Polish Wound Management Association
– strategy for developing modern wound healing

Poland used to be one of the few countries that did not have an organisation comprising people involved in wound healing. This had resulted in the common practice of traditional wound management, lack of knowledge on modern wound healing methods and lack of modern products on the market. The other significant disadvantage of the status of current wound healing methods in Poland is patient situation. People with chronic wounds – e.g. leg ulcers, pressure sores, recognised by a doctor as a chronic ulceration – may collect the modern wound healing products, on a doctor’s prescription, from a pharmacy but they have to cover at least 50% of the retail price of the product. That is not very helpful to elderly patients who often suffer from number of systemic disorders.

A number of people have recognised this unfavourable situation and tried to encourage development of modern wound management lecturing at different conferences and workshops. They have represented different specialities and therefore the impact of their experiences was limited to narrow groups of similar specialists involved with an interested in wound healing. To speed up the development of modern wound healing, an assembly of wound healing professionals established the Polish Wound Management Association.

PWMA’s initial interest was to influence practices in wound healing in Poland. It also aimed to become part of EWMA and encourage aligning standards in Management of Wound Healing (MWH) the way it has already been done in other countries. PWMA recognised the work done by EWMA and its comprehensive approach to wound healing presented at annual EWMA conferences. Our approach to MWH encompasses the best practice and experiences, gathered from countries that have already established MWH practices. However, we have some differences in our health care system and we therefore need to apply solutions applicable to our conditions. The PWMA has an appointed constitution, which summarises its activities. Basically these are: education of medical professionals on modern wound

PWMA board.
management introducing principles of MWH to programs of education for doctors and nurses, co-operation with other medical associations for constant education and establishing standards in wound healing, discussion with reimbursement authorities on principals of reimbursement for wound healing products which are proven to be cost and clinically more effective than traditional dressing products.

In its first activities the PWMA especially wants to focus on education for medical professionals. We must bear in mind that Poland has 38-million citizens and there are no wound specialists for patients with wounds. Patients are therefore confused and often do not receive relevant help or sometimes do not even look for it. We assume that as a primary undertaking we should aim to give the basics of modern wound management to people who most often see patients with wounds and who should and wish to take responsibility for managing chronic wounds. That group would encompass some specialists who deal with more complicated wounds but also general practitioners and community nurses who see all those patients at their surgeries. PWMA tactics will be based on an educational program targeted for each group. To further develop MWH in Poland we plan to establish outpatients units – Ulcer Healing Centres - for treatment of chronic wounds. Specialists based in these clinics would be able to manage wounds, especially the more complicated cases and to educate medical staff in their regions in the techniques of MWH and spreading the knowledge further. We look forward to co-operating with EWMA in our challenges and undertakings. We have already learned much from the EWMA speakers who have visited us in Poland. Professor Finn Gottstrup came to Poland for a Phlebological Conference; the lecture received a great welcome and generated much interest amongst the audience. In the future we would like to organise a conference in close co-operation with EWMA.