

GNEAUPP



National Advisory
Group for the
Study of Pressure
Ulcers and Chronic
Wounds



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Conflict of interest: none

WOUNDS ALSO SPEAK SPANISH

– GNEAUPP in context

This year GNEAUPP celebrate its 15th birthday. Fifteen years ago we started out with lots of energy and desire to improve the treatment and understanding of pressure ulcers and wound care. We think that our progress has been fruitful and positive in all areas, as we intended. Our group has become a reference in Spain and abroad, mainly in Latin America.

For more than a decade GNEAUPP has brought together all Spanish professionals interested and involved in the prevention and management of this "silent epidemic" through its conferences, publications and scientific activities, and more recently, has also reached people outside our borders. Since its inception in 1994, GNEAUPP, has managed to address the problem of pressure ulcers and other chronic wounds in our environment, highlighting awareness of this important health problem. As described by Dr. Bernabeu on his presentation at the First Latin American Congress about ulcers and wounds held in 2008 in Tarragona (Spain) when he said: "In the XXI Century, while we are still talking about communicable infectious disease epidemics, we also usually talk about the pandemic of obesity, and began to appreciate the importance of so-called, by WHO, forgotten epidemics, as with traffic accidents and their aftermath. Behind these three realities (infectious diseases, obesity and accidents) are, in fact, many of the risk factors accompanying wounds and pressure ulcers. And, in the same words than WHO, wounds could be viewed as a forgotten epidemic".

The early twenty-first century has offered substantial support to all these years of work, for example the Spanish Government's National Quality of Health Plan included pressure ulcers as an objective, to highlight its policy of quality and safety within Spanish health institutions. We have also seen our GEROKOMOS journal indexed in the CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature) Database, which culminated work that began with its incorporation into other scientific databases like CUIDEN (Spain) or LILACS and SCIELO (Latin American).

In the professional field, GNEAUPP has been the architect of the birth and development of the first multidisciplinary wound units in Spain, as well as,

in the absence of a chronic wound specialty, strengthening the accreditation of professionals in wound care. The purpose of these units is to protect people, ensure responsibility of professionals, and promote professional recognition and certification of quality practices.

The position papers published in Spanish together with relevant advertising and dissemination of all position papers of the EWMA and EPUAP throughout our Spanish geography and Latin America, has placed us in a privileged position at the junction of cultures and continents, which are closer than ever today.

This collaboration and closeness has resulted in joint projects that were started before but were consolidated at the First Latin American Congress of ulcers and wounds held in 2008 in Tarragona (Spain). The theme chosen was "Wounds and globalization", addressing how this phenomenon has the tendency to spread not only through markets but also how the concerns, research and development in care techniques and related injuries surpass the boundaries of each country, reaching another dimension hitherto unfelt.

The constitution of "Sociedad Ibero Latinoamericana de úlceras y Heridas" (SILAUHE) starts with similar aims and objectives to the Spanish and Portuguese speaking scientific societies with a mission to promote and defend, within its scope, all activities related to ulcers and wounds management and those responsible for their care; focusing on ethical, social, development level and research issues related to those Latin American cultures. Today, SILAUHE is composed of eight Scientific Societies from two continents (South America and Europe) and this means a potential of more than 100,000 professionals involved in wound care. We expect that, in the coming years, more Portuguese and Spanish speaking societies, maybe from Africa, will be involved in our project.

SILAUHE was consolidated in 2009 with the conclusion of the Second Latin American Congress of ulcers and wounds held in Salvador de Bahia (Brazil), which included participation from representatives from EWMA and GNEAUPP in several presentations, highlighting even more, the different realities of the two continents.

These differences between the professional and scientific societies of Latin America and Spain have begun to be reflected in the policies of international institutions such as the Government of Mexico and its Secretary of Health, who have no hesitation in working in partnership and collaboration with GNEAUPP for its program on quality and patient safety, including education on ulcers and chronic wound management.

Since 2007, Dr. Verdu (Council member of GNEAUPP and EWMA) has been coordinating and taking part in the annual nursing training programs in ulcers and wound management organised by the Secretary of Health of Mexico. In October 2007, Dr. Verdú was also invited to participate at the 2nd International Forum for Quality in Health presenting: "Quality strategies for preventing pressure ulcers".

In October 2009, D. Pablo López, (Council member GNEAUPP) was invited to present "Pressure Ulcers: The white epidemic", at the 4th edition of International Forum for Quality in Health. These Forums are regularly organized by the Federal Government of Mexico and are attended by representatives of WHO and PAHO.

Members of GNEAUPP have also participated on other collaborations, for instance: advising and performing audits for ICE group (a research group from Canary, Acores and Madeira Islands who got funds from Europe to research), collaborating with SOBENFE at the first Brazilian Wound Care Meeting held in Rio de Janeiro in 2007, and other projects.

This path of cooperation has just begun. There are still major cultural and language barriers to overcome, but at GNEAUPP we intend to work to minimize these barriers. The language barrier is a constant issue in our countries and Spanish, as a language of science, has to position itself clearly in the world of wounds. Each day, our researchers add to the knowledge available but, sadly, this progress is often invisible to the international community which, in many cases, means the Ibero-Latin American scientific contribution is not taken into consideration.

SILAUHE and GNEAUPP, are keen to offer a way of consensus and communication between Latin America and Europe, joining forces and expertise for the integration and globalization of wound societies. ■



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