‘Sit up, get dressed, keep moving’
Applying the hospital initiative to the hospice setting

Authors
Ms E Stedman, Dr S Ford-Dunn, St Barnabas House, Worthing, UK

Introduction
Bed rest causes accelerated muscle loss in elderly patients: ten days bed rest ages muscle by ten years1, most loss is lower limb and occurs in initial days of immobility. Hospitalised elderly patients spend 20 hours in bed, 3 hours sitting and just 1 hour standing or walking2: deconditioning is therefore likely. This results in increased risk of falls, pressure ulcers, functional incontinence and may be the difference between dependence and independence on discharge. Since 2017 an NHS initiative #endpjparalysis aims to reduce deconditioning using methods such as encouraging patients to dress, social dining, ward tea parties and activities.

Although our hospice inpatients have tailored physiotherapy, we believed the principles of this initiative could be appropriate for inpatients admitted for symptom control or respite.

Aim
To increase staff awareness of risks of bed rest and increase the proportion of appropriate patients up, dressed and moving.

Method
After a baseline audit we held awareness sessions for staff and introduced daily social dining options. Posters and information leaflets ensure patients and carers understand the importance of keeping moving and that they bring appropriate clothes and footwear with them.

Results
Baseline audit revealed 40% of patients well enough to get dressed were still in pyjamas at lunchtime. No patient went to the day room to eat. A repeat audit after 3 months showed that 50% of patients who were well enough to get dressed, were dressed, and 2% of patients were actively using the day room to eat their lunchtime meal. Still room for improvement.

Conclusion
Despite good physio input the wider hospice teams could do more to increase patient activity and reduce deconditioning. The ‘sit up, get dressed, keep moving’ campaign can be/ is appropriate for the hospice setting, although it does hold some challenges. The main challenge we face is educating and encouraging staff members to recognise the importance of preventing deconditioning in patients within the hospice setting and their role in promoting this. With a wider outlook we can ensure that our patients are maximising and maintaining their independence. We have now introduced a social dining scheme, we plan to introduce afternoon tea and cake sessions and we are in the process of putting weekend activity volunteers in place to support us in the campaign to get patients up, dressed and moving.

Authors
1 Kortebein P et al. Effect of 10 days of bed rest on skeletal muscle in healthy older adults. JAMA 2007 25; 297 (16) 1772-4
2 Brown CJ. The under recognized epidemic of low mobility during hospitalisation of older adults. JAGS. 2009; 1660

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