

# The Reality of Running a Pilot Program

*Throughout the Pressure Ulcer Awareness Program (PUAP) pilot period, the team champions met to discuss their experiences. In every discussion, we found many commonalities surrounding the challenges and surprises we encountered. For readers wondering what the experience might be like in their own facilities, you may find our “top fives” interesting.*

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## Top Five Challenges

5. **Language barriers.** Several of the facilities noted that their clientele speak many different languages—sometimes not including English—which presented a challenge to find interpreters to pass on the information.
4. **Maintaining administrative support.** In a few cases, managers wavered in their support for the program, but this challenge, once identified, was overcome with letters from the Team Leader and a conference call that rekindled support.
3. **Funding.** This was an issue as equipment needed for positioning and transferring had to be purchased in order to maintain skin integrity and follow the best-practice guidelines that served as the foundation for the project.
2. **Time constraints and workload.** Staff workload and time-constraints seemed to be a national problem. Finding time to educate the staff became a challenging task requiring innovation and imagination. However, each Champion was able to work with the staff and find ways to provide education that worked for everyone.
1. **What a lot of work!** Champions initially had no idea how much commitment and time would go into making this project a success, but all the champions were able to get the job done.

## Top Five Surprises

5. **Recognition on accreditation report.** Several sites received recognition for the project on their accreditation report, strengthening their successful accreditation.
4. **Champions really can change practice.** Practice among the staff changed in positive ways. This was

evident by the reduction in the number of pressure ulcers as well as a recognition—and therefore, identification—of Stage I pressure ulcers that would have been missed before. New equipment was purchased in some cases, proving that administrators see the need to enhance patient care and prevent pressure ulcers.

3. **Positive feedback for the staff.** Although staff had to deal with workload issues and time constraints, their overall feedback was very positive. They enjoyed the education sessions, which enhanced their knowledge and skills and enabled them to provide better patient care.
2. **The quality of the materials provided.** The material that is provided by the CAWC is professional, thorough and very helpful. The “bum” logo was a huge hit and the champions were very surprised at the excellent quality and quantity of the available resources. We were also very thankful for the networking that was provided by the CAWC through teleconferences and e-mail. This support was invaluable.
1. **What a lot of work!** This was the biggest surprise to the champions, but we enjoyed every minute of it.

Working on the PUAP project has given the champions a humble sense of pride, knowing that we can make a difference to enhance patient care by decreasing the number of pressure ulcers. We understand that no one person can be responsible for changing an organization’s culture. We would all like to thank the teams that endured us, the administrators that supported us, and the staff that welcomed us with open arms. Each helped to make this project a huge success. ☺