

Initiative Overview:

Pressure Injury Prevention for Adults in Alberta Hospitals

The NRV SCN is leading a provincial initiative to implement prevention strategies for adult patients in hospital identified to be at risk. The strategies required for PIP are packaged together in a bundle of interventions called **SSKIN+**. The goal of the initiative is to reduce and eliminate preventable hospital-acquired pressure injuries.

Why do pressure injuries in adults need to be addressed in Alberta hospitals?

All patients in hospital are at risk of developing a pressure injury (PI). (PIs were previously known as pressure ulcers or bed sores.) Most pressure injuries are preventable.

Approximately 1 in 6 of adult patients in Alberta hospitals has a PI.

- 71% of PIs are hospital-acquired
- 18% of PIs are device-related

Pressure injuries are painful. Severe pressure injuries can incur further complications such as infection, and some require costly surgical debridement. Patients that acquire pressure injuries in hospital experience a significantly longer-than-average length of stay in hospital.

Alberta data reveals that screening to identify patients at risk occurs over 90% of the time but hospital acquired pressure injuries continue to occur.



Accreditation Canada identified PIP in hospital as a required organization practice (ROP) over 10 years ago. The Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) and Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) also recognize pressure injuries as a major issue in “hospital harm” and considered to be a “never event”.

What is being implemented?

SSKIN+, a bundle, or collection of multiple actions that, when undertaken by health care providers or patients and families, work together to help prevent pressure injuries for persons in hospital. Bundled under SSKIN+ are over 75 individual interventions that can be implemented, depending on the patient's risk assessment.



SSKIN+ was developed for AHS based on the successful *Stop the Pressure* program implemented in the United Kingdom. PIP bundles are recommended as best practice for implementation of PIP programs in health care systems by the [National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel](#) and [European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel](#).

The NRV SCN will support site teams in implementing SSKIN+ based on their own unique context.