Introduction
A strategic approach was required to reduce the number of pressure ulcers acquired by patients with accelerated health conditions in the care of Palatine Ward, predominantly haematology and young oncology patients.

With consideration given to a number of other factors – increasing patient loads, bed waiting times, cost pressures and a necessity to react faster to skin breakdown – it was felt that a more innovative and sustainable solution should be considered. A financial review into equipment provision was also needed to establish a more cost effective method of managing pressure redistribution equipment, with eliminating avoidable harm (pressure ulcers) as the primary driver.

Methods
A project commenced to determine whether adopting a different support surface could support PU incidence reduction whilst reducing costs.

A review examining equipment deployment alongside historical PU data showed patients could wait over 4 hours for the correct surface with patients’ conditions often deteriorating rapidly to the point where they can no longer be moved before their mattress arrives.

The same review also determined that the 31 bedded ward was spending circa £11,000 p.a. on the rental of dynamic mattresses. While the Trust owned the static mattresses, when required for a patient considered to be at a higher risk of pressure damage, dynamic mattresses were rented from an external supplier. Conditions of the rental agreement required the dynamic mattresses to be decontaminated off ward after every patient use and stored on site until collection.

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