

Pressure cushions information

Accora

Introduction

This document is intended to provide guidance for healthcare professionals prescribing **Configura** cushions. It is important to note that prescribing cushions is a professional decision and whilst we (Accora) are able to describe our cushions, we are not qualified to prescribe.

We are often asked what Waterlow/Braden etc. score our cushions are appropriate for. A direct answer to this question is not straightforward, as many of the factors contributing to a Waterlow score are beyond the scope of a cushion (i.e. continence, medication, build etc.). We are however able to give broad guidance on what level of risk our cushions are appropriate for.

A risk assessment tool such as Waterlow/Braden etc. is intended to be an 'aide memoir' to help arrive at a risk level (low/medium/high/very high) for an individual. Such a scale should not be used arbitrarily to assess a user's pressure care equipment requirements and is no substitute for clinical judgement.

The overriding principle regarding pressure care is that it comes down to risk assessment of each individual. In addition, regular and consistent monitoring is important.

One of the most useful websites we have found is <http://nhs.stopthepressure.co.uk/> which has some really useful information around pressure ulcer prevention and treatment. This website was created by NHS Midlands and East.

The evidence base around pressure care in the seating position is still relatively weak. In the absence of a strong evidence base, in most areas, the following guidance is used:

- Users at risk of pressure damage and who have up to category 2 pressure damage should use a static, (pressure reducing) device such as foam, gel etc.
- Users with category 3-4 damage should use a dynamic cushion and the user should be seated for limited periods (max 2 hours) if at all.

Note: the above guidance is generic and would be superseded by specific local level guidance.

There are two key variable factors when considering pressure damage:

- 1) Level of risk of developing pressure damage: i.e. low/medium/high/very high. This is a professional judgement and an 'aid memoir' such as Waterlow or Braden can be used to help arrive at this.
- 2) Level of pressure damage: if a user has developed pressure damage, it will fall into one of four 'categories'.

However the NICE guidelines state:

"No seat cushion has been shown to perform better than another, so this guideline makes no recommendation about which type to use for pressure redistribution purposes."

So prescription of pressure cushions is a rather challenging area and we hope this document helps to provide some direction! In this context, the fact that the **Configura** cushions are easily interchangeable helps to make cushion prescription easier and less costly.

Clinical studies/pressure mapping:

Accora has a clinical study in progress and we have pressure mapping to demonstrate the difference between the **Configura** cushions.

However, it is important to note that pressure mapping should only be used as a comparison between cushions with the pressure mapping device at exactly the same setting, otherwise they can be quite misleading.

Also, pressure mapping of dynamic cushions is of limited relevance because by definition, the mapping varies as the cushion inflates and deflates.

Useful links:

The following website links will be helpful for understanding pressure sores and risk assessment etc.:

<http://nhs.stopthepressure.co.uk/>

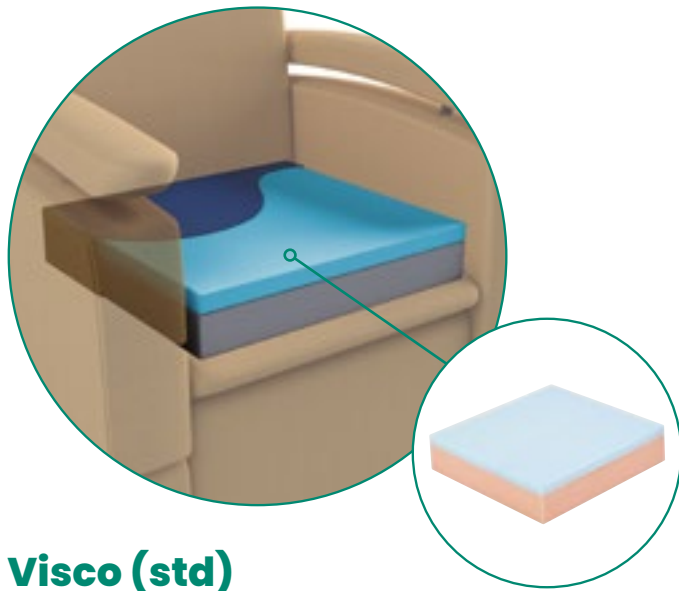
<http://nhs.stopthepressure.co.uk/docs/PU-Grading-Chart.pdf>

<http://www.judy-waterlow.co.uk/downloads/Waterlow%20Score%20Card-front.pdf>

<http://www.bradenscale.com/images/bradenscale.pdf>

Configura cushions:

All cushions are upholstered in a 4-way stretch, vapour permeable fabric and are covered with the chair 'overlay' which comprises 4-way stretch vapour permeable material and a 12 mm layer of Visco foam. In the case of the CushionAir cushion, the overlay part can be fitted underneath the cushion so the user is sitting directly onto the cells of the cushion (although the cushion tends to fit better if the overlay is fitted over the top).

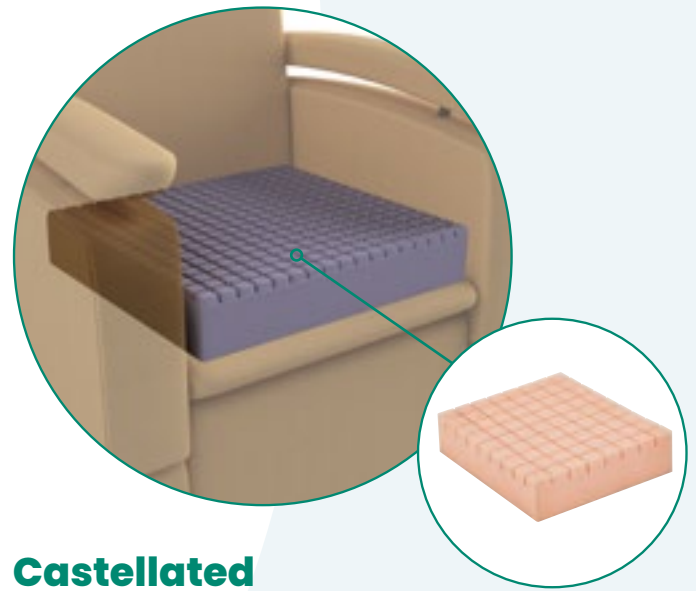
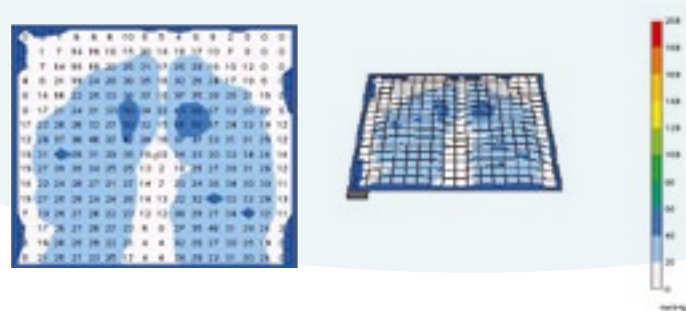


Visco (std)

The Visco cushion is a static, pressure-reducing cushion which we suggest for users who are at high risk of developing pressure damage but whose skin is intact.

This comprises a 3" layer of standard foam then a top layer of 1" Visco foam. The Visco cushion is a heat-sensitive memory foam and takes a certain amount of time to warm up so the user immerses into it. Some users who have reduced core body heat (i.e. some neurological conditions), may find the cushion a little firm. In these cases, the Castellated cushion may be a good alternative.

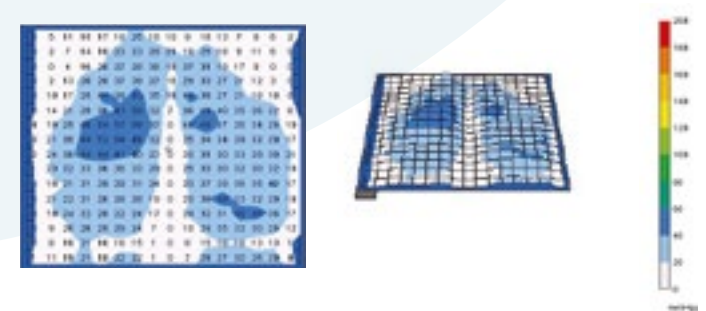
The principle is that the foam conforms to the user's shape as it warms up, thereby providing a larger surface area of contact and therefore lower pressure – especially around the vulnerable ITs. This is called 'immersion'.

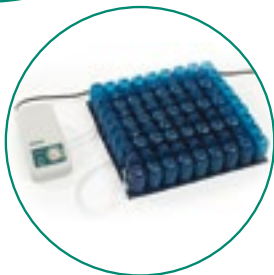


Castellated

As can be seen from the pressure mapping results below, the Castellated cushion is similar in performance to the Visco cushion but does not include Visco. In other words, this is a static, pressure reducing cushion which we suggest for users who are at high risk of developing pressure damage but whose skin is intact.

The Castellated cushion consists of standard foam with a castellated top surface which provides improved immersion. This cushion is useful for users who have reduced core body heat and for users who may find the Visco cushion too firm.





There is a dial on the cushion pump which allows the cushion to be adjusted: soft through to firm. This setting is adjusted primarily in terms of comfort and is not purely based on the user's weight.

The overlay part can be fitted underneath the cushion so the user is sitting directly onto the cells of the cushion (although the cushion tends to fit better if the overlay is fitted over the top). As standard when supplied from Accora, the overlay will be fitted on top of the cushion cells. This slightly decreases the effect of the dynamic therapy but provides superior comfort and stability.

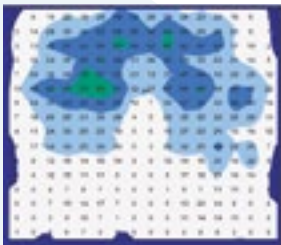
Self-supply:

It is possible to fit cushions from other manufacturers into a **Configura** chair, depending on its size. We suggest you call us on 01223 206 100 to discuss this so we can ensure the most successful outcome.

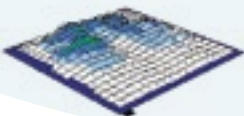
CushionAir

The CushionAir cushion is a dynamic pressure relieving cushion which is normally recommended for users who have developed pressure damage*.

The principle is that the cells of the cushion inflate and deflate alternately. This provides pressure redistribution via cyclic changes in loading and unloading.



*This is based around anecdotal evidence and Accora's experience; we do not yet have clinical studies to evidence this although these are in progress.



Minimum (mmHg)	0.00
Maximum (mmHg)	84.57
Average (mmHg)	21.51
Variance (mmHg ²)	343.67
Standard deviation (mmHg)	18.65
Coefficient of variation (%)	86.69
Horizontal centre (cm)	21.73
Vertical centre (cm)	28.02
Sensing area (cm ²)	1886.34
Regional distribution (%)	100.00





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