ATTENTION TO SKIN IN THE PERIOPERATIVE SETTING
Team Leader: Sandra Filla, BSN, CCRN, CPAN
Barnes-Jewish Hospital, St. Louis, MO
Team Members: Vicki D’Harlingue, RN; Elizabeth Cox, MSN, CMSRN

Purpose: Our hospital is a level one trauma center performing over 100 surgeries daily. With the advent of Centers for Medicare and Medicaid state stage three and four skin breakdowns not present on admission will no longer be reimbursed, the Perianesthesia Care Unit took a proactive stance at skin integrity issues. Recognizing opportunity to improve our practice in reporting, documenting and informing to divisions skin related concerns, our division developed a proactive process of tracking and communicating with in-patient divisions.

Implementation: The PACU has a staff nurse designated as the divisional “wound liaison”. She actively in-services staff on recognition of skin breakdown, staging wounds, and appropriate nursing interventions for pre and post operative care. The liaison participates in hospital monthly wound meetings to discuss frequency of patient skin events, review trends, and collaborate on between division communications at handoff. In addition providing education regarding new skin products, positioning equipment and bed surfaces, the liaison actively reviews staff questionnaires regarding skin issues and is instrumental in reporting information to everyone. The initiation of reviewing patient specific skin issues at monthly performance improvement meetings allows for in-depth discussion of individualized cases.

Outcome: Perioperative staff have increased awareness of the importance of skin assessments, documentation, and reporting. Collaboration within the organization has increased. The vigilant assessment of potential breakdown and reporting of high risk patients has brought the awareness and quality of care to a higher level. Proactive use of products has increased providing increased patient and staff satisfaction.