

What is the evidence for 24 hour Posture Management?

A scoping review by Lauren Osborne MSc.



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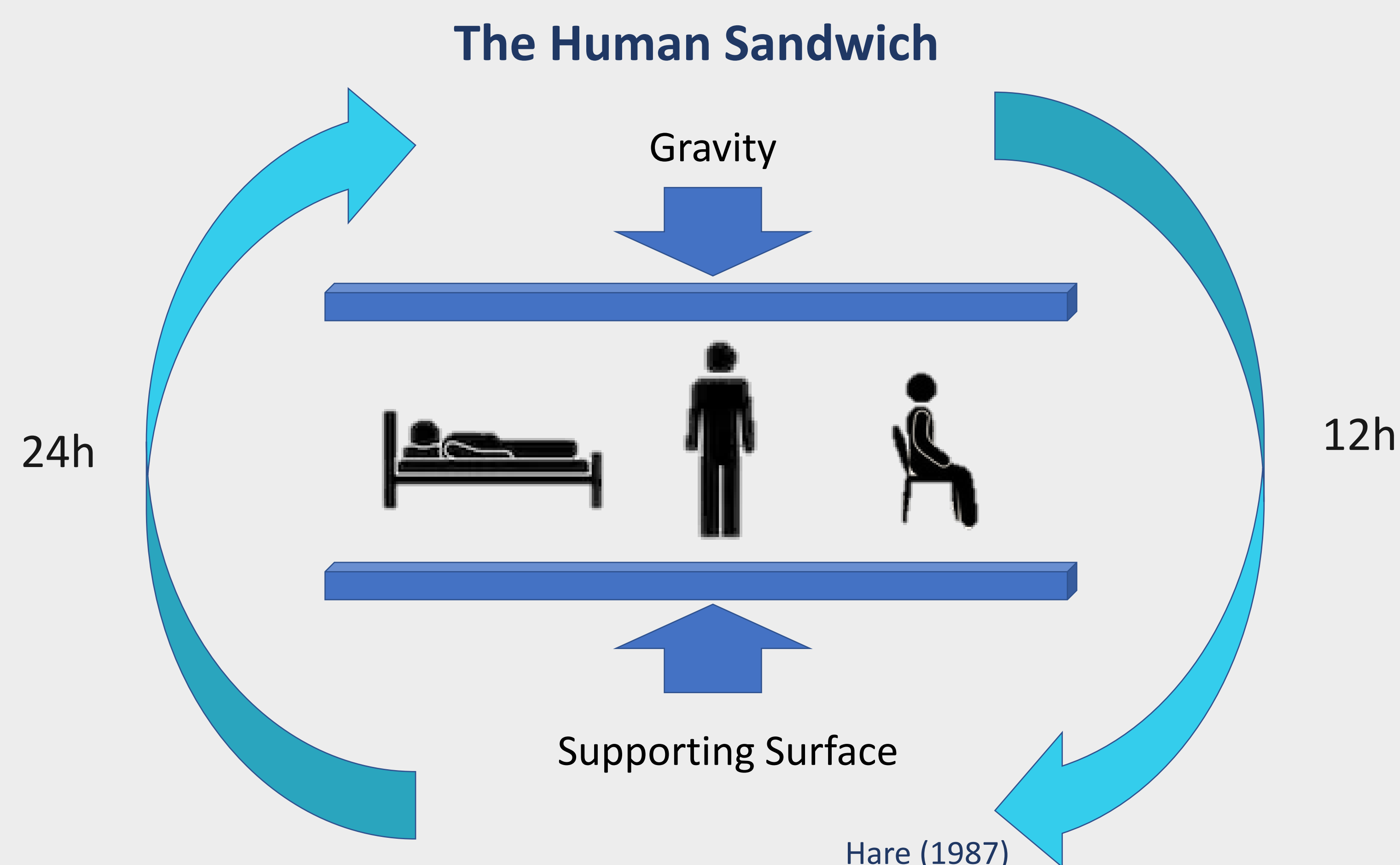
Millbrook
HEALTHCARE

What is 24 hr Posture Management?

- A 24hr posture management approach is required for any individual who is unable to change their position independently and therefore unable to counteract the forces of gravity on their body shape.
- “The use of any technique to minimise postural abnormality and enhance function” (Farley et al, 2003:449)
- If posture is not considered in all orientations over a 24hr period (e.g. sitting, standing and lying) then provision of support in one orientation can be counterproductive.
- Preventable secondary complications can occur if posture is not supported:
 - Contractures
 - Postural deformities
 - Pressure ulcers
 - Pain and discomfort
 - Reduction in function of internal organs

Method

- Scoping Review due to broad topic area with emerging evidence base.
- Search Terms
 - Postur* management
 - Night time positioning
 - Seating assessment
 - Postur* seating
- Databases
 - CINAHL, Psych INFO, Web of Science, Medline
- Published and Grey Literature 2003-2019.
- 44 Papers classified using a simple categorization system by Wallace and Wray (2006), cited in Aveyard (2014:44)
 - 25 x Research Literature
 - 13 x Practice Literature
 - 4 x Theoretical Literature
 - 2 x Policy Literature
- Papers were mostly systematic review and exploratory, no RCTs = therefore considered low quality and weak in design.



Discussion

- Current service provision is patchy and inconsistent, often relying on local Therapist’s individual knowledge and skills.
- There is a lack of robust research and guidelines due to complex ethical considerations; researcher blinding is not possible.
- Provision of good postural care can save funding through reduced need for medication, surgery and reduced care.
- Better value for money of existing services could be achieved through a more integrated posture management provision.
- Posture management is a pre-requisite to occupational performance and as OT’s, we should consider it in all of our work – how can an individual engage in occupation if they are unable to support their body and hold their head up?
- Good postural care can lead to improved quality of life, occupational engagement and increase independence for longer.
- Posture management could be considered a safeguarding and human rights issue.

Conclusion & Recommendations

- National guidance and strategic policy on posture management is needed to inform practice and ensure equity.
- A consensus of expert opinion would add to the evidence base as it is difficult to produce robust research due to complex ethical considerations.
- Posture management needs to be integrated into pre-registration training for all Healthcare workers.
- A dedicated MDT Posture Management service is needed to ensure a holistic 24hr approach, providing specialist seating, wheelchairs, standing frames and night-time positioning aids.
- Personal Wheelchair Budgets offers an opportunity to incorporate 24hr posture management into care plans.
- Training is needed for families and carers to use prescribed equipment appropriately to ensure effective use.
- The International Classification of Function, Disability and Health (ICF) lends itself nicely as a framework for posture management provision.



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References

1. Farley et al. (2003) What is the evidence for the effectiveness of postural management? *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*. Vol 10, No 10. Pg 449-455.
2. Hare (1987) cited in Pope, P. M. (2007) *Severe and complex neurological disability: management of the physical condition*. Edinburgh: Butterworth-Heinemann/Elsevier.
3. Wallace and Wray (2006), cited in Aveyard (2014:44) *Doing a literature review in health and social care : a practical guide*. Third edition edn. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

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