundaries of seating innovation whilst improving knowledge available to the healthcare community. Martina has authored 'The Clinician's Seating Handbook', the only handbook in the world dedicated to seating and 'The Clinician's Guide to Pressure Injuries'. Martina delivers Training Days and presents at conferences worldwide, sharing how clinical research improves patient care.

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