

## AWA Austrian Wound Association

Doz. Dr. Gerald Zöch  
Elected President

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The *Austrian Wound Association (AWA)* was founded in 1998 in Vienna. The AWA is a non-profit association working in the field of wound healing. It was organised by a group of physicians and nurses to approach the need for a coordinated co-operation in the area of wound treatment.

Treatment of wounds and its disturbances is not a specialized medical field but concerns several fields on an interdisciplinary level. Where acute and iatrogenic wounds are managed by the surgical field, chronic wounds are mostly taken care of by the conservative fields.

In contrast to North America where wound healing has gained a high status and numerous national and international societies offer further education, there has been no activity in Austria in the area of wound healing. Individual persons have previously been involved in this area, but a flow of information between them did not exist. The research within this area was rather scanty and not available to the public. News and innovations came only from the companies producing wound treatment products. These companies introduced wet wound treatment in Austria and continue to provide information on the most recent developments such as bioengineering products.

Poor healing and chronic wounds appear to be a therapeutic problem asking for special knowledge. The wound itself is mostly only a symptom – not a diagnosis. To recognise the context of the primary disease and the appropriate therapy is closely connected to the healing process. Precisely this makes interdisciplinary cooperation and nursing so important.

AWA seeks to advance the exchange of information and expert knowledge in the area of wound healing. Information on most recent therapies, therapeutic regimens and innovative approaches should be accessible to a wide forum. The Cupertino between doctors and nurses is to be improved.

The public is to be informed about the possibilities of active and preventive measures. By the means of further education, conferences and informational events for physicians and nurses, AWA wants to pass on expert knowledge to specialists and patients.

Members from either the doctoral or the nursing fields form the AWA Executive Board. Everyone working or interested in the area of wound treatment are eligible for membership. Companies with appropriate activities are welcome to become assisting members and can be reached through a link at our homepage. Application for membership is easily accessible at: [www.a-w-a.at](http://www.a-w-a.at)

The executive board is elected every second year at the AWA general meeting and was recently constituted as follows:

Elected President	Doz. Dr. Gerald Zöch
Vice-presidents	Erika Degendorfer and Prof. Dr. Norbert Sepp
Treasurer	Dr. Sebastian Reischle
Secretary	Dr. Susanne Siedler
Vice-secretary	Dr. Thomas Wild

The Executive Board is supported by the Scientific Board, an interdisciplinary forum of people who work and/or do research in the area of wound healing.

AWA hopes to enhance medical wound care in Austria with activities and to help those patients suffering from medical conditions with substantial impairments on quality of life.