

Preventing Perioperative Pressure Injuries: Caring for the Surgical Patient

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Introduction

- In our large academic health system, one of the most significant perioperative challenges is safely preventing perioperative pressure injuries.
- According to National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel, between 4% and 45% of pressure injuries can be attributed to the operating room due to prolonged immobility, friction and shearing forces, positioning devices, and non-modifiable risk factors.¹
- Patients that acquire a pressure injury may have a longer length of stay, incur higher costs and possible readmission.²

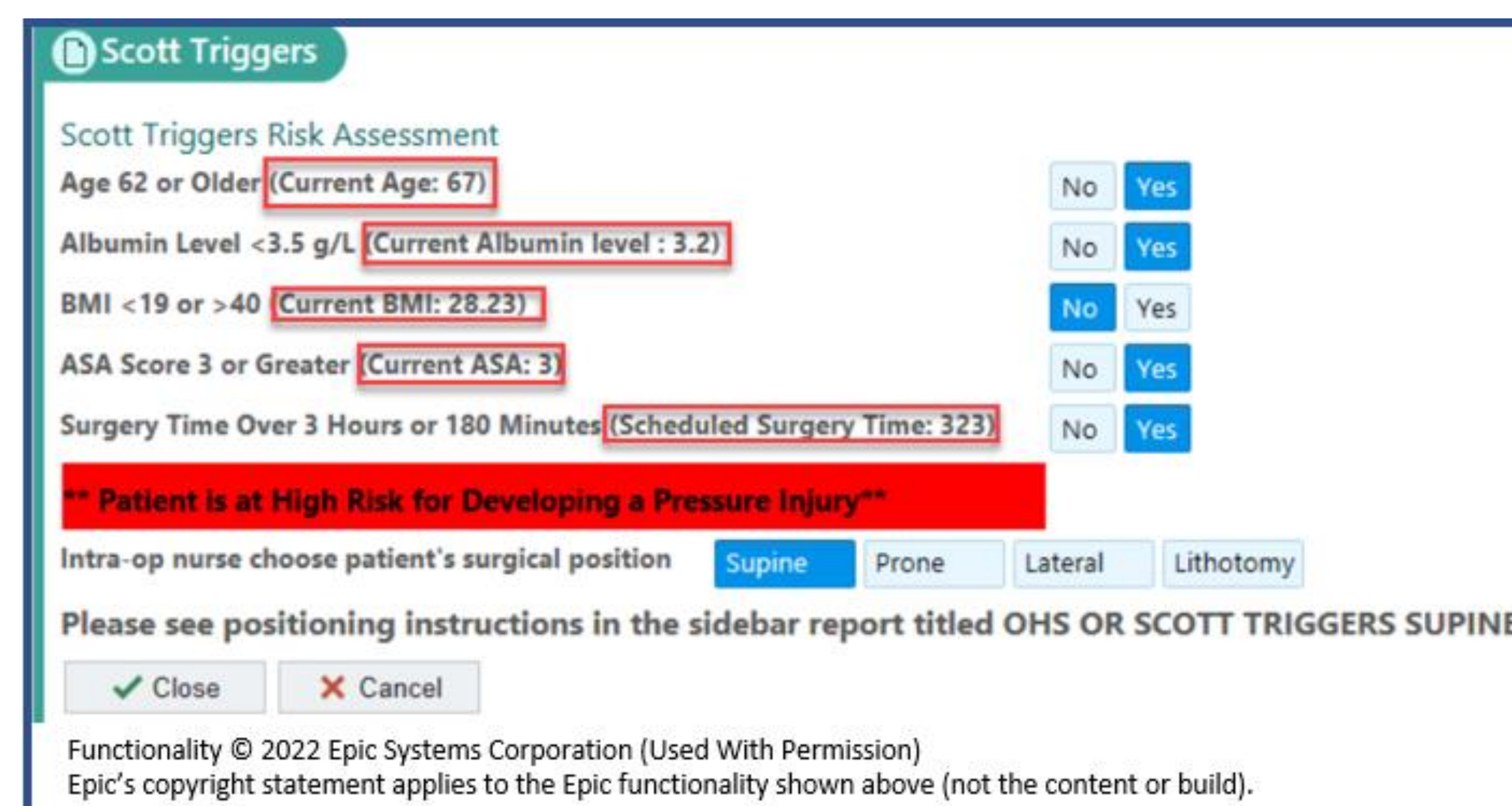
Purpose

- The purpose of this project was to transition to evidenced-based risk management strategies, implement clinical practices to prevent pressure injuries and improve patient positioning practices and tools in the perioperative care area.



Methods

- In March of 2020, an interprofessional team developed a strategy to decrease perioperative pressure injuries and provide optimal patient safety across Ochsner Health using evidence from the Association of PeriOperative Registered nurses (AORN) recommended practices.³
- The team used LEAN methodology to implement the following standardized preventative measures:
 - Nursing assessment of the patient’s risk for skin breakdown and pressure injury using an evidenced based risk assessment tool.^{4,5,6}
 - Standardized perioperative nursing practice of performing and documenting head-to-toe skin assessments.
 - Communication of pressure injury risk during handoffs.
 - Utilization of safe patient handling devices when moving patients to and from the OR table.
 - Resources within standard operating procedure and electronic health record (EHR) for best-practice positioning bundles based on patient-specific needs.
 - Reusable and disposable positioning products selected and standardized.
 - Updated EHR nursing documentation for ease of use surrounding all implemented workflows.
 - Chart auditing of pressure injuries using root cause analysis for solutions.



Results

- Project is in LEAN control cycle, reworking processes based on findings of chart audits using the root cause analysis process to determine upcoming analytics.

Discussion/Conclusions

- Perioperative nurses play an important role in identifying existing pressure injuries, patients at risk, and preventing perioperative pressure injuries.



- Leveraging a highly reliable team plays a critical role in implementing evidence-based practices to eliminate patient harm.

“As we work to reduce harm, standardizing risk assessment and prevention processes will be key. Smart healthcare providers are no match for smart healthcare providers armed with tools to prevent patient harm!”

- Richard Guthrie, Jr., M.D.
Chief Quality Officer Ochsner Health

References

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