

Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Role in Wound Care

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INTRODUCTION

A CNS student identified opportunities for improvement in wound care practices and outcomes across an 11-hospital system. Furthermore, termination of an outpatient wound care management contract required additional hospital resources to continue wound care services. An SBAR was submitted to hospital leadership outlining the value of adding a system position for a Clinical Nurse Specialist focused specifically on wound care. The position was approved in February 2022.

WHAT IS A CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST

The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) definition:

A Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) prepared by a master's, or doctoral, or post-graduate certificate level CNS program. CNSs diagnose, prescribe, and treat patients and specialty populations across the continuum of care. The CNS improves outcomes by providing direct patient care, leading evidence-based practice, optimizing organizational systems, and advancing nursing practice.

nacns.org
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Three Spheres of CNS Impact:



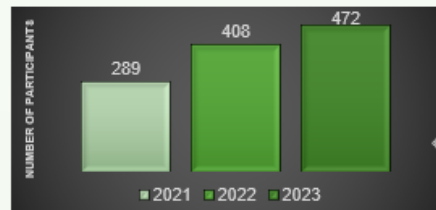
INPATIENT

Management of online wound care reference manual

Educated over 200 nurses and Patient Care Techs about wound care

Skin Warrior (champion) program

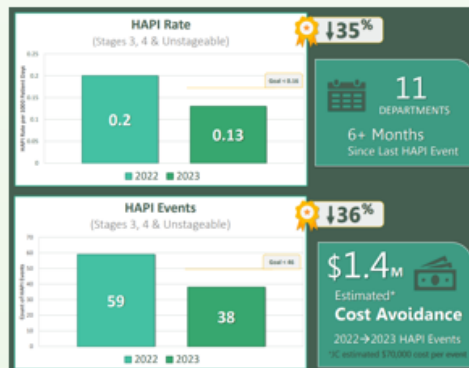
Increase in quarterly NDNQI skin audit participation



Photography guideline, encourage culture shift to take photos of wounds upon hospital admission and at discovery.

Remote wound care nurse consult for community hospitals

Created a process for reviewing, tracking, and trending HAPIs.



OUTPATIENT



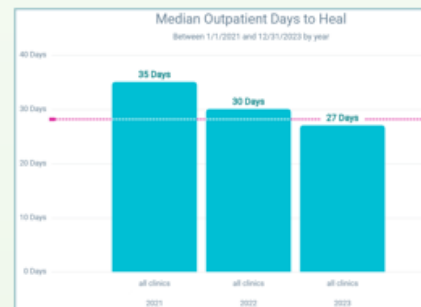
Development of policies, standards of care, and competencies.

EMR changes to reduce duplication, improve workflows, optimize reporting, and improve communication between nurses and providers.

Implementation of Evidence Based Practices:

- Wound Hygiene and Cleansing
- Proper Culture Techniques
- Offloading Diabetic Foot Ulcers

Creation of a quality metrics dashboard



Assisted with CMS TPE audit and implementation of documentation changes

Lead bi-weekly meeting with clinic leaders

Mentor for Nursing Clinical Action Team (NCAT)

SYSTEM

EMR optimizations to improve wound documentation and communication between Inpatient, Outpatient, and Home Health Care teams.

Co-lead Skin Safety Team Meeting

Member of HAPI Committee

Conduct IRB approved research studies

Involved in strategic planning of wound care service line to increase visibility and access to care



New technology and product evaluations

Collaboration with interdisciplinary teams to improve continuity of care

SUMMARY

Patients with acute and chronic wounds required specialized care and utilize many resources within a healthcare organization. A Clinical Nurse Specialist is well suited to impact clinical outcomes, nursing practice, and organizational goals related to wound care and prevention.

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