

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY - A Mechanism for Enhancing Care and Documentation in Wound Care Service Delivery

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CHN Conference



Who we are

- ★ Large provider of home health care services across Canada.
- ★ Accredited with CCHSA
- ★ Have 24 home care branches in Ontario and 1 in Alberta.
- ★ Nurses/Therapist and Support Workers provide exceptional quality health care and support services to clients in their homes, schools, offices and assisted living centers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Who we are

- ★ Provide care to clients of all ages
- ★ Nurses have specialized skills in wound care, palliative care and IV therapy.



What did we do?

- ★ Pilot Project started to create a home health care based protocol for using digital photography in wound care.



Drivers for the Project

- ★ Request from clinical leader in wound care to use digital photography
- ★ Want to use evidence based practices
- ★ Enhance assessment of wounds, evaluate healing, and improve client outcomes
- ★ Tool to communicate with consultants
- ★ Increase client's satisfaction – provide them with visual record of healing
- ★ Assist with education to field staff



Project Vision Statement

- ★ To draft and test policies and procedures that address the use of digital photography and the electronic health record.
- ★ To determine the feasibility of using digital cameras and to create a plan that ensures the risks and costs to the company, clients and staff are managed.



Project Goal and Objectives

Develop policies/procedures to address:

- Camera equipment specifications
- Utilization
- Consent
- Confidentiality
- Electronic handling of photographs.



Literature

- ★ Usually focused on benefits of using digital photography
 - Wound Care Canada – Incorporating Digital Photography into your Wound Care Practice (Philips, K., 2006)
- ★ Lack of camera specifications
 - Home Healthcare Nurse – Choosing and Using a Digital Camera in Home Care (Demarest, L & Acoraci, L. 2004)



Literature

- ★ Lack of publications for competencies required for digital photography in Canada.
 - Excellent work done by Kathleen Buckley in the U.S. on Evaluating Homecare Nurses' Knowledge of Wound Assessment and Developing a Wound Photography Competency for Home Care Nurses. (2005).



Project Accomplishments

Digital camera equipment specification was determined (using Kodak Easyshare)

- 5 or higher megapixels
- 10X optical zoom
- Memory card – 32 megabyte or higher
- Rechargeable battery
- Colour photo printer



Project Accomplishments

Created procedure on how to use the camera based on literature/clinical leader's expertise.

Considered:

- Lighting and Focusing
- Client positioning
- Privacy
- Photo identifiers
- Number of photos to take
- Infection control



Project Accomplishments

Developed separate consent form informing client that photo:

- Is used as a visual record with no identifiers
- Could be shared with other specialists
- Might be used in teaching
- Would be placed into chart
- Could be transferred to a secure computer
- Acknowledged that they would not be reimbursed for use of photos.



Project Accomplishments

Electronic handling of photographs

- Downloading to computer
- Using passwords
- Emailing



Implementation

- ★ Approval from senior management to proceed with purchase for all branches
- ★ Arrange for camera/printer purchase
- ★ Memo to branch managers
- ★ Introduction of policy and procedure in a supervisor's meeting
- ★ Support by practice department for supervisors and clinical leaders in wound care via teleconference.



Ongoing Evaluation Criteria

Clinical leader in wound care at each branch will gain the knowledge, skill and competency to use digital photography for wound care within 2 months by:

- Providing all branches with policy and procedure
- Provide supervisors/clinical leads with education
- Use competency checklist to evaluate knowledge



Ongoing Evaluation Criteria

The clinical leader in wound care will have the tools to accurately assess complicated wounds and enhance documentation. Conduct a chart audit to determine:

- If wound assessment tool is used
- The number of digital photos in chart
- If wound care flow chart is completed



Ongoing Evaluation Criteria

Clinical leader in wound care will collaborate and share the digital photograph with other specialists when wounds are not healing or complications develop

- Gather data on number of times a digital photo is sent to specialists
- Record the number of times the specialist requests a digital photograph to be taken
- Gather data on length of time for wound to heal.



Ongoing Evaluation Criteria

The client will be satisfied with the use of digital photography in their plan of care.

- Provide client with consent form to sign
- Provide client with a photo of wound
- Survey the client on discharge about their satisfaction on use of digital photo.



Ongoing Evaluation Criteria

All nurses will have learning opportunities to increase their knowledge on wound care

- Provide education on difficult wounds to heal
- Use digital photographs as a visual aid



Impact on Practice

- ★ Nurses have a better understanding of healing process, can visually see the changes
- ★ Visual aid to discuss best practices and decide on treatment
- ★ Relationship building between nurses and the doctors – allows for discussion/learning
- ★ Captures what measurement numbers don't show



Any questions/comments?



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