



Basic research

Analyses of pressure ulcer point prevalence at the first skin assessment in a Portuguese hospital



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KEYWORDS

International classification of diseases;
Nursing;
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Pressure ulcer;
Prevalence;

Abstract *Aim:* To analyze the first pressure ulcer risk and skin assessment records of hospitalized adult patients in medical and surgical areas of Aveiro Hospital during 2012 in association with their demographic and clinical characteristics.

Material and methods: Retrospective cohort analysis of electronic health record database from 7132 adult patients admitted to medical and surgical areas in a Portuguese hospital during 2012. The presence of (at least) one pressure ulcer at the first skin assessment in inpatient setting was associated with age, gender, type of

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Risk assessment

admission, specialty units, length of stay, patient discharge and ICD-9 diagnosis. *Results:* Point prevalence of participants with pressure ulcer category/stage I–IV of 7.9% at the first skin assessment in inpatient setting. A total of 1455 pressure ulcers were documented, most of them category/stage I. The heels and the sacrum/coccyx were the most problematic areas. Participants with pressure ulcer commonly had two or more pressure ulcers.

Conclusions: The point prevalence of participants with pressure ulcer of our study was similar international literature. The presence of a pressure ulcer at the first skin assessment could be an important measure of frailty and the participants with pressure ulcer commonly had more than one documented pressure ulcer. Advanced age or lower Braden Scale scores or Emergency Service admission were relevant variables for the presence of (at least) one pressure ulcer at the first skin assessment in inpatient setting as well as respiratory, infectious or genitourinary system diseases.

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1. Introduction

Pressure ulcers continue to be a challenge to healthcare professionals [1–3] and represent an indicator of healthcare quality [4–6]. In fact, effective pressure ulcer prevention depends on health care professionals (especially nurses) that identify patients who are particularly vulnerable to pressure damage due to their specific risk factors [1–3]. Nowadays more than 30 pressure ulcer risk assessment scales are known worldwide and are used in clinical practice [7–9]. However, preventive measures are not always effectively implemented [10,11] and the prevalence of pressure ulcers in hospitals is still high [12].

In order to follow national guidelines [13], Registered Nurses and/or Clinical Nurses Specialist should perform a pressure ulcer risk assessment using the Braden Scale (Attach 1) as well as a skin integrity assessment using the Skin Assessment Tool (Attach 2) every 24 h in emergency rooms and intensive care units. In inpatient settings that assessment should be performed at admission and repeated every 48 h during the length of stay. At "Centro Hospitalar do Baixo Vouga, EPE – Unidade de Aveiro" (Aveiro hospital) these systematic assessments have been carried out (only) in inpatient settings since 2012.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the first pressure ulcer risk and skin assessment records of hospitalized adult patients in medical and surgical areas of Aveiro Hospital during 2012 in association with their demographic and clinical characteristics.

Specific objectives were defined as follows: [1] To calculate the prevalence of pressure ulcers in hospitalized adult patients at the first skin assessment in inpatient setting; [2] To identify the category/stage of pressure ulcers in hospitalized

adult patients at the first skin assessment in inpatient setting; [3] To identify the location of pressure ulcers in hospitalized adult patients at the first skin assessment in inpatient setting; and [4] To analyze the demographic and clinical characteristics of hospitalized adult patients who had (at least one) pressure ulcer at the first skin assessment in inpatient setting.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Design

This study was designed as a retrospective cohort analysis of electronic health record database from adult patients admitted to medical and surgical areas of the Aveiro Hospital from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012.

2.2. Sample/participants

The inclusion criteria were: [1] Patients with ≥ 18 years old at the time of admission; [2] Patients admitted and discharged in 2012; [3] Patients with emergency service or programmed hospital admission. The exclusion criteria were: [1] Patients with less than 24 h' length of stay; [2] Patients admitted to specialties of Psychiatry, Gynecology, Obstetrics and Intensive Care; [3] Patients without pressure ulcer risk assessment and/or skin assessment at the admission in inpatient setting.

2.3. Ethical issues and approval

The study was performed after Hospital Council Board and Ethics Committee approval. Confidentiality of the participants was maintained and no names or identifying information was recorded.

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