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**ADHERENCE TO LEG ULCER TREATMENT: DEVELOPMENT OF A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK BASED ON A QUALITATIVE STUDY**

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**Aim:** Exploring processes underlying (non-)adherent behaviour in leg ulcer patients

**Methods:** Twenty-six leg ulcer patients received an intervention to enhance adherence with compression, leg exercises, physical activity and leg elevation. Five tissue viability nurses carried out the intervention in individual sessions at home.

A qualitative study was conducted in a homecare setting. Interviews were held with patients after completion of the intervention. Data were also collected by participant observation. Data collection and analysis took place iteratively. Analysis was validated by means of researcher triangulation.

**Results:** Trust in the nurse was central in adherence. Patients who experienced a trusting relationship with the nurse seemed to adhere. Trust was facilitated when nurses took time to talk with the patient, went the extra mile, took time for wound care and gave attention to pain and other problems. Even though patients did not know or were not convinced of the benefits of the advice, they were prepared to follow it because they trusted the nurse. Perceived physical improvements or sensations after following lifestyle advice convinced patients of the importance of the advice in which they did not believe at first.

Self-efficacy for performing leg exercises was higher than self-efficacy for being physical active and leg elevation. Physical impediments, co morbidities, and socio-structural impediments influenced the patient's ability to adhere to leg ulcer advice.

**Conclusion:** Interpersonal aspects between patients and nurses permeate adherence with leg ulcer treatment in different ways. Nurses should integrate nurse-related factors in adherence-promoting interventions.