

3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on

# NURSING & MIDWIFERY

May 23-24, 2018 | New York, USA

## Evaluation of a formal care worker educational intervention on pressure ulceration in the community

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**Statement of the problem:** Pressure ulcers are a major burden to health care and with a growth in patients with co-morbidities alongside an aging population, the prevalence and incidence of pressure damage is likely to increase. Formal care workers providing personal care to people at home in the UK is ideally placed to identify patients at risk but lack standardized educational provision. The purpose of this study was to develop and evaluate an educational intervention for formal care workers on pressure ulceration in the community.

**Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** An insider approach to action research in one UK healthcare provider organisation, November 2014-May 2015 was utilized. The number and categorization of pressure ulcers, within 3 community nursing teams was collected before and four months after an education intervention was delivered. A purposive sample (n=250) of formal care workers were assessed and the taught element evaluated using a questionnaire and verbal feedback.

**Findings:** The total number of pressure ulcers reduced from 28 to 20, [category II, 19 to 11; category III remained unchanged at six and category IV from two to zero] following the educational intervention. Key risk factors included impaired mobility (71%), urinary incontinence (61%) and previous pressure damage (25%), and 71% had formal care worker input. The intervention was highly rated 4.95/5 by 215 (86%) formal care workers in the evaluation questionnaire.

**Conclusion & significance:** Formal care workers in the UK receive little, if any, education on pressure ulceration. An educational intervention can have a positive effect within community care, with the potential to reduce direct costs of care. However, a standardized approach to education is required; an urgent review of the education provision to formal care workers, in the United Kingdom and around the world, is therefore essential if the potential that formal care workers offer is to be realized. Formal care workers are ideally placed to help identify and alert healthcare professionals about patients at high risk of developing pressure ulcers. If this potential is to be realized a standardized approach to education is required.

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**Notes:**