



AMP Asociația pentru Managementul Plăgilor România



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EWMA
Cooperating Organisation

Wound Management Association-Romania

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(WMA-R) is a non-profit organisation that was founded in 2012. From the beginning, the European Wound Management Association encouraged the establishment of WMA-R and its initiatives.

The main purpose of the association is to promote the principles, standards, procedures, and current methods used worldwide in wound care and prevention and to ensure efficient communication among all contributors to the health care system.

WMA-R currently has over 30 members from the medical and nursing fields, working in general surgery, plastic surgery, vascular surgery, palliative care, home care facilities, and even psychiatry.

To achieve its purpose WMA-R aims to meet the following objectives:

- Facilitate the exchange of ideas, solutions, and technical processes among medical and nursing specialists and with members of other NGOs interested in the field from Romania and abroad;
- Organise training and other events at the national and international level;
- Ensure access to quality documentation and dissemination of useful information in the field of wound care;
- Initiate and conduct research projects in the field of wound care;
- Provide material and logistical support to follow up on ideas and perform actions that lead to the understanding, development, improvement, and application of best practices in wound care;
- Develop educational programs according to international standards in the area of wound care and prevention;
- Develop partnerships with similar organisations in Romania and abroad.

Communication among members of WMA-R is maintained through a monthly newsletter that informs this academic community on events organised by the association. This information is also sent to other members of the health care system (e.g., doctors, nurses, pharmacists) and interested companies with the intention of highlighting the importance of this area of practice. We are anticipating a Journal but to achieve this we have to wait for the organisation to develop further and mature. Meanwhile, we strive to maintain an active association website (www.ampromania.ro) to offer information and feedback to our members and stakeholders.

WMA-R COURSES, TRAINING, AND HANDS-ON SESSIONS

Since establishment of the association a series of training courses at different levels, designed to provide basic information and advanced training, has been provided in several cities. In collaboration with the Order of Nurses, Midwives, and Medical Assistants in Romania, universities, industry representatives, and other NGOs we have organised the following courses and workshops:

- "Using modern dressings in hard-to-heal wounds" (Timisoara-2012)
- "Wound bed preparation" (Bucuresti-2012, Timisoara-2013)
- "Using modern dressings in hard-to-heal wounds" (Targu-Mures-2013)
- "Current methods for wound debridement" (Cluj-Napoca-2013).

Trainees (physicians and nurses) were interested in the pathophysiology of acute and chronic wound healing, assessment, and treatment targets according to the T.I.M.E. algorithm. Discussions were mainly focused on issues related to the use and selection of specific wound care products and devices. During the debridement workshop, lecturers, students, and sponsors combined efforts to develop an outstanding activity.

Sponsorships have brought classical and modern methods of wound debridement and management to workshop participants. All methods of debridement available worldwide were demonstrated by lecturers with experience in the field and trainees had the chance to participate in hands-on sessions with most of the debridement techniques currently used in wound management. This was the first time that some of these methods had been presented and demonstrated in Romania.

EDUCATION

Future projects need to cover the considerable gap between what constitutes wound management in Romania and what constitutes wound management abroad. Although the role of the wound care specialist (who may be a nurse or physician) is expanding dramatically worldwide, practices in Romania currently have limited resources to make the necessary progress and meet this level of care. In Romania, the standard education on wound care given to all medical staff provides only a brief training on some basic principles and does not emphasise the benefits of modern dressings and devices available in this field. It is important to optimise this situation because nurses and resident



Current methods for wound debridement – workshop Cluj-Napoca-2013

physicians spend a significant amount of their working time performing these procedures. In Romania there are only a few more advanced educational programs, which are short and struggle to offer enough information to develop critical thinking in this area. The limited access to such programs leads to inconsistent and incomplete knowledge and erroneous perception of some concepts. Dressing wounds with modern products is generally performed using the limited information provided by the industry and is not supported by evidence-based practice. The scope of practice in wound management for health care providers also presents a challenge due to variation in the competency of professionals to perform advanced skills.

RESEARCH

Research into wound management in Romania is inadequate, especially in nursing where there is no consolidated tradition of research. Therefore, our efforts are focused on building an appropriate knowledge base in research methodology and providing up-to-date knowledge on wound management. With this aim we have started to involve nurses and physicians in the creation of educational programs, motivating them to read and translate relevant literature and share it during various meetings. We intend to collaborate with other NGOs to develop and organise training sessions in order to involve nurses in research projects. After this mission is accomplished, the research programs will start with some investigations into the prevalence of different wound types. On the other end of the scale, we seek to support medical staff involved in more advanced research (academic staff and postgraduate students), aiming to create a common platform to confront the problems encountered in wound management.

PRACTICE

Wound management in clinical practice constantly raises challenges, mostly caused by a shortage of funds in the health system; often, sophisticated plastic surgery techniques are performed while basic care is somehow neglected. Paradoxical situations are frequently encountered, for example in well-equipped medical facilities there is not sufficient knowledge to use the facilities, whereas in other facilities well-trained medical staff struggle to obtain adequate equipment and materials for their patients. The hope that there will be sufficient materials and trained staff in each facility is a goal that will stretch over many years.

Things happen slowly, and meanwhile we spin into a vicious circle in which the companies support educational programs in the hope that it will sway the sale of products, but lack of funds push aside the problem of wound care and treatment, and dressings for our patients continue to consist of only gauze and iodine. Lack of standards and guidelines for the care and treatment of different types of wounds is an on-going challenge for health professionals, who act mainly based on experience derived from the routine application of the same methods.

WMA-R's FUTURE PROJECTS

In Romania, interest in wound treatment and care has grown over the last years. There are small groups of enthusiastic people (nurses and physicians) who choose to be involved in the area of wound management development and have started to work together in different small projects. One of these projects involves translating the *Pressure Ulcers Prevention and Treatment Guidelines* and sharing its recommendations with all Romanian medical professionals.

With the support of A.P.U.P.A., in August of this year a delegation of 10 Romanian nurses attended the 16th Annual European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel Meeting in Vienna, Austria, to acquire adequate information on this topic. The assimilated information has prepared us for 2014, when review guidelines for the management of pressure ulcers will be published and we will provide a translation.

Before that, in November 2013 we will hold the 1st Conference of WMA-R, where we want to draw public attention to the problems of pressure ulcers and celebrate "Stop Pressure Ulcers Day". In addition, we will hold elections for the future president of WMA-R. Our association is trying to involve more health care specialists in wound management because we believe that this topic will be best approached by a multidisciplinary team.

We expect this conference to be attended by a large number of professionals involved in this field, and hope that their enthusiasm will elicit rapid changes in wound management in Romania through involvement in specific educational programs and research and the development of new guidelines and procedures. We hope that their scientific work will empower our academic community to become a valid partner with health care authorities, decision makers, our patients, and other stakeholders in order to develop health policies that are based on the reality of the situation in Romanian and supported by scientific evidence. ■