



EWMA Education Committee

Module descriptor:
Prevention and Management
Of Pressure Ulcers



Latest revision: October 2015



ABOUT THE EWMA EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Programme is designed to assist, students and healthcare professionals who work with patients with wounds and related skin conditions and wish to develop and/or increase their knowledge and skills in order to meet patient needs.

Overall, the Programme aims to:

- Provide students and healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills to equip them to perform their role in the delivery of optimal wound care.
- Provide contemporary, interdisciplinary, product/brand neutral wound management education that is endorsed by EWMA.
- Provide quality standards against which other organisations can evaluate existing wound management programmes.
- Achieve European acceptance by developing an educational framework that is in line with European Commission educational initiatives in order to disseminate best practice in wound care.

ABOUT THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Curriculum Development Project is at the heart of the Educational Development Programme. The aim of the Project is to develop a flexible curriculum, consisting of a number of modules.

All modules are based on a standard template but individually focused on a specific aspect of wound management. Each module is developed by a small group consisting of members of the EWMA Education Committee and/or affiliated wound care key specialists. For an updated list of the currently available modules please visit the education sub page at www.ewma.org.

ABOUT THIS MODULE

The Prevention and Management of Pressure Ulcers module aims to:

- Broaden participant's knowledge and understanding of the prevention and management of pressure ulcers.
- Evaluate strategies to promote effective inter-professional collaborative working for patients in risk of developing or with pressure ulcers.



MODULE CONTENT

1. Elaborating Body

European Wound Management Association (EWMA)

2. Date of production of module

April 2004

3. Latest review date

October 2015

4. Module intended learning outcomes

This module provides opportunities for health professionals to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

A. Intellectual Skills – Knowledge and Understanding

Participants will have knowledge of the:

1. Physiology in relation to tissue and pressure damage/pressure ulcer aetiology.
2. Epidemiology of pressure ulcers, age/sex distribution, sites and grades of pressure damage, costs (monetary and emotional/QoL).
3. Different methods of assessment of patients 'at risk' of pressure damage, pressure ulcer classification system, deep tissue injury, differentiation between other causes of tissue damage (for example Incontinence Associated Dermatitis or moisture lesions).
4. Range of prevention systems of care, protocols of care, care pathways, mattresses and other devices.
5. Treatment of pressure ulcers including wound/skin assessment and care, pressure relief/repositioning, dressings, mattresses/seating support surfaces, devices, nutrition, evaluation and documentation of care.
6. Pain, psychological and social issues associated with pressure ulcers such as the impact of ulceration on the individual and their family/carers.
7. Local service provision such as the organisation of delivery of equipment as well as service provision within all levels of the healthcare system.
8. Health economics related to pressure ulcer prevention and treatment.

B. Practical Skills – Skills and Attributes:

Participants will be able to:

1. Assess patients with different levels of risk of pressure ulcer development, identifying the specific factors that increase risk status (could be potential or actual).
2. Plan pressure ulcer prevention strategies appropriate to different patients' needs.
3. Develop strategies for managing patients with pressure ulcers.



4. Demonstrate appropriate documentation skills detailing risk assessment, prevention and management of pressure ulcers and associated skin damage.
5. Demonstrate an ability to communicate with and educate patients and carers pertaining to pressure ulcer prevention and management.

5. Teaching/learning methods & strategies

Acquisition of 4.A & 4.B (see above) is through a combination of lectures, small group workshops and learning in practice throughout the module. There is also the possibility of using e-learning in combination with traditional learning methods. Throughout, the learner is encouraged to undertake independent study both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught and to broaden individual knowledge and understanding of the subject.

6. Assessment methods

Assessment methods will need to vary for each professional group. Understanding will be assessed in a variety of ways i.e. open discussion, formal written exercises, case studies, practice work-books. Throughout, the learner is expected to consolidate the development of practical skills / management skills in the clinical setting.

7. Unit content

A. Overview / epidemiology

Prevalence and incidence of pressure ulcers and associated skin damage

National/International guidelines, relevant campaigns, relevant programmes and targets for pressure ulcer prevention

Health economics of pressure ulcers and treatment of pressure ulcers

B. Anatomy

Anatomy of the skin and related structures

C. Pathophysiology

The aetiology of pressure ulcers e.g. ischaemia, lymphatic impairment, cell deformation, reperfusion injury including classification system for example EPUAP

Pressure and shearing forces

Microclimate and its effect on skin properties

Other risk factors associated with pressure ulcer formation

D. Principles of patient care

Identification of patient-centred management objectives

Care planning and documentation (Use of quality indicators)

Evaluation of outcomes (periodic audits)

Critical screening of guidelines and implementation of the guidelines into local clinical context



Use of care bundles (such as the skin care or the pressure ulcer bundle)

Referral criteria

Interdisciplinary team working

E. Assessment

Physical, psychological, social, and environmental assessment

Risk assessment, including the use and limitations of pressure ulcer risk assessment tools. Useful tools include for example Norton, Braden, Waterlow, Purpose T and tools for specific patient populations

Skin assessment – skin resilience to pressure/shear, assessment of dark skin

Wound assessment - pressure ulcer assessment techniques

F. Prevention of pressure ulcers

After assessment, the following prevention strategies are suggested for patients at risk or with an ulcer:

- Auditing / monitoring pressure ulcer prevalence and incidence to evaluate local prevention programs
- Repositioning: general repositioning, frequency, techniques, in bed/seated, devices, mobilization, documentation. Special attention to pressure support for heel ulcers.
- Support surfaces and the principles of envelopment, adjustability, adaptability and durability
- Nutrition: screening, assessment, care planning, energy intake, protein intake, hydration, vitamins and minerals
- See recent guidelines for prevention strategies related to specific patient populations

It is recommended to consult the most recent guidelines (for example the [EPUAP-NPUAP Guideline](#)).

Include the emerging evidence, for example for prophylactic dressings

The role of the multi-professional team in preventing pressure ulcers ([EWMA document](#))

H. Wound management of pressure ulcers

Management strategies of pressure ulcers including the use of wound management products and adjunct therapies

The use of guidelines and evidence-based practice of wound management to treat pressure ulcers

Assessment of wound bed, surrounding skin including the problems of undermining and sinus formation

Assessments and treatments of infection and biofilm

Principles of wound bed preparation ([EWMA Document: Debridement](#), [EWMA Document: Antimicrobials and Non-healing Wounds](#))

Dressing selection including product availability relative to local circumstances and different healthcare settings

Advanced wound care products/techniques



Pain management to ensure effective assessment and evaluation of outcomes including the use of analgesia

Care of the surrounding skin ~~use of protective skin wipes.~~

I. Management of infection

Assessment /presentation - clinical signs/symptoms, silent systemic infection

Radiological and other investigations – Isotope scans, Magnetic Resonance Scans

Antibiotic therapy for infection - indications, type and duration of treatment J. Specialist Interventions

The use of surgery to treat pressure ulcers e.g. full thickness skin flaps

K. Systemic and local pharmacological management

Drugs affecting wound healing and/or increasing the risk of developing a pressure ulcer e.g. steroids, anti-depressants, anti-coagulants, etc

L. Rehabilitation services

Patient follow-up services

Barriers and facilitators for pressure ulcer prevention and care in different health care service levels

M. Psychosocial aspects of care

Impact of pressure ulcers on the individual, the family & society (quality of life)

Factors affecting concordance/ compliance/ adherence to prevention and/or treatment strategies

Self-management and education strategies

8. Unit specific learning resources

Books/Book chapters

Romanelli, M., Clark, M., Gefen, A., Ciprandi, G. (2018). Science and Practice of Pressure Ulcer Management, second edition. London: Springer.

Journals

Advances in Skin and Wound Care

Journal of Tissue Viability

Journal of Wound Care

Web links

EPUAP/National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel, European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel and Pan Pacific Pressure Injury Alliance. Prevention and Treatment of Pressure Ulcers: Quick Reference Guide. Emily Haesler (Ed.). Cambridge Media: Osborne Park, Western Australia; 2014. <http://www.epuap.org/>

EWMA documents <http://ewma.org/english/publications.html>



Healthcare improvement Scotland (SSKIN)

http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/patient_safety/tissue_viability/sskin_care_bundle.aspx

NICE <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance>

NHS, England, Stop the pressure <http://nhs.stopthepressure.co.uk/>

Norwegian patient safety programme to reduce pressure ulcers

<http://www.pasientsikkerhetsprogrammet.no/>

Skin integrity research group www.skintghent.be

Wounds International <http://www.woundsinternational.com/>

Wounds UK <http://www.wounds-uk.com/>

Skin Integrity Group www.skintghent.be