

Clinical experiences when using an active support surface within an inpatient hospice setting



Julie French, Staff Nurse, Inpatient Unit, Coventry Myton Hospice, UK

Introduction

Comfort is an essential part of care for patients at the end of life and for those with life limiting conditions. The department of health's commitment is that every person at the end of their life should receive attentive, high quality, compassionate care, so that their pain is eased, their spirits lifted and their wishes for their closing weeks, days and hours are respected. ¹

High quality care, when delivered collectively, should contribute to improving the effectiveness, safety and experience of adults approaching the end of life and the associated experience of their families and carers. This can be achieved by treating and caring for people in a safe environment and where possible protecting them from avoidable (health-related) harm ² such as pressure ulceration.

A plan of care and treatment must be developed to meet the dying person's own needs and wishes in relation to how their care should be managed and any treatment preferences they may want to express. ³ Within this specialised area of care, providing a comfortable support surface which suits the clinical needs of individual patients whilst maintaining quality of life can be very challenging.

Both patient comfort and the prevention of pressure related tissue damage are key considerations for nursing staff, carers, patients and their families, however balancing comfort with clinical performance can be very difficult with this specific patient cohort, which typically represent some of the most dependent patients in our health care system.

Aims

The aim of this work was to ascertain staff feedback and acceptance of a specialist active therapy support surface within an inpatient hospice setting, with a key focus on comfort and clinical effectiveness.

Method

This work reports the clinical experiences of the nursing and care staff who use the Talley QUATTRO Acute active therapy support surface (see Figure 1) as part of routine patient care within a hospice setting. Data collection took place across two sites, Coventry Myton Hospice (16 bedded) and Warwick Myton Hospice (20 bedded). A total of seven specialist support surfaces were in use.

The first QUATTRO Acute mattress system was purchased by Coventry Myton Hospice in 2014 after a resident had been successfully nursed on one, and due to positive staff feedback on the system a further six have subsequently been purchased.

Product effectiveness, user acceptance and staff views on the



FIGURE 1.
QUATTRO ACUTE
mattress system

support surface were determined by structured questionnaires. These were distributed to all staff across both sites with the results reported in the following table.

Results

A total of fifty two questionnaires were completed, the feedback from which is shown in Table 1.

STAFF VIEWS ON THE TALLEY QUATTRO ACUTE ACTIVE THERAPY SUPPORT SURFACE	STAFF FEEDBACK
Effective / very effective at redistributing pressure and maintaining skin integrity	98%
Comfortable / very comfortable for patients	96%
No noise / minimum noise	98%
Patient safety / stability when repositioning / getting on/off the mattress	100%
Future Use: happy to use QUATTRO Acute again for patients receiving end of life care	86%

TABLE 1. Staff views and feedback on the QUATTRO Acute mattress system

Discussion

Within this specialised care setting, the results of this work clearly demonstrate that the nursing staff who use this system recognise that it delivers the comfort that palliative care patients often require at the time they most need it, thus contributing to patients' quality of life.

In addition to patient comfort, it is imperative that care givers have confidence in the clinical performance of the support surface being used. This user evaluation demonstrates that the clinical staff within the hospice recognise that the support surface can help them deliver safe, effective, harm free care to their patients approaching the end of life, by effectively redistributing the pressure and maintaining skin integrity in these most dependent of patients.

Conclusion

Providing a specialist active support surface which suits the complex needs of end of life patients is essential in this often challenging environment. Many factors must be considered to ensure that patient comfort is maintained whilst preventing avoidable health related harm and the unnecessary additional suffering associated with this.

Whilst an appropriate support surface is critical in achieving this, clinicians often face a trade-off when choosing between clinical performance and patient comfort. Based on the results of this work it is evident that some specialist PAC systems are able to offer acceptable levels of both performance and comfort even in the highest risk, most dependent patient cohorts such as those nursed in palliative care settings.

In conclusion, the Talley QUATTRO Acute is our preferred PAC mattress within the hospice as it provides all the pressure relief required for our patients. Patients are comfortable and settled and receive the clinical benefits of an alternating air mattress system without the obvious movement associated with many other, alternative systems.

References

1. Department of Health. Our commitment to you for end of life care. The Government Response to the Review of Choice in End of Life Care. London: DH; 2016. Accessed 10th July 2018 from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/536326/choiceresponse.pdf
2. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. End of life care for adults. Quality Standard QS13. 2011. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs13> Accessed 11th July 2018.
3. Leadership Alliance for the Care of Dying People. ONE CHANCE TO GET IT RIGHT: Improving people's experience of care in the last few days and hours of life. Publications gateway reference 01509. 2014. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/323188/One_chance_to_get_it_right.pdf accessed 28th September 2018.



Talley Group Limited
 Premier Way, Abbey Park Industrial Estate
 Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 9DQ England
 TEL: +44(0)1794 503500 FAX: +44(0)1794 503555
 EMAIL: sales@talleygroup.com

www.talleygroup.com

