Challenge #2 presented by Island Health

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Title: Non-agitating restraint device for patients suffering from dementia

Background: VIHA works with a very challenging population of patients many in the late stages of dementia who display risky behavior. Their patients often get up and walk at risk of falling and serious injury. They do not believe in restraining patients that are at high risk for falls due to the negative effects associated with restraint, including muscle wasting, loss of freedom and dignity, risk of constipation, weight loss and quality of life.

Challenge: The challenge is that there is no current product that can be secured to a chair or patient that does not agitate the patient. Could the group develop a chair alarm that does not alarm the patient but rather the care giver? What could be developed so that we could respond before the patient falls when they stand up from their wheelchair? Could this be an automatic locking device for the wheelchair when weight is lifted that then alerts to a device the care giver is wearing?

To design a chair alarm that alerts caregivers, not the patient, to at risk patients when attempting to get out of bed or chair in a timely manner. The device should not irritate patients, increase their agitation or anxiety, and thus, increases their risk of falling. The device should alert caregivers in a timely fashion, so they can respond before the patient falls when he or she stands up from their wheelchair. The device should consists of an alarm system along with an automatic locking device for the wheelchair when weight is lifted and, at the same time, alerts the caregiver.