



AWTVNF
All Wales
Tissue Viability
Nurse Forum



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www.
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Introduction

Tissue viability is an umbrella term covering skin health and wounding, within people of all ages regardless of case setting and at any point along the patient's journey through their health care episode. Tissue viability skills include the holistic assessment of patients with actual or potential skin/tissue damage and the implementation of appropriate prevention and treatment strategies. Tissue viability is a speciality that considers the protection of tissue integrity alongside all aspects of skin and soft tissue injuries ranging from simple to complex wounds, across acute and chronic wounds, in addition to tissue damage consequential to underlying chronic disease – e.g., venous hypertension.

Background

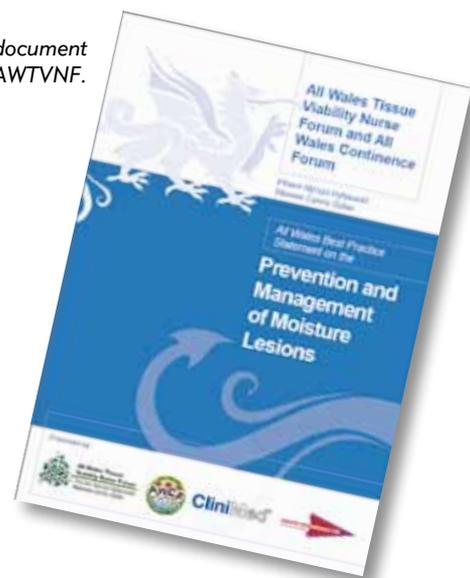
Across Wales, there are 32 specialist tissue viability nurses, and these individuals are members of the All Wales Tissue Viability Nurses Forum (AWTVNF). While providing a platform for sharing information and experience, they foster collaborative work between AWTVNF members and other healthcare organisations, communities and individuals. The AWTVNF was formed in 2003 to provide strategic guidance to facilitate quality tissue viability service

throughout Wales. The members provide clinical support and advice to patients in hospitals and their own homes. The AWTVNF meets three times a year at a central location in Wales, UK. The AWTVNF receives advice and guidance from its professional advisors. Professors Sue Bale and Michael Clark provide strategic advice and guidance. Pat Roberts and Ann Yates provide condition-specific advice (lymphoedema, continence).

Clinical guidance

The AWTVNF has been proactive in providing clinical guidance to nurses in Wales. To date, the forum has produced the following documents: *All Wales Guidelines for Faecal Management Systems* (2010); *All Wales Tissue Viability Nurse Forum, Best Practice Statement; the Assessment and Management of Skin Tears* (2011); *All Wales Tissue Viability Nurses Forum; All Wales Guidance for the Use of Larval Debridement Therapy* (2013); and *All Wales Tissue Viability Nurse Forum and All Wales Continence Forum; Best Practice Statement on the Prevention and Management of Moisture Lesions* (2013).

The latest document
from the AWTVNF.



In addition, the Forum adapted the NPUAP/EPUAP pressure ulcer prevention and management guidelines for use in Wales (*All Wales Guidance for the Prevention and Management of Pressure Ulcers* (2011)).

The AWTVNF documents can be found at the AWTVNF website, which is hosted on the Welsh Wound Network website www.welshwoundnetwork.org

Education and training

The AWTVNF members contribute to the curriculum planning and delivery of education and training with the universities based in Wales. In addition, they participate in local health board internal training and induction programs.



Left to right: Barbara Pritchard, TVN, Ann Yates – Director of Continence Services, Jean White – Chief Nurse for Wales, Trudie Young – TVN & Chair AWTVNF, Julie Evans, TVN and past chair of AWTVNF.

This is how life feels to people with EB.

Their skin is as fragile as a butterfly's wing. They have Epidermolysis Bullosa, a painful and currently incurable skin blistering condition.

www.debra-international.org

The group has developed clinical competencies to assist in standardising tissue viability practice in Wales. The competencies are for qualified and unqualified nursing staff and cover negative pressure wound therapy, pressure ulcer prevention and management, venous leg ulcer prevention and management, wound care and larval therapy. The competencies have been validated by Agored Cymru (www.agored.org.uk/).

All Wales wound care formulary

The forum has worked alongside the national body to develop a wound care formulary that is used by all health boards in Wales. The selection of wound management products to be included in the formulary is subject to a rigorous and transparent process. This process has been utilised to develop a second initiative, the all Wales negative pressure wound therapy contract. It is hoped that these developments will lead to a cost-effective and standardised delivery of wound care within Wales.

Clinical audit

The forum has undertaken a clinical audit on the use of honey dressings in wound management; this was presented at a symposium at the EPUAP conference in 2012.

Publication

The forum published the results of a pressure ulcer prevalence audit that was conducted at orthopaedic and community hospitals in Wales (James J, Evans J A, Young T, Clark M (2010). Pressure ulcer prevalence across Welsh orthopaedic units and community hospitals: surveys based on the European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel minimum data set. *International Wound Journal* 7 (3): 147-152).

Recent developments

The forum focuses on the prevention of pressure ulceration as a main target and has recently completed a major project with the National Patient Safeguarding Team and Protection of Vulnerable Adults Team. The document provides guidance across Wales on the protection of vulnerable adults in relation to pressure ulcer development and investigation (Pressure Ulcer Reporting and Investigation-All Wales Guidance. This document will direct and streamline care within Wales.

A past chair and the current secretary of the AWTVNF have recently won a national award for delivering cost-effective leg ulcer care in a social model within one health board within Wales (www.nhswalesawards.wales.nhs.uk/news/33127). It is anticipated that more of these leg clubs will open within Wales with one planned for South Wales in the very near future (www.legclub.org/).

Conclusion

The AWTVNF is a cohesive body of tissue viability nurse specialists that have been working together for 12 years to improve tissue viability practice within Wales through their many activities. The forum is proud to become a cooperating organisation of the European Wound Management Association and looks forward to sharing best practices and collaborating with our counterparts within Europe.



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