

CASE STUDY: EXCELLENCE IN WOUND CARE AT NORTHWOOD

Effective wound management is a priority because it is a high volume service that is delivered in all sectors of care within the health system. A conservative estimate of the staggering cost of caring for wounds exceeds \$50 billion per year in North America.

Emerging research indicates that 30 - 40% of patients do not receive evidence-informed care. Improved client care and decreased delivery costs can be achieved through the implementation of a standardized approach to wound care that includes a process for outcome measurement and evaluation. While the need for both standardized approaches to care and outcome measurement processes has been clearly articulated in the literature, defining and measuring healthcare outcomes remains one of the most significant and unresolved challenges facing the our health system today.

Health Outcomes Worldwide (HOW) is a recognized industry leader in outcome measurement solutions. Our core competencies are conducting wound prevalence studies and wound environmental assessments as well as providing mobile technology that easily measures and tracks patient outcomes. HOW has extensive experience working with healthcare organizations to improve outcomes for patients with wounds by decreasing the prevalence of wounds, the percentage of daily dressing changes and helping to better manage wound care costs

Our award winning how2trak® software solution is a highly intuitive mobile/web-based outcome measurement solution that can track patient, process and system outcomes. how2trak® operates in real-time to provide immediate in-depth reporting and analysis on wound prevalence, evidence informed treatments, and costs for labour and products utilized. By helping health providers to collect and transform wound care data into knowledge, the system supports better patient care and reduces costs.



For more information
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THE NORTHWOOD APPROACH

Northwood began as a response to the plight of seniors living alone in Halifax in the early 1960s.

Northwood consists of Northwood Towers, a seven-storey apartment complex that offers independent living for older adults; Northwood Manor, a building that offers apartments and varying levels of nursing care; and Northwood Centre, a building that offers Level II 24-hour nursing care. In addition, Almon Place is a 66-unit apartment building and a Northwood recently opened a 144-room long term care building in Bedford (Christina and Hedley Ivany Place).

In 2012, Northwood identified the need for a comprehensive and consistent approach to wound management that included outcome measurement. By using how2trak®, the innovative web-based outcome measurement solution developed by Health Outcomes Worldwide (HOW), Northwood LTC has been able to consistently record, monitor and report on quality and cost outcomes to support the effective delivery an evidence-based wound care program.

Northwood made a commitment to improving prevention, assessment and treatment of wounds, led by Bernadette Mitchell McDonald. To support this initiative and create a sustainable program for Northwood, they implemented HOW's innovative how2trak® solution in July 2012. Their vision was to improve wound care outcomes for the residents and wound care costs for the system. Bernadette led this initiative in partnership with Health Outcomes Worldwide. This report describes the outcomes achieved by Northwood in twelve months.

Northwood has:

- Decreased the overall wound prevalence rate by **42%**
- Decreased the pressure ulcer prevalence rate by **25%** (despite having an increase in the number of residents after the implementation of how2trak®)
- Decreased skin tear prevalence by **50%**
- Decreased the unstageable pressure ulcer rate by **44%**
- Increased use of pressure offloading devices by **44%**

Health Outcomes Worldwide has the largest wound care database in the country and as a result we are able to compare pressure ulcer prevalence rates across the country. Northwood is currently reporting a pressure ulcer prevalence of 3%; this pressure ulcer prevalence rate is lowest in the country. The team at Northwood is to be congratulated on their great work.



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HOW AND NORTHWOOD COLLABORATION

Over the past 12 months Northwood and HOW have worked together to improve the how2trak® solution for the Long Term Care environment. Bernadette and her team identified specific needs for Northwood and HOW quickly came to the table to address these needs. They include:

- An inventory management report to ensure accurate supply management at the resident level
 - HOW worked with Northwood Materials Management to evaluate their needs in tracking product purchases and deliveries to each Northwood unit, as well as product usage for each patient in those units
 - HOW designed and implemented a custom software tool that allows batch product/delivery data files created in Northwood's central inventory system to be easily imported into how2trak®
 - Detailed product delivery and usage data with summaries are available in separate downloadable reports
 - With the use of how2trak® Northwood can now track product costs more closely and have cut their product costs by 50%
- A new report for LTC - HOW worked closely with Bernadette to meet her reporting requirements. A report was developed for LTC that demonstrates the individual residents' wounds, their treatments and costs associated to the care of wounds.

SUMMARY

In a very short period of time Bernadette and her team have improved wound care outcomes for the residents of Northwood and have improved product utilization.

Change is not easy and the nurses at Northwood have embraced a new technology, how2trak®, to help improve prevention, assessment and treatment of wounds. We feel that implementation of best practice in wound care requires strong leadership and a continuous quality improvement and tracking solution, how2trak®, to ensure the best outcomes for residents. These factors ensure a sustainable best practice approach.

In only 12 months, Northwood has:

- Decreased wound prevalence from 17 to 7%
- Improved the knowledge of nurses in best practice in wound care
- Reduced pressure ulcer prevalence rate slightly from 7.4 to 3% . This rate is the second lowest in the country.
- Improved the quality of care for residents
- Decreased product costs by 50%
- Demonstrated leadership in the province of Nova Scotia
- Implemented an innovative solution built by HOW to track product usage at the resident level
- Demonstrated leadership within the organization - in particular Bernadette Mitchell McDonald - to lead and execute on such an important project

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