Policy Title: Pressure Ulcer Prevention Associated with Respiratory Equipment

Policy: Respiratory Therapy personnel will regularly inspect the skin integrity under respiratory equipment on all patients they see.

Purpose: To provide early detection and intervention of changes in skin integrity under respiratory equipment.

Policy Guidelines:

A. Pressure Ulcers can result from respiratory care devices, therefore the patients skin will be inspected on a regular basis. Area to be inspected include:
   1. Behind the ears on Nasal Cannula; including oxymizer and comfort flow cannulas
      a. If patient is on oxygen only, no other therapy. Once a day during O2 rounds
      b. If patient on therapy. Once during the shift(s) that patient receives therapy.
         Example: If patient is on oxygen and receives nebs qid then the patient will be checked once during the day shift and once during the evening shift.
   2. Skin under the tracheostomy faceplate Q8h
   3. Under trach securing device Q8h
   4. Under trach mask strap behind the neck Q8h
   5. Bridge of nose on BiPAP/CPAP Mask patients during oral cares at least Q8h
   6. ETT and secure Q2h with repositioning Q24h

B. Skin integrity can be improved by:
   1. Nasal Cannula – OxyEars are pre attached on all Nasal Cannulas, OxyEars must be attached to oxymizer and comfort flow cannulas prior to use.
   2. Tracheostomy tube –
      a. Clean / dry trach gauze
      b. Wound dressing, as ordered, for vulnerable / affected area
      c. Ventilator arm or rolled towel under vent tubing to decrease weight of the tubing and subsequent pressure at the trach faceplate
      d. Trach secure instead of twill tape
      e. Trach secure may need padding
      f. Ensure sutures removed and new trach secure placed after 5-7 days of tracheostomy

3. Endotracheal tubes – ETT
   a. Check tension and skin integrity under and around ETT and strap
   b. Ventilator arm or rolled towel under vent tubing to decrease weight of the tubing and subsequent pressure on the ETT
   c. Use commercial ETT secure instead of twill tape
   d. Replace tube secure when soiled or wet
   e. Rotate the position of the ETT (right / middle / left ) Q24 hours

4. BiPAP/CPAP –
   a. Secure straps with least amount of tension/pressure to obtain adequate seal
   b. Consider alternative products
      i. Mask size
      ii. Hybrid mask
      iii. Full facemask
      iv. Nasal prongs
      v. Gel pads

C. Report any area of skin redness to patient’s nurse or charge nurse.

D. Document area of skin redness and that nursing was notified in HED or respiratory care notes.