HELLENIC SOCIETY OF WOUND HEALING

The Hellenic Society of Wound Healing and Chronic Ulcers (HSWH) was founded in 2003 as a scientific non-profit association. The Society is based in Athens but also has members from other Hellenic cities all over Greece and from Cyprus. The main aims and objectives of the Society are:

- To cooperate closely with the relevant national and European authorities to improve the services to patients with chronic and acute tissue deficits.
- To reduce the psychosocial effects created by these deficits.
- To promote prevention by giving best training on health professionals.
- The reduction of treatment costs.
- The improvement of quality of life of these patients.
- To promote continuing education, both health professionals and the public concerned by organising educational events.
- To contribute in establishing cooperation between national professionals and international organisations.
- To provide research in this area, having the ability for sponsored research programs.
- To provide advisory and educational services to patients and their relatives, agencies and health care professionals.
- To improve wound care standards, according to the international guidelines, for patients.

HSWH works to achieve these objectives through encouragement and guidance of research, particularly among young scientists, as well as through the systematisation of knowledge concerning chronic and acute trauma in Greece, and the supervision and execution of postgraduate and continuing education programs.

ACTIVITIES

Between 2003 and 2013, HSWH has organised the National Wound Healing Conference, which occurs bi-annually with 500–1000 participants. During the National Congress, the “Ioannovich Award” is given to the best scientific presentation. Furthermore, HSWH offers four to five scholarships for young scientists to follow a programme at wound healing centres abroad.

HSWH is often invited to national and international scientific conferences; among these are the Annual National Conference of Hellenic Association of Nurses (ESNE) and the Annual National Conference of Hellenic Doctors (PIS).

Furthermore, HSWH have been invited to organise several workshops at hospitals of the public, military and private sectors, as well as to co-organise several educational programmes at the Plastic Surgery department and Burn Center of Nicosia General Hospital in Cyprus focusing on the prevention of pressure ulcers.

HSWH has co-organised meetings with the Mediterranean Council for Burns and Fire Disasters (MCB) and European Tissue Repair Society (ETRS), as well as supported seminars for European Academy of Wound Technology (EAWT).

Moreover, HSWH performed a Practical Training Program in collaboration with the World Union of Wound Healing Societies (WUWHS) and organised five workshops of Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS).

In 2012, HSWH co-organised an EAWT approved Summer School that also focused on the prevention of pressure ulcers.

RESEARCH EFFORTS

In January 2007, HSWH organised the first national pressure ulcer prevalence study in which approximately 30 hospitals all over Greece participated, and the prevalence was found to be 8.08%. The future plans and objectives are important for the board. HSWH will continue the engagement in new and existing research activities and collaborations with Greek and International Scientific Societies. In addition, the elaboration of guidelines for health care professionals is planned for the near future.

HSWH has established an excellent level of collaboration with the industry, which is considered an important partner in the dissemination of knowledge concerning wound healing and wound management. Any advice, comments or criticisms offered by the industry are reviewed by the academic and clinical partners in the organisation.

The area of wound care in Greece leaves much to be desired because reforms and economic restraints result in decreasing budgets in all sectors of the Greek healthcare system, including the wound healing sector. Also, the lack of specialised centres is considered a challenge for the advancement of wound healing in Greece.

Finally, even more improvement could be made within education and research in wound healing in our country—for example, by creating a masters degree in the area of Advanced Wound Management.