

Pol 364	Preventing pressure injuries
---------	-------------------------------------

Pressure injuries are one of the most commonly occurring preventable conditions. They can cause death, infection, cellulitis, reduced physical mobility and pain.

Life Choice has developed this policy to minimise the number of pressure injuries occurring in the health service sector. The policy addresses the following:

- Assessment of pressure injuries
- Prevention of pressure injuries
- Warning signs of pressure injuries
- Treatment of pressure injuries

Record of policy development

Version	Date approved	Date for review
2023/1	February 2023	February 2025

Responsibilities and delegations

This policy applies to	All staff
Policy approval	Quality & Risk Committee

Policy context – this policy relates to:

Standards	NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators NDIS (provider registration and practice standards) Rules 2018 NDIS (quality indicators) guidelines 2018 NDIS High Intensity Daily Personal Activities NDIS High Intensity Support Skills Descriptor
Legislation	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (2018)
Organisation policies	Wound Management Documentation Policy Management of Waste Policy Work Health and Safety and Environment Management Code of Conduct Policy Complaints Compliments and Feedback Policy Consent Policy Reportable Incident, Accidents and Emergencies Policy Information Management of Participants Records Policy Management of Medication Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

	Risk Management Policy Service Agreement Policy
Forms, record keeping, other documents	Participant Support Plan Participant Risk Assessment Wound management chart Waterlow chart Training Plan-Wound management

Definitions

Pressure injuries: Injuries caused by unrelieved pressure or friction, localised to the skin and/or underlying tissue. Most commonly they occur on the heel or sacrum, however they can appear anywhere on the body.

Procedures

Screening and Assessment of pressure injuries:

Upon entry to the service, participants will be screened and assessed for existing pressure injuries and their level of risk of obtaining a pressure injury.

The screening will involve assessment of the participant's current skin condition including:

- Evidence of infection and underlying causes;
- Skin and tissue temperature;
- Presence of swelling or oedema;
- Circulation;
- Vascular perfusion

The assessment will also consider factors that contribute to an individual's increased risk of infections such as mobility, co-morbidities, injuries, nutrition, body temperature, circulatory status and diabetes.

They will be assessed by the Registered Nurse. The Registered Nurse will develop an individualised management plan detailing: their existing pressure injuries, management of injuries and potential risks for developing pressure injuries.

For participants who have pressure injuries, the Registered Nurse will include a monitoring system in their individualised management plan, which includes who will be responsible for monitoring, recording and reporting on the injury.

Prevention of pressure injuries

Life Choice will endeavour to prevent pressure injuries from occurring by:

Repositioning of participants:

- Encouraging participants to move and change position regularly;
- Repositioning at-risk participants every 6 hours as a minimum;
- Maintaining the bed head at its lowest elevation or below 30 degrees;
- Not positioning participants on their pressure injuries, erythema, heels or bony areas or directly on medical devices;

- Encouraging participants who are seated to shift their weight every 15 minutes;
- Limiting the time participants are in a seated position;
- Encouraging participants to maintain good posture;
- Ensuring participants have appropriate foot support; and
- Assisting less mobile participants to change positions.

Preventing skin damage:

- Avoiding massaging or rubbing areas of skin at risk of pressure injury;
- Protecting participants from exposure to excessive moisture; and
- Applying prophylactic dressings where necessary.

Creating an environment conducive to pressure injury prevention:

- Ensuring bed linen and sheets are kept clean;
- Ensuring participants have sufficient fresh fruit, vegetables and water in their nutrition and meals plan, see;
 - o Including protein, health oils (omega 3), vitamins C and E
- Ensuring participants practice appropriate hygiene and self-care, and assisting participants with showering, when required;
- Assessing participants upon admission to facilities to determine their level of mobility and the assistance they will require to shower and change position;
- Providing specialised mattresses to participants who are at risk of developing pressure injuries;
- Conducting regular skin checks by the Registered Nurse and
- Requesting that participants notify staff/workers if their linen or clothing is damp or if they are experiencing soreness, reddening or skin swelling.

Participant involvement

Life Choice will ensure that participants are well informed on pressure injuries, by providing information on prevention, warning signs and management in a manner which is easy to understand and in the most appropriate format. Participants will also be active participants in their care plans and be involved in decisions regarding individualised pressure injury prevention strategies.

Warning signs of pressure injuries

Life Choice will ensure that support staff are trained and understand how to prevent and identify warning signs of pressure injuries. Daily checks will be undertaken by support staff to determine warning signs of pressure injuries. Support staff will look for;

- Red, purple or blue torn or swollen skin
- Hardness
- Dryness
- Shiny patches
- Blisters
- Signs of infection like skin warmth, swelling, cracks, calluses and wrinkles

Locations of pressure injuries

Support staff know the areas prone to pressure injuries, and are aware that they are likely to develop in different postures and positions. Refer to relevant guidelines for more information on identifying pressure injuries.

Treatment of pressure injuries

Life Choice will ensure support staff are trained in how to treat pressure injuries, where required.

Support staff, under the guidance of the Registered Nurse may treat pressure injuries by:

- Regular position changes;
- Dressing the sore to keep moist and keep surrounding skin dry;
- Regular cleaning;
- Administering specific drugs and medication if the pressure injury persists;
- Participants will be recommended for surgery if infection persists; and
- Continuing to support healthy lifestyle habits (nutrition, hydration and physical activity).]

Monitor and document

All assessment, monitoring and outcomes will be recorded in the participant's health record. Monitoring and assessment of patients will occur as required but at least weekly.

Review of policy

This policy is subject to review at least every two years. Any update in evidence-based guidelines on the identification, prevention and treatment of pressure injuries will be assessed and may be included or updated in this policy.

End of document
