

**STUDY OF PREVALENCE AND COSTS OF SKIN ULCERS AS THE STARTING POINT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOS ULCER PROJECT AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL**

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**Aim:** The SOS Ulcer project started in 2004 as a Disease Management Programme for vascular, diabetic and pressure ulcers, with the objective of determining the costs of ulcer disease and providing a method to be used to programme regional healthcare and improve use of resources. In October 2006, a prevalence study was completed on skin lesions in the Province of Padova, with the aim of identifying the presence of skin lesions in residential care facilities (RC) and home-based care (HBC) patients and risk factors for pressure ulcers. This study was the first step in a prospective observational, cost-assessment survey, which began in September 2007 and will last for 6 months.

**Methods:** The study on the prevalence of skin lesions involved all rest-home residents, patients attending outpatient nursing clinics, people receiving home-based care and all home visits to patients for blood sample withdrawals. Personal and clinical data were recorded in addition to an index of the risk of developing pressure ulcers according to the Braden scale. Bearing in mind the data provided by the prevalence study, patients were recruited to the prospective observational survey on the cost of ulcers (still in progress).

**Results:** The prevalence of pressure lesions was 22.7% in HBC and 9.1% in RC; 18.4% in HBC and 1.7% in RC for vascular lesions, and 4.3% in HBC and 0.4% in RC for diabetic foot lesions.

**Conclusion/Discussion:** The data collected through the study on prevalence and costs in a macroarea of the Veneto Region will be used to disseminate the programme to all regions of Italy and as the basis for a European study in partnership with EWMA and 7 European countries, to gather clinical and cost data on ulcer diseases.