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“TREAT THE WHOLE PATIENT AND NOT THE HOLE IN THE PATIENT” A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR THE TREATMENT OF A PATIENT WITH A CHRONIC WOUND

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Goals, objectives and purpose: To develop a practical tool for nurses and caregivers for the treatment of a patient with a chronic wound, based on the currently available evidence-based approach, with the focus on the patient.

Method: A research group was formed, consisting of GPs, nursing home doctors, tissue viability nurses, registered nurses and a Nurse Practitioner. Then a literature review was conducted to explore the current state of knowledge about the holistic treatment of the patient with a chronic wound.

A phased plan was developed and presented to a group of nurses for use in their daily practice. This led to the proposal of several points for improvement, which were incorporated in the final product.

Discussion and result: A phased plan in the form of a clinical path is a proven aide for giving all the steps in care their own place. It helps prevent skipping of a step and thus is a guarantee of quality. This leads to the holistic approach becoming integrated with the local wound treatment for the patient with a chronic wound.

The flowchart is divided into 2 parts: patient- and wound-related topics. By running through these steps every 2 weeks, all relevant aspects are considered in turn and interventions for them can be decided, evaluated and ensured.

Conclusion: The flowchart turns into a simple phased plan which can be applied in any care setting. The flowchart is easy to adjust to those products preferred in a particular institution. It offers a useful “tool” especially for the trainee nurse to provide an optimal treatment of the patient with a chronic wound.