

The Prevalence of Pressure Ulcers among Critical Care Patients Throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic

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1. Introduction

- **Pressure sores** are injuries to the skin that affect over **700,000 patients** in the UK per year(1) and costs the NHS **£1.4 million** every day(2)
- **Critical care patients** are at increased risk due to prolonged bed rest, poor perfusion, sedation and ventilation(3)
- **SARS-CoV patients** were potentially vulnerable due to long stays, breathing devices, prone positioning, the increased use of vasopressors and paralyzing agents(4)(5)

2. Methods: Retrospective Cohort Study

- Patients underwent **daily routine skin assessments** and every pressure sore in 2020 was recorded
- Data was collected from pressure sore **incident reports** and the **critical care patient** data base
- We recorded the following criteria: age, weight, comorbidities, **Covid-19 status**, length of ICU stay, admission date, site of lesion and the final outcome

3. Site of lesion

Location	Count
Mouth	24
Sacrum	12
Nose	10
Nostrils	10
Ear	10
Heel	9
Toe	7
Leg	7
Buttocks	5
Penis	4
Head, tongue, spine	2
Elbow, face, finger, foot, groin, chin, knee	1



Images A & C: Pressure ulcers can occur when there is external compression of the skin overlying a bony prominence (5)(6)
Image B: Prone positioning (7)



- Data was collated into an excel spreadsheet
- Results were presented to the Critical Care multidisciplinary team

4. Results

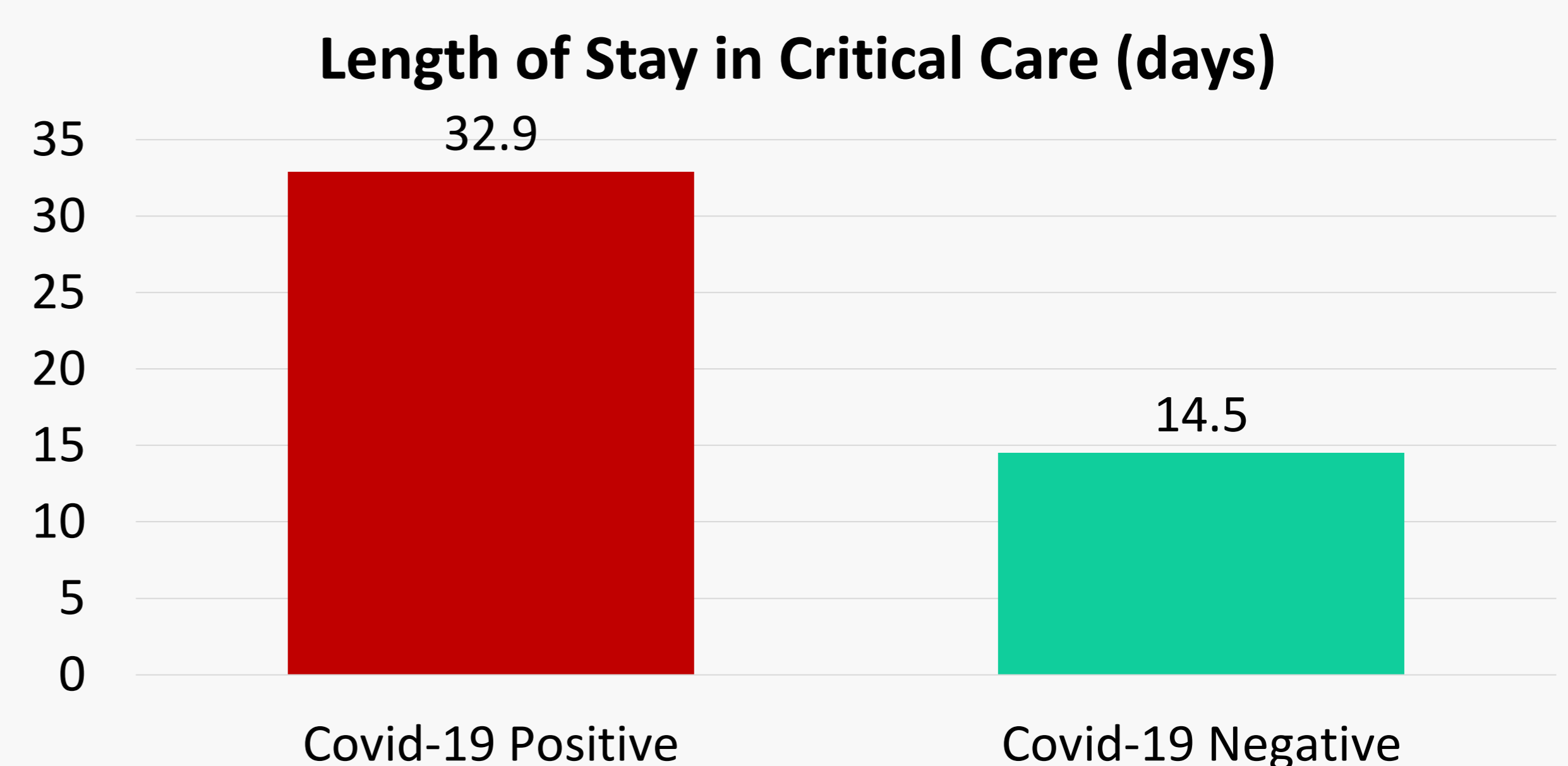
Out of **830 patients** admitted to Critical Care in 2020, **9%** sustained pressure sores

Demographics for the patients with pressure sores:

- Mean age: **60 years**
- Mean weight: **85kg**
- Mean length of stay: **21.7 days**

5. Results

- **112 pressure sores** occurred among **75 patients**
- **37.3%** of critical care patients with pressure sores had a diagnosis of **Covid-19 pneumonia**
- The most common location was the **mouth**
- More than **50%** of the pressure sores were **device related**
- **25%** of all patients with pressure sores died, with an equal mortality rate between Covid and non-Covid patients



6. Conclusion

Protocols were implemented to mitigate the damaging effects of **critical care devices**. Covid-19 patients with pressure sores stayed on average two times the length of non-Covid patients. The final outcome did **not differ** between the two groups.

References

Please scan the QR code with your iPhone camera or smartphone QR code app for a full list of references

