

SUCCESS STORIES

Greene Acres, the place to be

When a proactive commitment is aligned with a state-of-the-art wound care program, it's possible for even the most difficult wound care-related challenges to be overcome.

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Running a long-term care facility can be overwhelming and lonely. But there are heroes out there showing how success can be achieved. Each **SUCCESS STORIES** installment shows how a colleague turned a challenging situation into a victory.

Treating pressure ulcers and other wounds remains problematic for many providers. And as residents get older and frailer, the challenge does not appear to be subsiding anytime soon.

The good news is long-term care operators can rise above wound-related challenges. Three proactive strategies are the adoption of ongoing staff education, proactive assessments and implementing a comprehensive wound care program that blends effective practices with proven products and professional resources.

This approach has worked wonders for Greene Acres Nursing Home, a 143-bed not-for-profit facility in the small, rural community of Paragould, AR. Although the facility primarily serves Paragould's population of 25,000, it also has become a reliable referral site for hospitals and nursing homes in neighboring communities, including Jonesboro, which is approximately 20 miles away. This steady stream of referrals stems from Greene Acres' ongoing success in managing and healing even the most challenging wounds, including Stage



Greene Acres Nursing Home improved its wound care capabilities by improving staff education, proactive assessments and launching a comprehensive wound care program that blends effective practices with proven products and professional resources.

IV decubitus ulcers.

"We don't shy away from accepting residents with difficult wounds," said Greene Acres administrator Marlisa Thompson. "We have had a lot of success in treating and healing wounds that other facilities [couldn't]. In some cases, we have healed Stage IV wounds in residents who were not expected to survive."

Compass provides direction Thompson and her staff largely credit a comprehensive wound care program for their success. Since 2005, the Compass Wound Care Prevention and Treatment program by Medline Industries, Inc. has been

widely ingrained into Greene Acres' care practices, offering caregivers a one-stop resource for wound management, incontinence care and diabetes care.

"We were an early adopter of the Compass program and we have had terrific results [with its implementation] from the very beginning," Thompson said. "It has provided us with the resources and clinical support we need to make the best care decisions possible. This is important because as an independent not-for-profit, we wouldn't otherwise have the resources and clinical support available. We would be out here trying to do the best we can on

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our own. Medline and the Compass program have filled that gap for us.”

The core of the Compass program is education, with comprehensive, user-friendly tools geared toward every care level—from a facility’s wound care champion and director of nursing to the bedside nurse and even the resident and their family. Each Compass box contains a wound care handbook, wound care pocket guides, patient/resident educational brochures, and a CD with 225 images organized by wound categories.

“Nearly everything we need to address wounds and skin issues is included inside that Compass box,” Director of Nursing Angela Barber, RN said. She added that she’s particularly fond of the program’s pocket guides, which she describes as ring-bound “flip cards” that help educate staff on different wound types and serve as a guide for determining the best treatment approach.

One essential Compass resource that can’t fit in the box, however, is Medline’s live clinical support team. Because the Compass program was developed by Medline’s Wound Care Advisory Board & Clinical Team, customers have a network of clinical and wound care experts who can answer questions and help staff determine the best wound treatment and prevention method.

“With the Compass program, we have [round-the-clock] access to clinicians who have truly been there and experienced what we are experiencing. Many of these people who are available to assist us and offer clinical support helped create the Compass program,” noted Nina Hall, LPN, a treatment nurse at Greene Acres.

The facility also benefits from Medline’s well-trained sales



Greene Acres relies on Compass for the treatment and prevention of all wound types. They include skin tears, arterial wounds, venous ulcers and pressure ulcers.

“We were an early adopter of the Compass program.”

Marlisa Thompson, administrator for Greene Acres

representatives, according to Thompson. “They aren’t wound experts, but they are trained to assist us and they can also help direct us to the right clinical person based on our needs or questions. The level of support we receive is great.”

Success by numbers

Greene Acres’ wound-related statistics underscore the effectiveness of the Compass program and Medline’s array of wound care products. Currently, the facility’s pressure ulcer rate is just 2.09%. In the past year, Greene Acres has healed 13 Stage II pressure ulcers within one week of wound development – all using Medline programs and products with no other wound interventions.

Additionally, over the past three years, the facility has treated six Stage III pressure ulcers, three of which were also healed solely with the use of Medline programs and products. Greene Acres also admitted four residents over the past three years with advanced

Stage IV ulcers. Three of those residents received wound VAC treatment and two of the four residents with Stage IV ulcers were completely healed at the facility.

“One used wound VAC for a very short time and was healed from a Stage IV using Medline products – Silvasorb, calcium arginate, and, later, collagen. We also used Medline’s protein powder for that resident,” Thompson explained. Another resident, who was admitted with a Stage IV wound the diameter of a cereal bowl and wasn’t expected to survive, was completely healed solely with the use of only Medline products. One year later, he left Greene Acres and now is able to live independently.

The facility’s success with Medline’s products also can be largely attributed to comprehensive education delivered through the consistent use and implementation of the Compass program. As treatment nurse Erin Hollis stressed, a product cannot meet its full effectiveness if it is not used properly.

The Compass program assists caregivers in that goal by also providing information on Medline products, indications for use, and how to remove the products. Information on contraindications is also included.

“A wound will not heal properly if you are not using the correct products for each specific wound, so the information in the box is very important,” added Hollis.

While Medline’s Compass program plays a key role in Greene Acres’ wound care and prevention success, the nursing home also plays an active role in ensuring that staff are well trained and skilled in wound care and prevention. A staff education coordinator hosts in-service training every two to four weeks using Medline’s educational information, and multidisciplinary meetings are held daily and as needed to discuss resident needs and determine the best treatment approach.

To further build upon its success with the Compass program, Greene Acres’ next step is to begin widespread implementation of Medline’s Pressure Ulcer Prevention Program—a product bundle that assists caregivers in reducing pressure ulcers and incontinence-associated skin conditions.

“Medline has been a strong partner for us for more than ten years,” Thompson continued. “Their products and educational resources have given us a real advantage. I don’t know that we would be as successful without them.” ■

Coming next month

SUCCESS STORIES will show how one provider improved management.



“How do we improve
our resident and family-
centered quality of care
and prepare for QIS?”

We use abaqis.”

Sherri Dahle, RN, DNS
*Director of Nursing
Central Healthcare
LeCenter, MN*



The new Quality Indicator Survey (QIS) for nursing homes is more resident-centered, with more information obtained from direct questioning of residents and families. In fact, 60 percent of facilities have had more deficiencies in QIS than in the prior traditional survey, often in regulatory areas such as quality of life that were not as fully investigated in the traditional process.

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