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WOUND CARE ACTIVITIES IN SLOVENIA

The last six months have been very exciting and successful for the *Slovenian Wound Management Association (WMAS)*. Many great events and activities took place and many obstacles were finally overcome.

It all began with a visit from EWMA representatives, Prof. Peter Franks, EWMA Council member and Chair of the EWMA Cost Effectiveness Panel and Mr. Henrik Nielsen, EWMA Organisational Consultant. They came for three days in November (26-28) and we kept them very busy! The main purpose of the visit was to share different experiences and ideas and discuss cost effectiveness issues with our key people, since Slovenia is getting ready to change its reimbursement policy on wound dressings.

On the first day we accompanied the guests to our biggest hospital, Clinical Centre in Ljubljana, and the Department for Surgical Infections. We discussed treatment of patients with wounds in this department and also the organisation and treatment of patients across Slovenia. Afterwards we were received at the Ministry of Health by the State Undersecretary Dr. Andrej Robida. We discussed the current status of wound care issues in Slovenia. Our visitors introduced EWMA and explained the opportunities and its role in supporting us. We agreed that there is a need for further research in this field, and that we have to start by investigating the incidence rate of chronic wounds.

The second day we visited our government insurance agency. After a short introduction of EWMA, Prof. Franks spoke about the cost-effectiveness of modern dressings. The presentations were followed by a number of very interesting discussions. All participants acknowledged that modern wound dressings show cost-effectiveness, but expressed concerns over their rational and professional use.

The last day was spent at a seminar held by WMAS. This one-day seminar was attended by 130 participants, mainly nurses and doctors, from across Slovenia. The topics included an introduction to EWMA, lectures on cost-effectiveness and presentations on EWMA position documents. Our guests were warmly welcomed and the lectures very well received. Following the seminar, there was a WMAS board meeting. It was agreed at the meeting that we have to re-establish WMAS in order to enhance a multidisciplinary approach.

In January, there was a WMAS meeting including the election of a new board member. At this meeting many differences and obstacles were overcome and now we can finally benefit from the united expertise of many different doctors, nurses, pharmacists and health care professionals. The newly elected president is Prof. Zoran Arnež, Ph.D., MD and the two vice presidents are Zdenka Kramar, RN, and Vanja Vilar, RN. Prim. Ciril Triller, MD is the new secretary. Other board members are doctors from varying fields, nurses, pharmacists, and physical therapists. Helena Peric retained her position as the EWMA Cooperating Organisations Board member. The board members had already had some very productive meetings. An agenda for future work was accepted and it includes research, development of standards, seminars, workshops and lobbying activities for organisational and reimbursement issues. The key to all the activities is teamwork.

We are very enthusiastic, and we strongly believe we can achieve great results in the future. On behalf of WMAS we thank EWMA and its representatives for their support and sharing their experiences.



Meeting at the Ministry of Health: Dragica Šalamun (WMAS), Prof. Peter Franks (EWMA), Dr. Andrej Robida (Ministry of Health), Helena Peric (WMAS), Henrik Nielsen (EWMA).