Skin Tears - Innovation and Cost Savings using a Silicone Contact Layer

How Effective Contract Negotiations Contribute to Cost Containment

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PURPOSE:
Evaluating fiscal challenges require extraordinary reassessment and recommendation of resources for home care agencies. We sought to establish a relationship and execute a new standard of care for our agency statewide, as well as implement an innovative approach to decrease our costs for providing care for partial thickness skin injuries using a soft silicone contact layer.

ABSTRACT:
Home care must leverage cost resources, i.e., the clinical nurse, to achieve efficiency and excellence in clinical outcomes for patients. We sought to replicate cost savings and clinical outcomes of a previously published experience, as well as establish and execute a new standard of care for our statewide agency. We also sought an innovative approach to decrease our costs for advanced wound care products. Skin tears are highly exudative and physicians routinely order daily dressing changes consisting of a non-adherent gauze layer, covered with absorbent gauze sponges and then held in place with rolled gauze. Typically patients required 15 to 21 days of daily care. An algorithm for skin tear care was developed and staff statewide attended a mandatory inservice. At the end of the inservice, staff were given samples of the soft silicone wound contact layer.

PROBLEM:
Skin tears are highly exudative and physicians routinely ordered daily dressing changes consisting of a non-adherent gauze layer, covered with absorbent gauze sponges and then held in place with rolled gauze. Although the agency is associated with a large hospital system, soft silicone based wound care products were not available to home care for the same cost.

CLINICAL APPROACH:
An algorithm was developed and staff attended a mandatory inservice. Afterwards, staff were given samples of the soft silicone based products. Concomitantly, negotiations were pursued for a reduction of cost for access for these wound products under the larger contract umbrella.

OUTCOMES:

- Reduction in Nursing Visits
- Reduction in Cost of Care for Skin Tears
- Cost Savings per Patient/incident

- CENTURA HOME HEALTH NURSING COSTS - 3 weeks of patient care for skin tears
- CENTURA HOME AT HEALTH VISITS - 3 weeks of patient care for skin tears

CONCLUSION:
Supports previous clinical evidence "Skin tear" injuries heal faster using soft silicone dressings.
- Implementation of a functional algorithm for skin tears, decreases nursing visits.
- Elimination of daily RN visits increases capacity to serve a greater number of patients.
- Systematic negotiations with distributors are a successful strategy to overcome contractual barriers for decreasing costs for advanced wound care products.

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