

PRESSURE MANAGEMENT IN THE SEATING MATTERS RANGE OF CHAIRS



As an experienced clinical team, we at Seating Matters take pressure management very seriously and much consideration is given to the quality of pressure management in our chairs.

The Seating Matters cushion is made up of two distinct layers;

- **First Layer:** 2 inches of memory foam to allow emersion and envelopment of the Ischial Tuberosities (IT's) into the cushion, this emersion gives stability and reduces shear and friction.
- **Second Layer:** A dense foam which provides stability to the memory foam to prevent bottoming out.

The cushion is then covered by Dartex material which will fit the contours of both the cushion and body giving the required level of support. Dartex fabrics also offer great stretch recovery which will help prevent sagging and will therefore provide a more comfortable and effective support surface for longer.

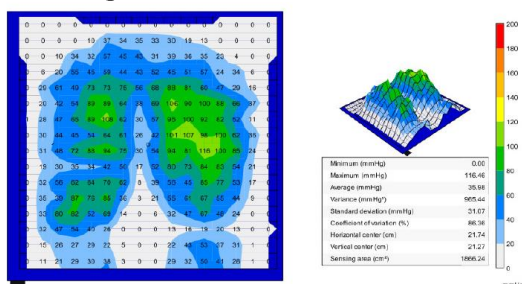
With the Dartex cover the cushion offers a degree of moisture vapour permeability to ensure that the cushion remains dry and comfortable to the touch. Any material next to the skin which interferes with its natural temperature and moisture control can also aggravate the risk to the patient. The cushion will give sufficient slip, as excess surface friction can add to the risk of pressure injury.

All seating surfaces should allow for emersion as the IT's naturally immerse 2 inches into a surface when seated but only if they are allowed to. Some support surfaces prevent immersion by having a very taught surface or having additional material between the client and the cushion. We recommend placing the client directly on the cushion to reduce the risk of shear and friction and to encourage immersion.

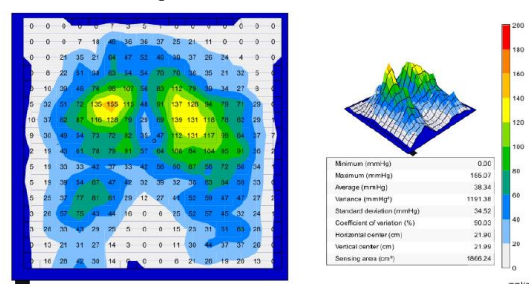
All Seating Matters chairs come as standard with a removable cushion and baseboard. This facilitates the use of any other cushion which may be prescribed by the clinician.

See below pressure mapping image obtained following an independent trial of the Seating Matters cushion.

Seating Matters Cushion



Commonly Used Cushion



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However following our research with Ulster University it was evident that pressure management was not only about the cushion. The use of Tilt in Space is vital to achieve maximum pressure redistribution. The Seating Matters chairs are the only chairs with 45° tilt which is the optimum position to off load the IT's and redistribute pressure.

This memory foam and Dartex combination give a **Medium to High** pressure redistribution, however in order to achieve maximum pressure management in a chair we need to use The Four Principals of Pressure Management in Seating. By using these principals we will achieve **High or Maximum** pressure redistribution:

1. Load the Body
2. Provide Postural Support
3. Effective Repositioning (Every 2 hours)
4. Use a Proper Cushion

Further Reading

When assessing for pressure management many factors must be considered before a decision can be made on the level of pressure relief a client requires. It is a mistake to assume that the cushion is the only factor which much be addressed. Some of these considerations are;

- Does the client have a current pressure injury
- Does the client have a history of a pressure injury
- Medical condition of client
- Can the client do an independent weight shift
- Position of the client in the chair and their posture
- Transfer method of the client from chair
- The adjustability of the chair to meet individual need
- The number of times the client is repositioned throughout the day
- Length of time the client sits in the chair
- Nutritional intake of the client
- Always check the mattress and ensure it is meeting the pressure care needs

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We recommend you are familiar with the NICE Guidelines on pressure management (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) September 2005. In these guidelines it is recommended that a client needs to be repositioned every 2 hours no matter what level of pressure management they are using. There is no substitute for repositioning the client regularly and this is the recommendation from Seating Matters.

We also strongly recommend that the decision on the type of pressure management used is made by a clinician with an expertise in this area and/or with an in depth knowledge of the clients' needs.

As a provider of equipment it is our responsibility to give accurate information on the product you are providing and to educate the purchaser/carer/user on the correct use of this equipment and the benefits of it. It is then the clinician's decision to decide what is appropriate for their client.

As responsible manufacturers we provide ongoing training on various aspects of chair selection and assessment for the benefit of our customers including a seminar on posture and its effect on interface pressure. I recommend you attend this training. Details can be found at www.seatingmatters.com

In the meantime if you have any queries please feel free to discuss them with us. Our clinical team can be contacted at clinical@seatingmatters.com.

Yours Sincerely,

Martina Tierney

Occupational Therapist, Clinical Director Seating Matters