

MEDIA RELEASE

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Stop the pressure – make the move!

Members of the public are being urged to take action which could prevent serious harm and infections.

Every year, thousands of people across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland develop pressure ulcers (also known as pressure sores or bed sores).

In mild cases this can be a painful discolouration of the skin. In more severe cases the skin can be broken and the damage can involve muscle and bone, which leads to the possibility of infections.

Now ten organisations have united behind the “Stop the pressure – make the move!” campaign. Its aim is to raise awareness of pressure ulcers, and to help people to take action which could stop them developing.

Victoria Peach, Lead Nurse for Community Services at Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, said: “People who are at risk of developing pressure ulcers can go a long way to preventing them developing by moving their position regularly. Even small movements made often can make a significant difference.”

Other steps which can help include:

- having a well-balanced diet and keeping hydrated;
- keeping your skin clean with regular washing with mild soap, water, and drying yourself thoroughly afterwards;
- using any specialist equipment provided by a healthcare professional; and
- checking your skin each day for changes.

At risk groups include:

- older people;
- those with limited mobility, such as wheelchair users or anyone who is confined to a bed; and
- people with certain medical conditions, such as diabetes.

Pressure ulcers can develop when an individual is in bed, in a chair, when they put their feet up. They can occur anywhere skin, usually over a bony prominence, is pressed against a surface. The pressure is often from the individual's own body weight. The pressure restricts the flow of blood to the skin, causing the skin to break down.

One patient who suffered a pressure ulcer was wheelchair user Andrew Harrison, 50, of Melton Mowbray. He developed a pressure ulcer on his hip from sitting in his favourite easy chair for lengthy periods. His wound became infected, leading to an admission to hospital, weight loss, and a lengthy course of antibiotics.

He said: "I wouldn't want anybody to go through what I went through, the healing process is so long. You have got to keep moving yourself. I make sure I'm only sat in one position for 20 minutes to half an hour."

The ten organisations behind the campaign – Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust, East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group, Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group, West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, Rutland County Council, LOROS and Age UK – are between them distributing 30,000 leaflets and 5,000 posters to highlight the risks.

They will also be reminding their staff who care for or come into contact with people who care for those at risk of developing pressure ulcers to pass on the message.

Anyone who is concerned about developing pressure ulcers should contact their GP or health practitioner.

Dawn Leese, Director of Nursing and Quality at Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group, said: “Our ambition is to eliminate avoidable pressure ulcers as far as possible and we hope that this campaign will demonstrate how different organisations working together can make a real difference to our patients.”

Victoria Peach, Lead Nurse for Community Services at Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, said: said “This is a coordinated approach across multiple health and social care organisations to reinforce an international ‘stop the pressure’ campaign by ensuring that the key message of moving is delivered to all people at risk of pressure ulceration.”

To see a copy of the leaflet, click here

<http://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/Library/PressuresoarsA5leafletV4.pdf> .

To see a copy of the poster, click here

<http://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/Library/PressuresoarsA3v3.pdf> .

For more information on pressure ulcers, follow this link:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Pressure-ulcers/Pages/Introduction.aspx> .

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Note to editors

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) provides a range of health and wellbeing services mainly for people living Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The Trust serves a population of one million, has a budget in excess of £282 million and employs approximately 5,400 staff. For more information visit www.leicspart.nhs.uk.

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