



Skin Integrity & Wound Management

AGED CARE POLICY

Policy Version 1.1

Category: Administrative *(Required by Legislation)*

Adopted: December 2024



Skin Integrity & Wound Management Aged Care Policy

Purpose

Winton Shire Council delivers safe and effective personal care, in accordance with the consumer's needs, goals and preferences to optimise health and well-being.

As people age, their skin becomes more fragile so maintaining its integrity is an important consideration in the delivery of home care services. Damage to the skin including tears, wounds and pressure injuries can cause significant pain and impact on a consumer's quality of life. Acute wounds can become chronic and complex if not properly assessed and managed, particularly for older people with medical conditions like diabetes.

Community Care Services works closely with the consumer and other health practitioners (for example General Practitioner) to maintain skin integrity and manage the risk of wounds and injury.

It is not within our approved service types or scope of practice to deliver clinical care and associated services.

Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All Community Care Services team members,
- Their volunteers,
- Students on placement,
- Contractors and consultants, whether or not they are employees, and
- Any other brokered service providers.

Definitions

Term	What it means / refers to
Acute Wounds	The result of tissue damaged by trauma that heals uneventfully such as a minor abrasion, skin tears, haematomas, and lacerations.
Aged Care Quality Standards	According to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission: Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect in aged care. The Aged Care Quality Standards define what good care looks like.
Chronic Wounds	A wound which does not heal as expected or fails to heal, cannot be easily managed, and has become fixed in any one phase for a period of 6 weeks. The wound may be infected or contain exudate or be attributed to factors such as poor nutrition and co-morbidities.
Community Care services	A broad term to describe a collection of services and health care that are packaged up to meet the unique needs of each individual in their own home, rather than in a hospital or care home.
Consumer	A person who receives approved services from a service provider.



Term	What it means / refers to
Pressure injury	A localised injury to the skin and/or underlying tissue, usually over a bony prominence, as a result of pressure, sheer or a combination of these factors.
Skin Integrity	Maintaining skin that is healthy, undamaged and able to perform its basic functions.
Skin tear	Traumatic injuries which can result in partial or full separation of the outer layers of the skin.
Wound	A break in the skin caused by trauma or pathological changes within the skin of the body. Wounds can be acute such as a surgical incision or chronic such as a pressure injury which is failing to heal.

Policy Statement

Winton Shire Community Care Services does not deliver clinical care services. However, where personal care services are provided; and within appropriate scope of practice, the team commits to:

- working in partnership with the consumer and their health practitioner/s to maintain skin integrity and reduce the risk of pressure injuries,
- ensuring staff have access to accurate and up-to-date information about skin integrity including by completing relevant education and training,
- promoting safe skin care practices and preventing further drying, changes to skin pH or skin trauma during personal hygiene and continence care,
- referring to other health practitioners and service providers where the consumer's wound management needs are unable to be met such as the Registered Nurse, General Practitioner and / or Wound Specialist,
- sharing information with relevant staff, health practitioners and service providers involved in the consumer's care (while respecting privacy and confidentiality) to ensure the delivery of quality consumer care,
- completing an incident report for any new skin tears, pressure injuries or bruising that occur during service delivery, and
- reviewing the effectiveness of skin care practices by encouraging, recording, responding, and monitoring related feedback, complaints, incidents and providing reports to the relevant committees and Winton Shire Council in line with the Clinical Governance Framework.

Operational Need

To ensure Winton Shire Council delivers safe and effective personal care, in accordance with the consumer's needs, goals and preferences to optimise health and well-being.

To deliver against the consumer outcome of

"I get personal care, clinical care, or both personal care and clinical care, that is safe and right for me."

in accordance with the Aged Care Quality Standards.



Roles and Responsibilities

Winton Shire Council

Winton Shire Council is responsible for providing leadership and fostering a culture of safe and quality personal care that is best practice, tailored and effective. The Governing Body will identify appropriate systems and processes to monitor, review and continuously improve practices that maintain the consumer's skin integrity and manage wounds.

Managers

Managers are responsible for ensuring this policy and related processes are implemented and that all staff, contractors, students, and volunteers provide safe, quality personal and clinical care. This includes ensuring there are sufficient resources, guidance and support and the workforce is competent to enable safe, quality skin and wound care.

They will provide reports to the Winton Shire Council to monitor implementation and compliance with this policy.

Staff, Contractors, Students and Volunteers

All staff, contractors, students, and volunteers are responsible for providing care and services to consumers in a manner that supports mobility and independence while respecting an individual's choice and preferences. They must complete all required education and training and follow all policies, processes, and directions.

Communication

This document will be published on the Winton Shire Council website and will be made available to all employees involved in the delivery of Aged Care services provided by Winton Shire Council.

Related Council Documentation

Aged care records including:

- Assessments
- Incident reports
- Consumer feedback

Legislation, Recognised Authorities, and Other Sources

- *Aged Care Act 1997* (Cth)
- *Quality of Care Principles 2014* (Cth)
- Aged Care Quality Standards
 - Standard 3 (3)(a) Care is best practice, tailored and optimises health and well-being
 - Standard 3 (3)(b) Management of high-impact or high-prevalence risks
 - Standard 8 (3)(d) Risk management
- Improving quality and safety through partnerships with patients and consumers – Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care [Link](#)



Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or when legislation or standards change and remains in force until amended or repealed by resolution of Council.

Record of Amendments and Adoptions

Date	Version	Reason for amendment	Date adopted by Council
December 2024	1.0	Initial policy	19 December 2024
February 2025	1.1	Update to Operational need	19 December 2024

