

# A presentation of the Norwegian Wound Healing Association

The **Norwegian Wound Healing Association** is a nationwide, voluntary organisation. It comprises approximately 600 members: nurses, physicians, podiatrists, orthopaedic engineers and orthopaedists.

The main purpose of the organisation is to improve health care personnel's interest and knowledge about prevention, diagnostics and treatment procedures for chronic wounds of all etiologies.

The organisation works primarily toward the primary health care, but secondary and tertiary health institutions are also included.

The board has ten members who work voluntarily without economic compensation. The board meets six times a year, and constitutes the working body of the organisation. It has organised the following sub-committees where appointed members of the organisation also participate:

1. The committee for education – which is responsible for educational courses, recommended standards for wound care and offers wound care journals, all of which is freely available from our internet site.
2. The committee for fellowships.
3. The committee for information and public relations.
4. The committee for pressure ulcer prevention, diagnostics and treatment.
5. The committee for reimbursement issues.
6. The committee for telemedicine in primary health care.

The association has an active internet site: [www.nifs-saar.no](http://www.nifs-saar.no) where summaries of all board meetings and meetings in the subcommittees can be found. The annual national seminars have been arranged since 1998 with the following main themes: Venous leg ulcers, Cancer ulcers, Arterial ulcers, Diabetic ulcers, The diabetic foot, Chronic ulcers. These seminars attract 300-400 participants every year, and are held in different locations around the country. They are also attended by the industry, and the latest developments in prevention, diagnostics and treatment of chronic ulcers are exhibited.

The association's internet presentation comprises general information of the organisation, information about our industrial sponsors and our fellowships. Guidelines for wound treatment based upon international recommendations are also presented.

The programme for next year's seminar, which in 2008 will be arranged in Bergen on February 14 and 15 is presented. The theme for this seminar will be *Prevention, diagnostics and treatment of pressure ulcers*, and will include all aspects including practical use of the most modern equipment.

The association supports courses for physicians, nurses and orthopaedists given by our members, and have worked out guidelines for courses with curriculae. The Norwegian Medical Association has accepted the curriculum for credits to the post graduate education of common practitioners and dermatologists. At our internet site, practical experiences and advice are offered to members as well as non members who wish to arrange teaching courses on wound treatment. Links to other organisations and literature are also easily accessible at this site.

The association acknowledges that a correct diagnosis of a chronic wound by a qualified physician is not always obtained before treatment is started, and it is one of our aims to improve the diagnostic work for all chronic wound patients.

We also wish to improve the education for physicians and nurses in this area, and have recently sent a questionnaire to the four Norwegian universities and to the colleges educating nurses asking their curriculae concerning wound care. So far, we are working with one college trying to establish an improved education in this field.

The organisation has established a net of contacts in primary and secondary health care to whom we offer an educational course. They will act as links to the organisation, map the needs for support and help us set up local education courses in wound care.

Reimbursement for bandage material for wound care is a continuing debate in Norway, because this is not covered by the social security regulations for primary health care, and our association works on this theme in cooperation with other patient organisations.

Another issue is the need for local or regional wound centres at local hospitals, which would be an important step forward. At present, this is limited to patients with diabetic feet in a few hospitals, but there is a need for local regional wound specialist centres with surgical, medical and dermatological out-patient clinics in a far more systematic fashion than today.



*The NIFS seminar 2008 will be arranged in Bergen on February 14 and 15. The theme for the seminar will be Prevention, diagnostics and treatment of pressure ulcers.*

The Scandinavian journal SÅR is the journal of the Scandinavian Wound Healing Associations and it appears four times per year with articles of interest from members in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, with national and international meeting calendars.

