



## WMAS Slovenian Wound Management Association

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## REPORT FROM WMAS

### Slovenian Wound Management Association - healing our own wounds

Regular readers of our reports to the EWMA journal are very well aware of the rocky road we have to overcome in Slovenia. For those of you reading for the first time about our association, may I briefly summarise our history?

The Slovenian Wound Management Association was founded in October 2001, so it is a very young association. The association was founded after some of our nurses participated in the EWMA Congress in Stockholm in May 2000, where they met key EWMA leaders. These EWMA leaders encouraged this small group to start activities to set up an association that would include all health care providers dealing with wound care; doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists etc. The nurses worked very hard to gather representatives of all these groups in initial set-up meetings. EWMA representatives visited Slovenia at these meetings and provided a lot of support in this process. Unfortunately, only days before the official foundation of this association, some differences in opinion arose between different health care groups, mainly doctors and nurses, causing the separation of most medical doctors from this group. The differences of opinions arose around issues like who should lead the Association, and what are the roles of the different professions etc. The separated doctors formed another association – the Association for Wound Healing. This association was formed with the support of the Medical Chamber of Slovenia.

These two associations worked separately for over a year and the work of the SWMA was hindered by the above, described events. But, they kept their contacts with EWMA, attended the Granada Congress and got much encouragement there, especially from other countries facing similar problems. However, with the difficulties that occurred, they weren't able to start some of the other activities set up as part of their programme at the initial foundation. They lacked the support of all health care groups and this was the main obstacle to their work.

The Association for Wound Healing organised some seminars and started with some activities to improve reimbursement possibilities for wound care products. But, all this time, they were also aware that only the united efforts of different health care professionals could improve and standardise wound care in Slovenia.

As a result, both associations expressed interest in joining forces and there have been intensive talks about this issue for a few months now. A lot of people feel empowered with these events and are now motivated more than ever to make this project work. The talks are not finalised yet and we can't report the final results. However, we are happy that we are all sitting at the same table again and talking through this issue.

The SWMA was invited to join the Association for Wound Healing and at our last meeting we agreed to it if the following conditions were accepted:

- The representative of the current SWMA will be a vice president in the joint association.
- Representatives of the current SWMA will be equal on the executive board of the joint association.
- The international contact person of the current SWMA will remain in position in the joint association.
- The name of the association will change from 'The Association for Wound Healing' to 'The Association for Wound Healing and Wound Treatment' (wound management doesn't fit in the Slovenian language when it comes to wounds), however the English name stays the same – The Slovenian Wound Management Association.
- The logotype of the current SWMA will be used for the joint association.

Our first impression is that members of the Association for Wound Healing are keen on our proposal and hopefully we will be able to update you very soon with the good news that we have joined forces, overcome our obstacles and are working full speed towards our common goal - excellent wound care for a better quality of life for our patients.