

Declaration by EPUAP at the Helsinki EPUAP Annual Meeting 2025

The prevention of pressure ulcers is a patient safety issue

The STOP Pressure Ulcer Day is held globally every November. It aims to raise awareness about the prevalence of pressure ulcers (also known as bedsores or decubitus ulcers), highlight the importance of prevention, and thereby promote evidence-based management in care for both prevention and treatment.

Pressure ulcers are injuries to the skin and underlying tissue that can affect individuals of any age in any setting. Their prevention must be a daily priority.

Despite advancements in healthcare, pressure ulcers remain a significant adverse event and common complication in complex patients. The growing number of individuals requiring intensive and prolonged medical care, arising from aging populations and complexity of care, has contributed to a higher risk of pressure ulcers. They are painful, increase the risk of infection and mortality, compromise patient safety, and reduce quality of life. Globally, the cost of treating pressure ulcers is estimated to account for 2% to 4% of total healthcare expenditure.

The majority of pressure ulcers are preventable. Prevention must be embedded into every stage of the care pathways and continuum — in hospitals, long-term care facilities, home care and during patient transport. Achieving this goal requires a shared vision, strategic leadership, consistent policies, a commitment to prevention, and continuous staff education.

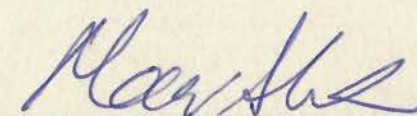
We call on governments and policymakers to recognize and acknowledge pressure ulcer prevention as a key patient safety issue and to take decisive action by integrating evidence-based prevention strategies into national healthcare systems. Furthermore, we urge the allocation of dedicated funding for professional education and scientific research in this field.

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Andrea Pokorná
EPUAP President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom O'Connor', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Tom O'Connor
EPUAP President-elect

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maarit Ahtiala', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Maarit Ahtiala
EPUAP 2025 Chair