

Infection Prevention Team Newsletter

July 2026

Keeping Residents Comfortable, Healthy & Protected

Why Skin Care Matters

As we age, skin becomes thinner, drier, and more fragile. This means residents in care homes are at greater risk of:

- Dry, itchy skin
- Pressure ulcers (bed sores)
- Skin tears and infections

Good daily skin care helps maintain comfort, dignity, and overall health.

Remember to always keep a look out for any unusual or itchy rashes too. Always request a clinical review to rule out infectious causes such as scabies, shingles or fungal infections etc.

Daily Skin Care Tips

1. Keep Skin Hydrated
 - Use fragrance-free moisturisers at least twice daily
 - Apply after washing to lock in moisture
 - Encourage residents to drink fluids (if appropriate)
2. Gentle Cleansing
 - Use mild, soap-free cleansers
 - Avoid hot water—lukewarm is best
 - Pat skin dry instead of rubbing
3. Regular Skin Checks
 - Look for redness, breaks, bruising, or changes
 - Report concerns early to prevent complications
 - Always escalate concerns early and record in care notes

Seasonal Skin Care

Summer:

- Apply a minimum SPF 30 sunscreen when outdoors (including lip care)

- Encourage hats and shade
- Loose fitting long sleeve/ full length clothing is the best protection from the sun
- Watch for dehydration

Winter:

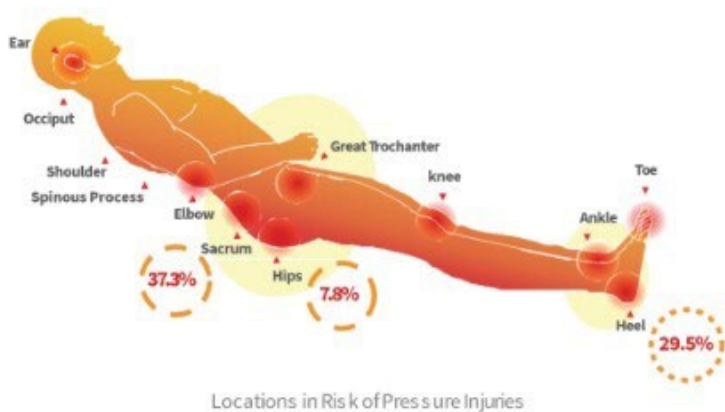
- Increase moisturising routines
- Protect skin from cold winds
- Lip Care- to guard against wind chapping
- Maintain indoor humidity if possible

Preventing Pressure Damage

Residents with limited mobility are at higher risk.

Key steps:

- Reposition regularly (as per care plan)
- Ensure any intervention is documented on ECP
- Use pressure-relieving mattresses or cushions
- Audit pressure relieving equipment regularly to ensure it is fit for purpose
- Keep skin clean and dry, especially after continence care
- Check heels, hips, elbows, and sacrum daily



Managing Common Issues

- Dry skin: Increase emollient use
- Skin tears: Handle gently—use protective clothing and safe moving techniques
- Incontinence-associated dermatitis: Clean promptly, apply barrier creams

Good Practice Reminders

- Always follow individual care plans
- Use prescribed products correctly
- Maintain infection prevention standards (hand hygiene, PPE where required)

Involving Residents

- Respect personal preferences for products
- Encourage independence where possible
- Communicate clearly about care routines

Quick Checklist for Staff

- Moisturise twice daily
- Check skin during personal care
- Reposition regularly
- Use applicable products
- Report concerns early and record in ECP

Healthy skin means happier, more comfortable residents. Small daily actions make a big difference.

Pressure Area Prevention and Skin Assessment

23 July 2026, 2pm to 3pm

Presented by Scarlet Darling from 'Smith & Nephew'

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/262485923643556?p=mAuSZ22cMLkqy3lqZl>

We are always here to help- email us at IPC@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

This newsletter was created with the assistance of Copilot AI, all information has been checked and verified by the Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) Team.