What is a pressure ulcer?

- A pressure ulcer (also known as a pressure sore or bed sore) is an area of skin that has been damaged due to unrelieved pressure.
- Pressure ulcers may look minor, such as redness on the skin, but they can hide more damage under the skin surface.

Where are they found on the body?

- Pressure ulcers usually occur over bony areas – especially heels, buttocks and toes.

Who gets pressure ulcers?

- Anyone confined to bed or a chair, who is unable to move, has loss of sensation, loss of bowel or bladder control, poor nutrition or is unwell is at risk of getting a pressure ulcer.

What can you do?

- **Move, move, move**
  - The best thing you can do is relieve the pressure by keeping active, and changing your position frequently, whether you are lying in bed or sitting in a chair.
  - If you are unable to move yourself, the staff will help to change your position regularly.
  - Special equipment such as air mattresses, cushions and booties may be used to reduce the pressure in particular places.

- **Look after your skin**
  - Keep your skin and bedding dry. Let staff know if your clothes or bedding are damp.
  - Tell staff if you have any tenderness or soreness over a bony area or if you notice any reddened, blistered or broken skin.
  - Avoid massaging your skin over bony parts of the body.
  - Use a mild soap and moisturise dry skin.

- **Eat a balanced diet**

Want to know more?

- Ask your nurse or healthcare professional.