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Powder 'bites the dust': Elimination of Body Powder From Patient Care, and Introducing Healthier Alternatives

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Body Powder 'Bites the Dust' at Swedish Campuses



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Background

- A patient-care experience led an RN to question the practice of using body powder on patients or bedpans.
- The literature was reviewed, revealing ingredients (e.g. cornstarch, silica) in 'body powder' as potential hazards to respiratory and integumentary systems for patients, families and staff.
- The perfume in the body powder contained a strong 'baby powder' fragrance, a potential irritant.
- Powder on the floor was a slip and fall hazard.

Purpose

- To explore the potential for eliminating the use of body powder ('baby powder') in acute care, system-wide.

Methods

- Staff RN developed a PICOT question for Nursing Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Council review.
- THE EBP Council moved to survey caregivers to assess reasons behind powder use.
- Alternative products explored based on survey and a product trial was implemented in 2 medical-surgical nursing units.

Alternative Products

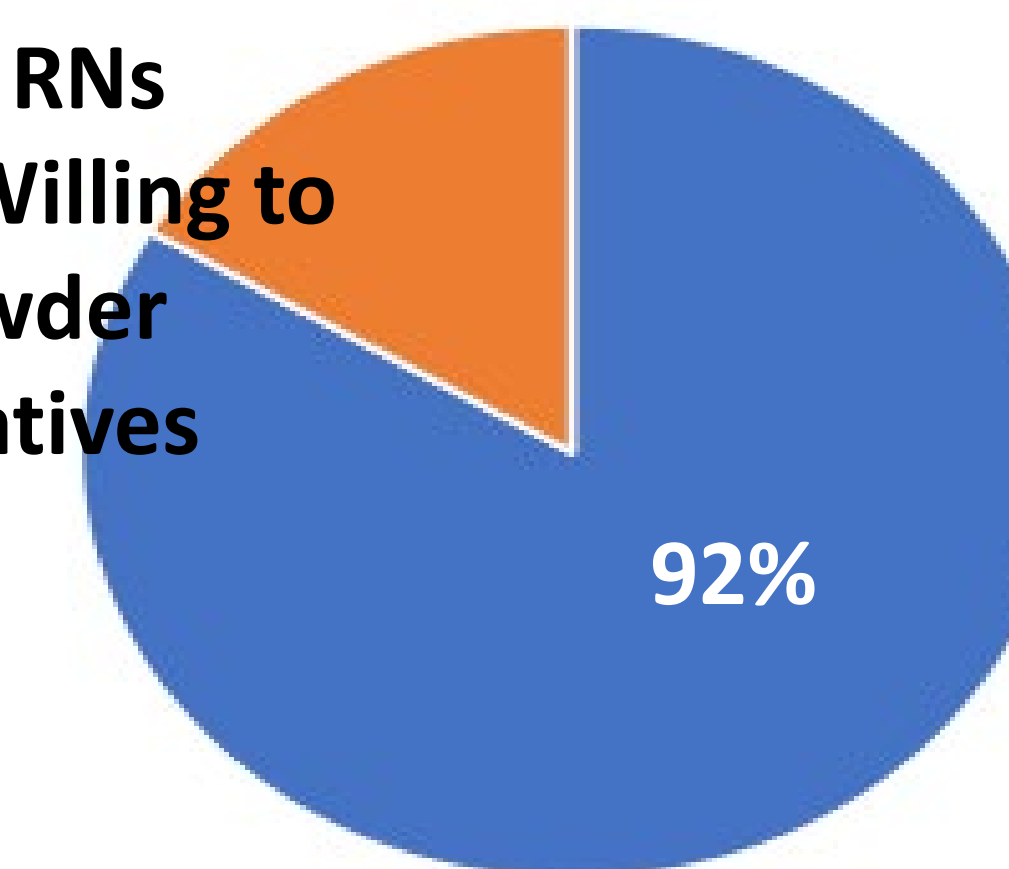


Alternative products to protect the skin and manage moisture (incontinence, skin folds) were trialed on high powder use nursing units to gather feedback and to promote adoption to change.

Results

- 36 RNs and 9 NACs completed the descriptive qualitative attitudes survey.
- A *majority* of RNs and NACs had applied powder to patients and/or bedpans in their current work setting.
- A *minority* of RNs and NACs agreed that using body powder on patients was beneficial.
- 67% of RNs and 78% of NACs reported using powder on patients.
- 89% of RNs and 67% of NACs agreed they applied powder to bedpans.
- 92% of RNs and 100% of NACs were neutral or agreed they would try powder alternatives.

92% of RNs
Were Willing to
Try Powder
Alternatives



Discussion/ Implications

- **Powder was removed from all nursing units in 2020. Alternative products were stocked on the units.**
- Additional types of powder in patient care (e.g., anti- fungals) have also been presented to pharmacy/ patient safety forums.
- Dissemination paper for publication in process.

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*Complete reference list available upon request janet.thorson-mador@swedish.org

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