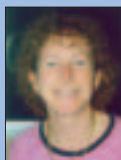




The EWMA University Conference Model:

Lessons learned from Lisbon



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INTRODUCTION

The members of the EWMA education committee have been aware for some time that health professionals are seeking alternative approaches to professional development and have created a unique model that combines attendance at the annual EWMA Conference with academic study at a university of their own choice. This model is called the EWMA University Conference Model (EWMA UCM) and has arisen from a pragmatic desire at future EWMA conferences to:

- Combine academic study with existing professional development activities
- Enable maximum utilisation of expert knowledge & skills
- Utilise excellent facilities & learning resources

The EWMA UCM was piloted in Glasgow in May 2007, proving highly successful. The second EWMA UCM took place in Lisbon in May 2008, where the success of the programme surpassed all expectations. The challenge ahead is now to use the student evaluations and lessons learned from Lisbon to prepare for another successful EWMA UCM course in Helsinki in 2009.

For participation in the Helsinki course, EWMA welcomes all teaching institutions who find the description of the EWMA UCM programme interesting to contact the EWMA Business Office at ewma@ewma.org

EVALUATION OF EWMA UCM LISBON 2008

EWMA was delighted to see a total of 110 students from teaching institutions in Belgium (Centre of Continuing & Professional Development), Ireland (Royal College of Surgeons Ireland), Portugal (Universidade Atlântica, ESS Setúbal and Universidade dos Açores), Switzerland (Haute école de Santé, Geneva) and the United Kingdom (University of Hertfordshire) undertake the EWMA UCM in Lisbon 2008.



Participants practising on pigs' feet at the debridement workshop.

The students added a unique dimension, contributing positively to the overall success of the conference. Feedback from the students, a central component in the future development of the EWMA UCM, was facilitated through an open forum and the completion of written evaluation forms.

One of the highlights of the feedback includes a strong sense of the importance of being a part of an international group where the opportunity to share different practice experiences is facilitated. The challenges of achieving evidence based practice were also considered an important issue, with the EWMA UCM facilitating open discussion of these challenges. Furthermore, the students were pleased to discover that they were not isolated in seeking the best answers to wound care problems. Indeed that fact that there is much debate on the subject, especially among "experts" was a reassurance. The emphasis, throughout the conference, on critical appraisal of research evidence for its application to clinical practice was also highlighted as important. This skill is central to enabling the student address the variety of clinical problems faced each day in their individual practices. Overall, the student found the programme to be a rewarding, valuable experience, one which they would have no hesitation recommending to others.

WHY SHOULD YOU UNDERTAKE THE EWMA UCM?

The EWMA conference brings together international experts in the field of wound healing and provides a dynamic platform for 'real world' research, professional debate and networking opportunities and presentation of the latest practice developments. It is an ideal educational environment to provide registered student's with a challenging, analytical conference experience from which they can develop reflective practice skills and is one that cannot hope to be replicated by any one individual university. Making use of the educational opportunities available at the EWMA conference will allow registered students to explore the wider perspectives of wound management from an international perspective.

The overall aims of the programme are to facilitate the student to:

- Identify the process and concepts involved in the conduct of research in wound management
- Increase their understanding of the dissemination of research findings
- Critically appraise the outcomes of research and its applicability in clinical practice
- Identify key priorities in the delivery of wound management services
- Understand the importance of European dimensions and diversity in wound management

- Understand the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to wound management
- Actively participate in National and International networking in wound management
- Identify key competencies required in wound management and the resources necessary for the development of these competencies.
- Seek and critically appraise materials necessary to maintain their own competence in wound management.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the epidemiological, financial and human costs associated with wound management, there is a need for practitioners to have in depth knowledge and skills in the provision of effective, efficient, evidence-based practice for individuals suffering from the most common chronic wounds encountered. The EWMA UCM aims to achieve this by providing a medium where students, from a wide variety of clinical backgrounds and cultural experiences, can come together to hear, confront and debate the latest evidence in wound care. This unique learning experience strengthens the link between theory and practice, facilitating the development of enhanced skills and knowledge in chronic wound management. We look forward to seeing you in Helsinki in May 2009 where you can share in this highly rewarding experience. ■



The UCM Group