

## Wound Management

# Preventing Pressure Injuries: A Collaborative Simulation Experience for PT and OT Students

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Keywords: interprofessional education, pressure injury prevention, spinal cord injury, occupational therapy, physical therapy

<https://doi.org/10.55566/JCEWM-D-25-00006>

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## Journal of Clinical Electrophysiology and Wound Management

Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2026

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### Purpose

Preventing pressure injuries in spinal cord injury (SCI) patients requires an interprofessional approach to address the complex needs of patients and caregivers. This study evaluated the effectiveness of an interprofessional education (IPE) simulation for occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) students aimed at enhancing collaboration skills specific to pressure injury prevention.

### Methods

Thirty-two students (8 OT and 24 PT) participated in a structured simulation, which included pre-simulation preparation, completing a SCI simulated case, and debriefing. The simulation was designed to emphasize pressure injury prevention strategies, including adaptive equipment use, pressure relief techniques, and caregiver training. This experience was assessed through student reflective papers analyzed via an inductive qualitative approach to identify themes.

### Results

Students that consented to the research study included five OT students and twenty PT students. A qualitative evaluation of student reflection essays identified five themes as follows: (1) reciprocal learning, (2) holistic care, (3) adaptability, (4) communication challenges, and (5) confidence building in professional roles (unique to OT students).

### Conclusions

Simulation-based learning provided a safe environment for students to practice comprehensive and collaborative care planning, emphasizing real-time problem-solving and essential skills for effective pressure injury prevention. Challenges in communication and role delineation emphasize the need for pre-professional training that fosters collaborative behaviors, which are essential for establishing clear team dynamics and enhancing teamwork during clinical practice. This study demonstrates that an IPE simulation may strengthen students' ability to collaboratively address pressure injury prevention by integrating their professional expertise, which could lead to better patient outcomes.

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