



WMAS
Slovenian
Wound Management
Association

WMAS Slovenian Wound Management Association

– one of the first cooperating associations to join EWMA

WMAS, the **Slovenian Wound Management Association** was founded in 2001. In the last decade, great changes occurred in the approach to basic and advanced wound care practices in our country despite the country being rather small in size and no one could have expected such a development. There was also a lack of basic and steady education in this field of medicine and nursing. Because of these circumstances, it was a sort of evolutionary process that a need for a different and evidence-based approach to modern wound care emerged in this milieu. A group of nurses and doctors who have been involved in this field of medicine and had similar problems in convincing patients, fellow nurses and doctors of the advantages of modern wound care saw better chances for achieving a change in the attitude toward this topic at the Slovene umbrella organisation.

The establishment of the Wound Care Association provided a better platform for exchanging ideas, or unifying the concepts of the practical and/or theoretical approach in all aspects of wound care. The Association comprises 184 members of whom the majority is nurses and doctors. As a symbol of Association we have chosen a leaf of the national tree. This leaf is torn apart and symbolises loss of integrity of the skin.

Even if looking not so far back in the past, we can observe that a lot has changed. The response of medical staff and the industry has been overwhelmingly positive, especially considering the annual meetings which have been addressing different profiles in wound care. Topics covered were miscellaneous, ranging from infection and pain management, venous ulcer, diabetic foot, to metastatic wounds. At least three events per year took place in different parts of Slovenia, attracting around 1000 attendees.

In the spring of 2007, we held elections for the president and management committee of the Association. The position of president was taken by Mrs Vanja Vilar, an enterostomal therapist.

In September, a two-day seminar was organised to introduce all position documents issued by EWMA in more detail. All of them were translated and published for this event. Besides the remarkably high attendance at the lectures on wound pain management, basics of compression therapy, wound bed preparation, lymphoedema, infection management and negative pressure therapy, the emphasis was also placed on the practical approach to wound care problems and solutions. All 129 attendees also used the opportunity at the workshops to discuss with experts the obstacles they are faced with in wound management.

Beside the educational activities, WMAS is trying to enhance its public recognition. Several activities are conducted with this aim in mind. The launching of a Website is planned for the beginning of 2008. Reports on the organised events have been published in medical and nurse journals. In October, a one-hour TV show covering the presentation, activities and goals of the Slovene Wound Care Association was broadcasted in prime time. All these efforts are bringing small progress in the public awareness of modern wound care.

Improving that attitude is also a constant wish of WMAS President Mrs. Vanja Vilar and all the active members of the association.

From 15 to 19 June 2008, the 17th World Council of Enterostomal Therapists (WCET) Congress (www.wcet2008.org/home/) will take place in the Slovene capital Ljubljana. This is going to be a great opportunity to present our Association, as well as its activities and goals to a wider domestic and international audience.

In autumn 2007, an important meeting of the WMAS representatives with the President of the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia took place. In Slovenia, modern wound care products are still not reimbursed. Although these are available, many patients have to pay for them out of their own pockets. Our proposal to the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia for wound care products to be covered by way of prescription of the insured person by the insur-



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ance company was not accepted at this time. We settled to prepare clinical pathways for venous leg ulcer, pressure ulcer and diabetic foot until the next appointment, to convince the Health Insurance Institute of the good cost-effectiveness relationship.

This year, Wound Care Societies from Croatia and Serbia were established and have joined the EWMA. Members of WMAS have been inviting particular doctors and nurses for several years, especially from Croatia and also from other republics of the former Yugoslavia to educational events organised by WMAS or EWMA. The restored relationships will proceed to a higher level early next year. At the request of Croatian and Serbian National Wound Care Association members, WMAS is planning a two-day meeting in wound care education that will be held in one of the Slovene tourist resorts on 7 and 8 of March 2008.

WMAS is also taking part in the EWMA Leg Ulcer Implementation Project which is a joint project between EWMA and the national wound care associations in Central and

Eastern Europe – Slovenia, Poland and the Czech Republic. The project is divided into four parts: Case Identification, Estimating the Outcomes and Costs of Care in the Current System, Development of a New System of Care, and Implementation and Evaluation of the New System. The first phase of this project was completed successfully. The survey was conducted in the south-eastern region of Slovenia, Dolenjska, which has around 147,000 inhabitants. Questionnaires for patients and medical staff have been sent to 402 addresses. The evaluation of returned questionnaires will be completed in the beginning of 2008.

All of us at WMAS strongly believe our efforts do make a change in daily practice and we are proud of our achievements so far, but we are also aware that there is still a long road before us to achieve equal high quality care for every patient with wound in Slovenia.

