

# The Perfect Fit: The Use of Convex and Flat Moldable Skin Barriers\* In Home Care

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## Challenge

Patients with new or established ostomies can present some unique challenges to the Home Health Care nurse. Not only is the nurse expected to be an expert at managing any disease process the patient has presented with, and deliver all required aspects of care, they are also charged with demonstrating confident patient teaching and self care ostomy management skills. Patient dexterity and/or vision deficits, learning disabilities and emotional factors can impact how patients learn and perform self ostomy care. Also, irregular stomas challenge the nurse to select a properly fitting ostomy appliance from the agency's formulary. WOC home care nurses who manage or recommend supplies that are stocked by the agency are challenged to evaluate supplies from multiple manufacturers to find the most cost effective solutions to provide the desired outcomes for their patients. Traditional flat skin barriers as well as convex skin barriers need to be considered in order to provide solutions for many stoma complications that the nurse encounters.

## Past Management

At Amedisys, while in the patient's home, our agency nurses have access to one of three certified ostomy care nurses via the telephone or e-mail. A photo of the patient's ostomy is usually sent electronically to the ostomy nurse during consultation in order for them to better evaluate the situation and recommend treatment options. Each certified ostomy nurse has responsibility for addressing ostomy concerns of staff in 200+ regional care centers. Regional care centers vary in size and patient census from approximately 100-700 patients each.

While the perfect rose budded stoma was usually managed successfully, help was always available to assist the nurse with the challenging stomas. The oval flush or retracted stoma always presented a problem, and usually required convexity for adequate management. Although we have formulary products, multiple products and accessories had to be mixed, matched, and even special ordered to achieve an acceptable fit. Most of the time, to simplify the application off-formulary products needed to be obtained in order to achieve adequate peristomal protection and appropriate wear time.

## Current Management

In order to address the issue of having appropriate supplies available for staff to help patients achieve a secure, sustainable wear time, even for those with additional physical challenges, our care centers evaluated moldable skin barriers.\* This technology was available in both convex and flat configurations, and available from one manufacturer.

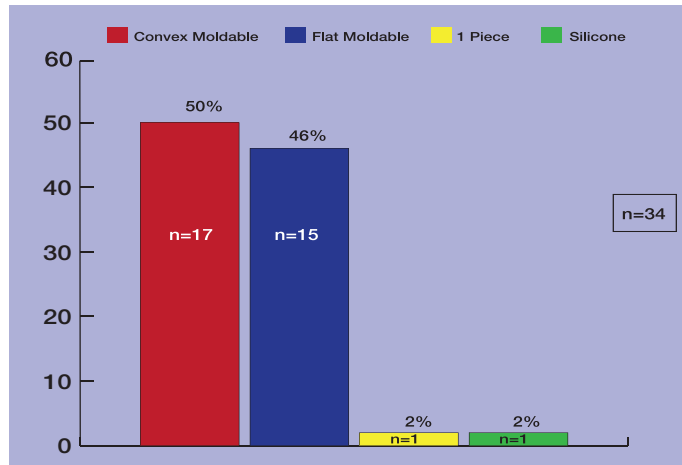
The rationale for choosing moldable\* skin barriers included:

1. They provided effective management for multiple stoma types.
2. Convex moldable technology was effective for irregular stomas that were retracted flush, or surrounded by an uneven peristomal plane.
3. Both patient and nurse feedback reported they were easy to use.
4. The fact that no cutting was required was viewed as a positive asset.
5. In many cases, no stoma paste was required.
6. Staff reported wafer application and routine management easier to teach patients and/or caregivers.
7. Anecdotally, an increased wear time was achieved as problems were addressed.
8. Decreased skin irritation was anecdotally noted.
9. Decrease in the number of products stocked at the care center level.

## Current Management (cont'd)

Since the addition of moldable technology to the formulary, recommendations were made and 50% of patients were placed in a convex moldable\* product, 46% were placed in flat moldable, 2% in a 1-piece system\*\*, and the last 2% placed in an off-formulary non-adhesive silicone product.

Overall, fewer accessory products were purchased decreasing agency costs, simplifying patient care routines and improved our overall ostomy patient outcomes.



Difficulty in cutting a cut-to-fit barrier



Irregular opening with potentially sharp edges. Patient's often do not have an appropriate scissor in the home to effectively cut skin barriers.



Ease of use when using Moldable Technology\*

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