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POLICY NO: CLN/PI

## PORTSMOUTH HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST

## CORPORATE POLICY

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 POLICY FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT  
 OF PRESSURE SORES
 

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## 1. PURPOSE

To ensure that appropriate action is taken within each service where there are patients or clients at risk, to prevent pressure sores occurring, and where they do occur, to manage them effectively.

These services include the Department of Medicine for Elderly People, Elderly Mental Health, Community Nursing and Community Hospitals. Some clients in Adult Mental Health and Learning Disability services will also be at risk.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

"The presence of a pressure sore can be defined as a new or established area of skin and/or tissue discolouration or damage which persists after the removal of pressure and which is likely to be due to the effects of pressure on the tissues."

(Department of Health 1994)

Pressure sores occur on various parts of the body, most notably over the heels, buttocks, hips and elbows. They may develop at other sites as a consequence of unrelieved pressure from support surfaces, orthotic devices, prostheses and footwear. Pressure sores are the result of a complex interaction of a wide range of internal and external factors which, in association with pressure, result in tissue damage.

## 3. ACTION

The action which needs to be taken to reduce the incidence and severity of pressure sores includes:

- Prevention
- Good Practice
- Education
- Monitoring

## 3.1 Prevention

- Risk assessment  
Patients/clients whose mobility is impaired or who are vulnerable for other reasons eg. Prosthetic/orthotic appliance, severe mental illness or learning disability, should have a formal assessment of their risk of developing a pressure sore using the Waterlow Scale combined with clinical judgement on admission to hospital or residential unit or to the Community Nursing Service.
- Availability of resources
  - a) Staff Each service where there are patients or clients at risk should have staff with the required level of skill to deliver the plan of care.