



# Applying and changing a dressing

LCC IPC Guidance

Next Review October 2024

[infectionprevention@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:infectionprevention@lancashire.gov.uk)



## **Applying and changing a dressing**

In care homes dressings for the temporary treatment of newly found wounds, including burns; pressure ulcers; and traumatic wounds such as cuts or scratches that break the skin are regulated by NICE guidelines.

These are dressing that have not been prescribed for the individual person but are available for purchase over the counter in a pharmacy and are held as stock by the home to enable staff in care homes to safely cover the wound as a first aid measure.

**In homes providing ‘nursing care’** the dressing will be used to safely cover the wound until an appropriate dressing is obtained on FP10 prescription. This will be at the discretion of the nurse in charge in consultation with the local tissue viability nurse where appropriate.

**In homes providing ‘personal care’** the dressing will be used to safely cover the wound until a district nurse can attend to assess it. Dressings should only be applied at the discretion of the senior person on duty.

### **Procedure**

- Ensure the comfort of the client.
- Ensure client understands the procedure.
- Follow the manufacturer’s instructions as provided with dressings in the box.
- Check that the dressing to be used is still in date.
- Decontaminate hands and put on disposable gloves before attending to the wound.
- Select a dressing where the foam pad overlaps the wound edge by a minimum of 1-2 centimetres. If the wound is too big to be covered safely by a 10cm x 10cm dressing advice should be taken from the district nurse immediately.
- Remove the dressing carefully from the packaging.
- Remove the protective handles and ensure that the dressing is applied to the wound without touching the surface of the dressing that will be next to the wound.
- Remove gloves and put in appropriate waste stream.
- Decontaminate hands.
- ***Nursing or medical advice should be sought immediately if the wound is deep, bleeding heavily or too big to be safely covered by a 10cm x 10cm dressing.***

