



EWMA Educational Development Programme

Curriculum Development Project

**Education Module:**

**Prevention and Management of Pressure Ulcers**

Latest revision: October 2015



## **ABOUT THE EWMA EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

The Programme is designed to assist, students and healthcare professionals who work with patients with wounds and related skin conditions and wish to develop and/or increase their knowledge and skills in order to meet patient needs.

Overall, the Programme aims to:

- Provide students and healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills to equip them to perform their role in the delivery of optimal wound care.
- Provide contemporary, interdisciplinary, product/brand neutral wound management education that is endorsed by EWMA.
- Provide quality standards against which other organisations can evaluate existing wound management programmes.
- Achieve European acceptance by developing an educational framework that is in line with European Commission educational initiatives in order to disseminate best practice in wound care.

## **ABOUT THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

The Curriculum Development Project is at the heart of the Educational Development Programme. The aim of the Project is to develop a flexible curriculum, consisting of a number of modules.

All modules are based on a standard template but individually focused on a specific aspect of wound management. Each module is developed by a small group consisting of members of the EWMA Education Committee and/or affiliated wound care key specialists. For an updated list of the currently available modules please visit the education sub page at [www.ewma.org](http://www.ewma.org).

## **ABOUT THIS MODULE**

The Prevention and Management of Pressure Ulcers module aims to:

- Broaden participant's knowledge and understanding of the prevention and management of pressure ulcers.
- Evaluate strategies to promote effective inter-professional collaborative working for patients in risk of developing or with pressure ulcers.



## MODULE CONTENT

### 1. Elaborating Body

European Wound Management Association (EWMA)

### 2. Date of production of module

April 2004

### 3. Latest review date

October 2015

### 4. Module intended learning outcomes

This module provides opportunities for health professionals to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

#### **A. Intellectual Skills – Knowledge and Understanding**

Participants will have knowledge of the:

1. Physiology in relation to tissue and pressure damage/pressure ulcer aetiology.
2. Epidemiology of pressure ulcers, age/sex distribution, sites and grades of pressure damage, costs (monetary and emotional/QoL).
3. Different methods of assessment of patients 'at risk' of pressure damage, pressure ulcer classification system, deep tissue injury, differentiation between other causes of tissue damage (for example Incontinence Associated Dermatitis or moisture lesions).
4. Range of prevention systems of care, protocols of care, care pathways, mattresses and other devices.
5. Treatment of pressure ulcers including wound/skin assessment and care, pressure relief/repositioning, dressings, mattresses/seating support surfaces, devices, nutrition, evaluation and documentation of care.
6. Pain, psychological and social issues associated with pressure ulcers such as the impact of ulceration on the individual and their family/carers.
7. Local service provision such as the organisation of delivery of equipment as well as service provision within all levels of the healthcare system.
8. Health economics related to pressure ulcer prevention and treatment.

#### **B. Practical Skills – Skills and Attributes:**

Participants will be able to:

1. Assess patients with different levels of risk of pressure ulcer development, identifying the specific factors that increase risk status (could be potential or actual).
2. Plan pressure ulcer prevention strategies appropriate to different patients' needs.



3. Develop strategies for managing patients with pressure ulcers.
4. Demonstrate appropriate documentation skills detailing risk assessment, prevention and management of pressure ulcers and associated skin damage.
5. Demonstrate an ability to communicate with and educate patients and carers pertaining to pressure ulcer prevention and management.

## **5. Teaching/learning methods & strategies**

Acquisition of 4.A & 4.B (see above) is through a combination of lectures, small group workshops and learning in practice throughout the module. There is also the possibility of using e-learning in combination with traditional learning methods. Throughout, the learner is encouraged to undertake independent study both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught and to broaden individual knowledge and understanding of the subject.

## **6. Assessment methods**

Assessment methods will need to vary for each professional group. Understanding will be assessed in a variety of ways i.e. open discussion, formal written exercises, case studies, practice work-books. Throughout, the learner is expected to consolidate the development of practical skills / management skills in the clinical setting.

## **7. Unit content**

### **A. Overview / epidemiology**

Prevalence and incidence of pressure ulcers and associated skin damage

Methodology of epidemiological studies

*National/International guidelines, relevant campaigns, relevant programmes and targets for pressure ulcer prevention*

The financial and human costs associated with pressure ulcers and treatment of pressure ulcers

### **B. Anatomy**

Anatomy of the skin and related structures

### **C. Pathophysiology**

The aetiology of pressure ulcers e.g. ischaemia, lymphatic impairment, cell deformation, reperfusion injury

Pressure and shearing forces

Microclimate

Risk factors associated with pressure ulcer formation

### **D. Principles of patient care**

Risk assessment

Assessment – physical, psychological, social, environmental



Identification of patient-centred management objectives

Care planning and documentation

Evaluation of outcomes

Use of evidence based practice/clinical guidelines

Referral criteria

Interdisciplinary team working

### **E. Assessment**

Risk assessment, including the use and limitations of pressure ulcer risk assessment tools such as Norton, Braden and Waterlow

Reliability and validity of risk assessment tools

Wound assessment - pressure ulcer assessment including the use of pressure ulcer grading/categories and methods of wound assessment, including the use of advanced assessment techniques

Skin assessment – skin resilience to pressure/shear, assessment of dark skin

### **F. Risk factor management**

Prevention – auditing / monitoring pressure ulcer prevalence and incidence to evaluate local prevention programs

### **G. Prevention of pressure ulcers**

Prevention strategies, for example the SSKIN care bundle including skin inspection and care, repositioning, selection and use of pressure redistributing equipment in bed and chairs (mattresses, overlays, and cushions), incontinence and nutrition care

Skin care such as cleaning and protection, microclimate control

The emerging evidence for prophylactic dressings

Nutritional screening/assessment and support in preventing pressure ulcers

Use of guidelines and evidence-based practice in pressure ulcer prevention

The provision of education for patients and carers e.g. NICE guideline

The role of the multi-professional team in preventing pressure ulcers

### **H. Wound management of pressure ulcers**

Management strategies for the different categories or stages of pressure ulcers including the use of wound management products and adjunct therapies

The use of guidelines and evidence-based practice to treat pressure ulcers

Assessment of wound bed, surrounding skin including the problems of undermining and sinus formation

Assessments and treatments of infection and biofilm

Principles of cleansing

Selection of cleansing agents



Debridement and wound bed preparation including surgical debridement, dressings promoting autolytic debridement, use of bio surgery and topical negative pressure therapy

Dressing selection including product availability relative to local circumstances and different healthcare settings

Advanced wound care products/techniques

Pain management to ensure effective assessment and evaluation of outcomes including the use of analgesia

Care of the surrounding skin e.g. the use of protective skin wipes.

Evidence base to support complementary wound therapies e.g. aromatherapy

### **I. Management of infection**

Assessment /presentation - clinical signs/symptoms, silent infection

Superficial infections and cellulitis

Deep infections - surgical drainage

Methods to identify infecting agents - culture and swab techniques, biopsy

Radiological and other investigations – Isotope scans, Magnetic Resonance Scans

Use of topical antiseptics - indications, type and duration of treatment

Adjunct therapies and their relevance and practical application

See also module: Managing wound infection

### **J. Specialist Interventions**

The use of surgery to treat pressure ulcers e.g. full thickness skin flaps

### **K. Systemic and local pharmacological management**

Analgesia e.g. local, systemic

Nutritional supplements e.g. mineral and vitamin supplementation

Cleansing and disinfection of the infected wound

Antibiotic therapy for infection - indications, type and duration of treatment

### **L. Rehabilitation services**

Structure and management of rehabilitation services

Hospital and community care, share of responsibility between care levels

Inter-disciplinary, multi-professional approach

Patient follow-up services

Barriers and facilitators for pressure ulcer prevention and care in different health care service levels

### **M. Psychosocial aspects of care**

Impact of pressure ulcers on the individual & society

Factors affecting compliance/concordance/adherence with treatment including case examples of individuals who have effectively succeeded or failed to comply with treatment strategies



Effective patient and next of kin education strategies

## 8. Unit specific learning resources

### **Books/Book chapters**

#### **English language journals**

Advances in Skin and Wound Care

Journal of Tissue Viability

Journal of Wound Care

#### **Web links**

Danish patient safety programme to reduce pressure ulcers <http://isikrehaender.dk/>

EPUAP/National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel, European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel and Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Alliance. Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers: Quick Reference Guide. Emily Haesler (Ed.). Cambridge Media: Osborne Park, Western Australia; 2014.

<http://www.epuap.org/>

EWMA Cooperating Organisations: <http://ewma.org/english/cooperating-organisations.html>

EWMA documents <http://ewma.org/english/publications.html>

Healthcare improvement Scotland (SSKIN)

[http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our\\_work/patient\\_safety/tissue\\_viability/sskin\\_care\\_bundle.aspx](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/patient_safety/tissue_viability/sskin_care_bundle.aspx)

NICE <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance>

NHS, England, Stop the pressure <http://nhs.stopthepressure.co.uk/>

Norwegian patient safety programme to reduce pressure ulcers

<http://www.pasientsikkerhetsprogrammet.no/>

Wounds International <http://www.woundsinternational.com/>

Wounds UK <http://www.wounds-uk.com/>