



Release: April 9, 2018
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Wireless Patient Sensor Shows Good Results in Reducing Hospital-Acquired Pressure Ulcers for Lourdes' patients

Lourdes first hospital in NJ/Philadelphia-area to implement this new technology

CAMDEN, NJ—Eight months ago, Lourdes hospitals began using a unique monitoring device called the Leaf Patient Monitoring System (www.leafhealthcare.com) with a goal of reducing the incidence of pressure ulcers, sometimes called bed sores, that occur at hospitals.

Since that time, Lourdes has had a hospital-wide average of 90 percent patient-turn (repositioning of the patient) compliance, among the best ever of hospitals working with Leaf Healthcare. Lourdes had just one sacral/coccyx pressure ulcer in the past eight months versus 12 in the same period last year. Two community-acquired ulcers (already present on the first day of hospitalization) have healed in patients protected by a Leaf sensor.

Results of a clinical trial utilizing Leaf sensors for pressure ulcer prevention were recently published in the *Journal of Nursing Studies*. The randomized controlled trial examined more than 1,200 intensive care unit patients and 100,000 hours of Leaf monitoring data, showing a 73 percent reduction in hospital-acquired pressure injuries. Benchmarked with other hospitals and studies, Lourdes has experienced most promising results.

[http://www.journalofnursingstudies.com/article/S0020-7489\(17\)30286-9/fulltext](http://www.journalofnursingstudies.com/article/S0020-7489(17)30286-9/fulltext)

“We continue to make great strides in decreasing the incidence of pressure ulcers with the help of the Leaf Sensor,” said Michele Wargo, RN, Director, Nursing Systems, Lourdes Health System. “With ongoing clinical support and training, this innovative technology is ultimately helping Lourdes clinicians improve patient care.”

The lightweight, disposable Leaf sensor is placed on the patient’s chest. Its triaxial accelerometer then automatically measures the patient’s position, movement and activity and wirelessly transmits the data to monitoring stations easily viewed by clinical staff. The Leaf system provides alerts to staff so that patients are repositioned according to their individually prescribed turning schedule and confirms adequate pressure reduction is performed. The sensor registers independent patient movement and automatically adjusts the schedule accordingly, saving staff time when patients reposition on their own. Leaf recently received a [Technology Leadership Award](#) from Frost and Sullivan, a Growth Partnership Company that works to leverage visionary innovation and develop growth strategies.

“Hospital-acquired pressure ulcers are a major concern to all healthcare providers,” explained Maria Lariccia Brennan, DNP, RN, CPHQ, Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Patient Care Services, Lourdes Health System. “It was a nursing-led effort to implement Leaf Sensor technology at Lourdes, and the initiative was embraced by all. Our team is committed to high-quality patient care. We are very pleased with the results.”

Traditional measures for preventing pressure ulcers include daily visual inspections, changing a patient’s position every two hours and using items like pillows, foam padding and specialized mattresses to reduce/redistribute pressure.

Patients who develop pressure ulcers in the hospital are more likely to have longer stays, a higher risk of death and be readmitted within 30 days of discharge. To help improve patient safety and clinical outcomes, Trinity Health, parent organization of Lourdes Health System, provided Lourdes with a grant to pilot the Leaf System in August 2017.

Patients who are bedridden for long periods of time, those over age 70, paralyzed, and diabetic patients are especially susceptible to the painful ulcers that happen when the skin has been put under repeated pressure or stress, reducing blood flow to the affected area.

“The Leaf Patient Monitoring System provides us with a tool to consistently monitor patient mobility and gain accurate information to help improve patient progress,” said Wargo. “We look forward to this advanced technology continuing to help our patients.”

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