

Exploring healthcare professional and patient perceptions of a sustainable, novel polymer in comparison to foam pressure-relieving products, within the community setting

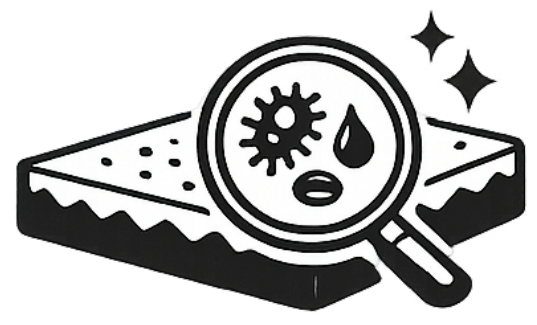
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Foam surfaces are widely used for pressure ulcer prevention but present practical limitations, including patient immersion, reduced mobility, heat retention, and challenges with effective cleaning. A novel polymer surface has been developed to redistribute pressure without reliance on immersion, with potential benefits for improved airflow, hygiene, and usability. This evaluation aimed to explore whether these anticipated advantages are realised in community clinical practice, based on patient and healthcare professional experience.



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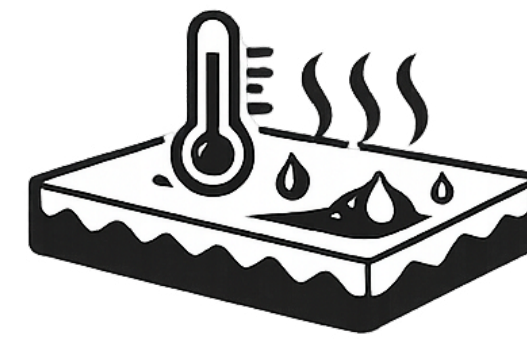
The limitations of foam



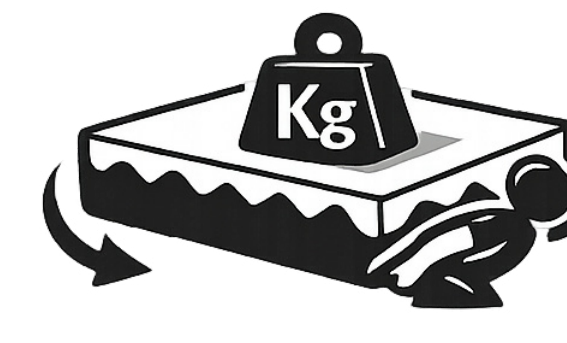
Foam core not effectively cleanable



Reduced patient mobility (immersion and envelopment)



Heat and moisture retention



Heavy and difficult to handle



Challenging patient repositioning

A different approach: novel polymer

The novel polymer uses an alternative structural design to redistribute pressure without reliance on immersion and envelopment. This innovative material is intended to support improved airflow, enhanced hygiene through full washability, and greater patient independence through easier movement and repositioning.

	Novel polymer	Foam
Washable	✓	✗
Recyclable	✓	✗
Inhibits bacteria	✓	✗
Eco-friendly	✓	✗
Lightweight	✓	✗

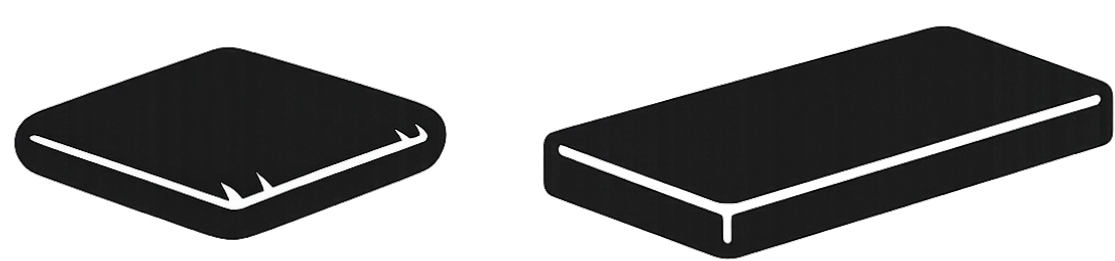
How was it evaluated?

The initial evaluation was conducted over a two-month period across multiple UK community settings, primarily involving district nursing teams. Patients previously using foam surfaces and who had been assessed as low risk were transitioned to the novel polymer, with data collected as part of routine care. Feedback from both clinicians and patients was captured using structured evaluation forms, and included mobility, skin condition, and overall user experience.



What did we see?

The results from the evaluation showed the following results:



Cushion

- ✓ Comfortable, cool, light
- ✓ Easy transfers
- ✓ No skin deterioration
- ✓ Effective for MASD

Mattress

- ✓ Easy to install
- ✓ Easy patient positioning
- ✓ No skin breakdown

What people said

Clinicians reported positive experiences with the novel polymer, highlighting practical benefits in day-to-day use and overall comfort:

“Patients report they are able to reposition easier.”

“Patients love the cushion.”

“Patient’s daughter moved it with ease.”

“More comfortable than their previous cushion.”

What does this mean?

The exploratory evaluation indicates that the anticipated practical benefits of the novel polymer were realised in community practice, with positive experiences reported by both clinicians and patients. These early findings suggest its acceptability as a legitimate alternative to foam surfaces.

Next steps

Further investigation with a larger patient cohort is warranted to confirm and expand upon these initial observations.

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