

# HEALTH CARE IMPACT

## Improving Care in Oregon Nursing Facilities

Acumentra Health improves the lives of Oregon’s nursing facility residents through projects aimed at preventing and healing pressure ulcers and reducing the use of physical restraints on residents.

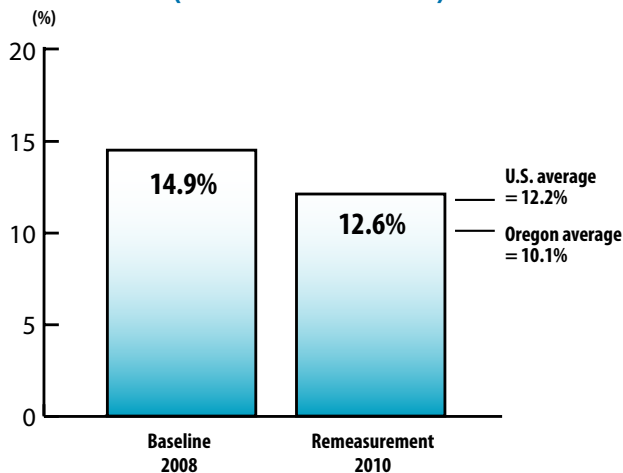
### Pressure ulcer prevention and healing

Pressure ulcers (bedsores) afflict more than 1 million people annually in the nation’s nursing homes and hospitals, and the costs associated with their care exceed \$1.3 billion. Although preventable and treatable, pressure ulcers are associated with increased mortality in the elderly.

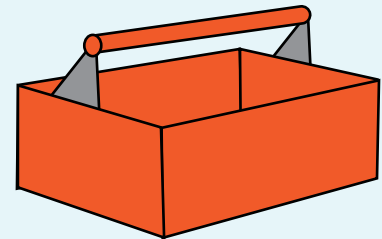
Our 3-year Pressure Ulcer Project supported 13 Oregon nursing homes (our Identified Provider Group, or IPG) in reducing pressure ulcer rates among their high-risk residents. Most of these facilities were recruited from a “need to improve” list identified by the Medicare program.

- From 2008 to 2010, the IPG facilities as a group reduced the incidence of pressure ulcers from 14.9% to 12.6%—close to the national rate of 12.2%.

**Oregon Nursing Home IPG performance on pressure ulcers**  
(lower rates are better)



### Tools for quality improvement



Acumentra Health shared free resource kits to support nursing facility improvement initiatives.

Acumentra Health led a statewide stakeholders’ group that produced the **Oregon Transitional Care & Pressure Ulcers Toolkit**, a cross-disciplinary approach for applying guidelines and best practices to prevent harm. Nursing facilities in our project pilot-tested key elements of the toolkit, including a handoff dataset form for transmitting information with a resident as he or she moves between care settings. Download the toolkit from [www.acumentra.org/PU](http://www.acumentra.org/PU).

**Skin Care Fairs** use engaging, interactive exercises and household materials—socks, fruit—to teach direct care staff the key elements of preventing and treating pressure ulcers. In addition to leading four “live” fairs, Acumentra Health delivered self-contained toolkits to all participating facilities for use in ongoing staff education.



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## Avoiding use of physical restraints

Physical restraints are considered medical treatment, to be used in nursing facilities only under a physician's direction. Once thought of as safety measures, restraints have been proven ineffective in preventing harm to nursing facility residents, and have led to injury or death in many cases. Current best practice is to avoid restraints when possible and focus on addressing root causes behind the use of restraints.

- Our 3-year Physical Restraints Project cut nearly in half the inappropriate use of restraints in the 13 Oregon nursing facilities in the IPG—lowering their combined rate from 6.7% to 3.4%.

*“Acumentra Health’s training helped us to reduce restraints by making us more aware of the presence of restraints and stimulating a more active look for alternatives. The training also improved our assessment for determining if a device truly is a restraint.”*

—Resident care manager for an Alzheimer’s care unit

### Building a common understanding

Acumentra Health convened three conferences for the elder care community, bringing together more than 300 staff from Oregon nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, resident care facilities, and state survey offices for dialogue and learning from expert presenters.

The June 2010 conference (held again in November 2010 by popular demand) focused on the Pressure Ulcer Toolkit, supportive wheelchair positioning, and wound care. We held our April 2011 event via virtual conferencing, hosted at state survey offices across the state. Titled “A Holistic Approach to Wound Prevention and Healing,” the event provided new perspectives from a therapist, a dietitian, and a specialist on durable medical equipment and mobility.

Conference participants praised the events, offering comments such as this:

*“These education opportunities make me feel like a part of a larger health care team, and it’s interesting to meet nurses from different backgrounds and share thoughts and ideas. I’m inspired!”*

#### Sources

**Oregon and national pressure ulcer and restraints rates and project participant rates:** CMS CASPER data system, including the Minimum Data Set (MDS) Quality Measure/Quality Indicator (QM/QI) Report.

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## Oregon Nursing Home IPG performance on physical restraints (lower rates are better)

