

BEARING THE BURDEN; VOLUNTARY WOUND MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS

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Aim: Highlight the enormous contribution voluntary organisations such as Wound Management Association, make to members and patients. Small groups collectively form the backbone of international organisations with their altruistic aims of updating practitioners, conducting and publishing research as well as promoting multidisciplinary approaches and improving patient wellbeing.

Method: At request of attendees at a local conference an evening seminar series pertaining to aspects of basic wound care were developed, organised and facilitated by focused committee members of WMAI over a 3 year period. Workshops were incorporated into each 3-hour session.

Results: Seminar evaluations indicated content as excellent and relevant to practitioners needs. Over-subscription for these seminars continues along with continuous request and desire for basic wound assessment and management education.

Discussion: Many barriers and challenges face local wound care committees. Competency in wound care appears ambiguous. Practitioners seen to avoid empowerment in relation to wound management and lack motivation to become involved in voluntary organisations due to the overwhelming burden on the nurses role in current healthcare. Wound care education is not mandatory at undergraduate and post graduate levels. What are the consequences of this omission in terms of delivery of evidence based wound management and the legal implications if this is not delivered? Consequently voluntary organisations have to shirk their altruistic aims. Stagnation in local and national wound research, educational updating, and debating of clinical issues ensues.

Questions Arising: Is wound care education totally the remit of voluntary organisation? What happens if we get it wrong?