

Improving Lower Limb Assessments with Toe Pressure Devices

Tissue Viability Service

October 2019

Background:

- The Tissue Viability Service (TVS) wanted to purchase two Ankle and Toe Pressure Kits so that the team could perform Ankle and Toe Pressure assessments in clinic or community settings.
- This would enable the clinical team to undertake a full assessment on the patient's first visit and reduce the need for multiple visits prior to treatment.
- This could also reduce the number of referrals to secondary care.
- The purchase of Toe Pressure machines would remove the need for contracts with Medical Physics, making an annual cost saving.

Aim:

To reduce service costs and reduce referrals to Secondary Care via service improvement



Outcomes:

- Provided staff with autonomy in assessing patient with Leg Ulcers.
 - Allowed for timely and accurate assessment in a community setting which informed efficient decision making for patient care.
- 'Having this equipment and the skills to interpret the results has meant that our patients are receiving better care. I feel I have made a positive difference for my patients'*
- House bound patients can now have advanced assessment at home. Previously house bound patients were transported to outpatient clinics or did not have the assessment they required
 - Staff learned a new skill
 - Saving of £10.5K annually as Medical Physics no longer required

Methods/Actions:

- Previous use of Duplex Screening undertaken by Medical Physics team was expensive and required patients to attend an out patient clinic so this was not accessible for housebound patients.
- The TVS decided to research other options the service could implement to make accurate and timely patient assessments. The TVS explored options by engaging with other leg ulcer services and researched best practice recommendations.
- After equality impact and risk assessments were carried out, the TVS gained service line approval of the proposed business plan and procurement was agreed. The team have subsequently received training.
- Staff now have the appropriate knowledge and skills to utilise the toe pressure machine during their assessment of patients with leg ulcers. This enhanced assessment ensures timely best practice treatment, improving patients outcomes.
- We are now starting the treatment on their initial assessment rather than waiting weeks to attend a Duplex appointment.

Learning:

The advance in medical technology has enabled the TVS nurse to have the autonomy in assessing patients with leg ulcers. We do not need to refer to Medical Physics; meaning we are now able to provide the full care for patients within our services.