

The Benefits of Disposable Incontinence Pads

Janeen M. Bendig BSN, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, janeen_m.bendig@lvhn.org

Shannon E. Hindman BSN, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, shannon_e.hindman@lvhn.org

Kaitlyn N. Irving BSN, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, kaitlyn_n.irving@lvhn.org

Ellen M. Melanson BSN, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, ellen_m.melanson@lvhn.org

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The Benefits of Disposable Incontinence Pads

Janeen Bendig, BSN RN, Shannon Hindman, BSN, RN, Kaitlyn Irving BSN, RN, Ellen Melanson, BSN, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

BACKGROUND

- Incontinence is a prominent issue on a medical/surgical unit due to increased proportion of older adults in this patient population as well as the medical and physical conditions of these patients.
- Lehigh Valley Hospital Cedar Crest saw a 36% increase in nosocomial pressure ulcers in FY16 as compared to FY15. (FY15 = 296 total, FY16 = 402 total).
- Quilted cloth pads have been frequently used as a means to “boost” patients in bed, increasing friction and shear on the patients skin (potentially leading to pressure ulcer development).
- Our goal was to facilitate proper use of disposable incontinent pads while eliminating the use of traditional linen pads that can trap moisture and infectious agents – and potentially placing a patient at higher risk for skin breakdown.

PICO QUESTION

- **P:** Patients >18 years of age on 7BP.
- **I:** Exclusive use of disposable incontinence bed pads.
- **C:** Conventional, multi-use, cloth incontinence pads.
- **O:** Superior moisture management, infection control, and decreased risk for skin breakdown in incontinent patients (with no added financial burden to unit).



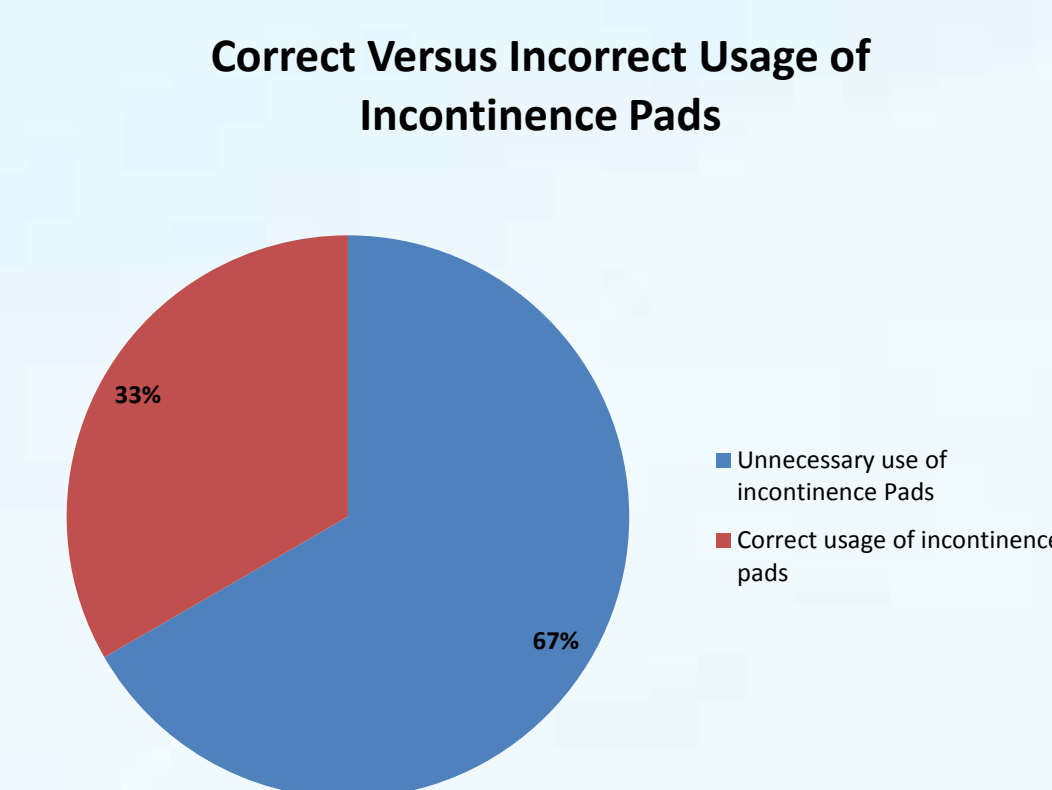
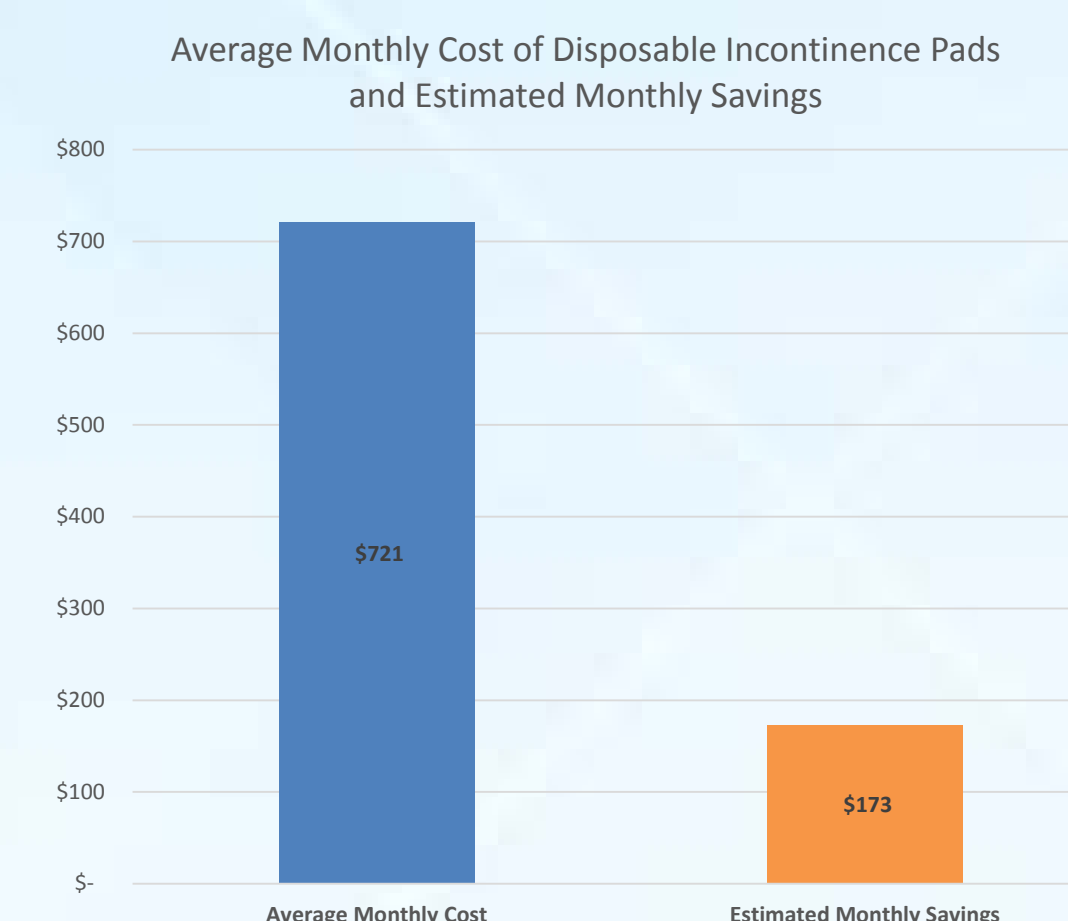
EVIDENCE

- Skin breakdown due to improper moisture management and incorrect use of incontinence pads is an avoidable issue (Nazarko, 2015).
- Traditional, non-disposable incontinence pads have a higher propensity to retain bacteria, stains, odor, mildew and fungus (Sehulster, 2015).
- Absorbent pads have a substantial adverse effect on the pressure redistribution properties of mattresses. Improper use of these pads can lead to pressure ulcer formation in susceptible patients (Fader & Cottenden, 2004).

METHODS

- A prevalence audit was completed on the incontinence pads in use on 7BP.
- Staff was queried to determine how many patients had quilted cloth pads on the bed, and the rationale for the use of the quilted incontinence pads.
- Quilted linen pads were removed from unit par level in May 2016, resulting in exclusive use of disposable pads.
- Staff was provided with education about proper use of incontinence pads.
- A post-education audit was completed shortly thereafter, which revealed no inappropriate usage of incontinence pads.

OUTCOMES



RESULTS

- During the pre-education prevalence audit, 35% of 7BP patients had incontinence pads
 - According to our pre-education audit, 67% of patients with incontinence pads had the pads placed for unnecessary or incorrect usage
 - 38 % patients were reported to have the unnecessary incontinence pads because the previous shift had placed them
 - 63% of the patients had incontinence pads to assist with boosting patients in bed
- According to our post-education prevalence audit, 0% of patients were found to have unnecessary usage of incontinence pads

CONCLUSIONS

- Disposable incontinence pads wick wetness away from patient’s skin via soft absorbent top layer.
- Disposable incontinence pads do provide excellent incontinence protection for patients at risk for skin breakdown, and may reduce labor costs associated with laundering.
- The average monthly cost for 7BP's usage of non-disposable incontinence pads is \$720.89.
- Use of disposable pads only and eliminating unnecessary usage of incontinence pads could result in an average monthly savings of \$173.01 or roughly 24%

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