



Preliminary survey results from the UK and Ireland:

Determining the current level of wound management education in the pre-registration nursing curricula



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Background and aim of the project

Evidence from industrialised countries has identified a gap regarding wound care teaching within the nursing curricula.¹⁻⁵ Furthermore, the number of hours of teaching, as well as how this information is delivered, also varies.³ Based on these facts, the Teacher Network of the European Wound Management Association undertook a project to determine the current level of wound management education in pre-registration nursing curricula. This article reports the preliminary results of an online survey from England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland. Permission to undertake the survey was granted by the School of Medicine's Research Ethics Committee at Cardiff University, UK.

Methods

An online questionnaire was developed based on the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) standards for skin health and wound management.⁶ In June 2016, as initial pilot study of higher education institutions in Wales (n=4) was

undertaken using an online cross-sectional survey approach. The purpose of the pilot was to test the online survey software and to gather responses from participants to inform the development of a subsequent survey. The initial survey comprised of 12 questions, which examined the following areas:

- Numbers of pre-registration (student) nurses enrolled in BSc/BA/BN programmes in nursing
- Skin health and wound management topics included in the current curriculum (open question)
- In what years of study the topics are taught
- Number of classroom-based and skills laboratory teaching hours allocated to these topics
- Learning outcomes associated with these topics
- Assessment methods

Table 1:
Number of Students Enrolled

	England	Scotland	Wales	Republic of Ireland
Number of students enrolled in a degree	21-723	160-400	360-1200	40-229

Table 2:
Percentage of Time Devoted to Theoretical and Clinical Training

	Wales (n=2)	England (n=6)	Scotland (n=6)	Republic of Ireland (n=5)
Theoretical Training i.e. Nursing School / college / University	50%	50%	50%	45-50%
Clinical Training i.e. Hospital Placement	30-50%	25-60%	25-40%	40-55%
Community Placement	20%	8-40%	10-25%	5-10%

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- Lecturing staff (faculty) members and specialist qualifications
- Opportunities for clinical placements in clinics/ with specialist staff.

Data collection was carried out in June 2016.

Survey results

Out of 89 institutions, 21% (n=19) participated in the survey. The number of students enrolled in these courses is shown in Table 1. The results of the survey showed that the institutions provided the expected level of theory versus practical training, according to NMC standards. The findings also identified that the percentage of clinical training hours provided in hospitals versus community settings varied (Table 2).

The results indicate that a wide range of wound care topics is taught (Table 3). Wound assessment, wound dressings/bandages and principles of asepsis were taught most frequently (Table 4). A majority of institutions (n=16) reported that skin anatomy and physiology and skin roles and functions were taught in Year 1 (Table 5). A majority of subjects are taught in Year 2, with fewer in Year 3. For some respondents, it was difficult to determine in which year a topic was taught, as the subject area might feature across one or more years.

In terms of learning assessments, the most frequently used assessment methods were short answer questions and direct observations in clinical practice (Table 7). In terms of other healthcare professionals being involved in teaching, the numbers were quite low; however, the number of institutions offering placement opportunities with a specialist nurse or area was high (Table 8).

Conclusion

The results of the survey indicate an encouraging level of teaching related to skin health and wound management. There is a mismatch between the information and the years in which certain topics are taught. The number of classroom-based teaching hours provided by the institutions was difficult to quantify. A subsequent report will present the findings of the wider survey undertaken to include results from 14 additional countries. ■

Table 3:
Topics Taught as Part of the Theoretical Training

Topic/ Subject Area	Total (n=19)
Skin anatomy and physiology	18
Skin function	
Effects of ageing on the skin	
Skin assessment	
Skin care	
Factors affecting healing	
Wound assessment	
Wound infection / Wound bioburdens	
Pressure ulcers	
Principles of asepsis / Non-touch techniques	
Physiology of normal and abnormal wound healing	17
Wound debridement	
Wound dressings / bandages	
Surgical wounds	16
Psycho-social factors affecting healing	
Leg ulcers	
Nutrition assessment and wounds	
Wound documentation	15
MASD/ IAD	
Diabetic foot ulcers	
Multi-disciplinary teamwork in wound care	
Wound pain: Assessment and management	14
Wound bed preparation (TIME)	
Common skin conditions	
Adjunctive devices in wound care	
Burn injuries	
Legal and professional issues	
Skin tears	13
Traumatic wounds	
Lymphoedema	
Malignant wounds / Palliative wound care	12
Unusual / Atypical wound presentations	11
Management of fistulas and drains	

Table 4:
Topics Taught Using Laboratory
or Simulation-Based Teaching

Topic/ Subject Area	Total (n= 19)
Wound assessment	16
Wound dressings / bandages	
Principles of asepsis / Non-touch techniques	
Physiology of normal and abnormal wound healing	15
Skin assessment	
Wound pain: Assessment and management	
Wound documentation	
Skin care	13
MASD/ IAD	
Pressure ulcers	
Surgical wounds	
Wound debridement	12
Wound infection / Wound bioburdens	
Adjunctive devices in wound care	
Wound bed preparation (TIME)	11
Leg ulcers	
Diabetic foot ulcers	
Nutrition assessment and wounds	
Factors affecting healing	10
Skin function	9
Effects of ageing on the skin	
Traumatic wounds	
Management of fistulas and drains	
Skin tears	8
Burn injuries	7
Skin anatomy and physiology	
Common skin conditions	
Malignant wounds / Palliative wound care	
Unusual / Atypical wound presentations	6
Lymphoedema	
Multi-disciplinary teamwork in wound care	
Legal and professional issues	

Table 5:
Years in Which Topics
are Taught

Topic Area	Year	Number (mode)
Skin anatomy and physiology	1	16
Skin roles and function		16
Effects of ageing on the skin		14
Skin assessment		12
MASD / IAD		11
Skin care		15
Physiology of normal and abnormal wound healing		8
Principles of asepsis / Non-touch techniques		16
Wound assessment	1 2	7 7
Common skin conditions	2	6
Skin tears		10
Factors affecting healing		11
Psycho-social factors affecting healing		9
Wound debridement		9
Wound Infection / Wound bioburdens		11
Wound bed preparation (TIME)		7
Wound dressings / bandages		9
Adjunctive devices in wound care		6
Pressure ulcers		11
Diabetic foot ulcers		10
Burn injuries		6
Traumatic wounds		8
Surgical wounds		9
Unusual / Atypical wound presentations		9
Nutrition assessment and wounds		8
Wound pain: Assessment and management		7
Multi-disciplinary teamwork in wound care		9
Legal and professional issues in wound care		6
Management of fistulas and drains	2 3	6 6
Wound documentation	2 3	7 7
Leg ulcers	3	9
Lymphoedema		6
Malignant wounds / Palliative wound care		5

**Table 6:
Number of Hours Taught
within the Classroom**

Topic/ Subject Area	Range of Hours	
Principles of asepsis / Non-touch techniques	1-12	
Wound pain: Assessment and management		
Skin anatomy and physiology	1-8	
Skin care		
MASD/ IAD		
Physiology of normal and abnormal wound healing		
Factors affecting healing		
Psycho-social factors affecting healing		
Wound assessment		
Pressure ulcers		
Wound dressings / bandages		
Nutrition assessment and wounds		
Surgical wounds		
Skin function		1-6
Effects of ageing on the skin		
Skin assessment		
Common skin conditions		
Wound documentation		
Wound Infection / Wound bioburdens		
Leg ulcers	1-5	
Diabetic foot ulcers	1-4	
Legal and professional issues		
Wound bed preparation (TIME)	1-3	
Adjunctive devices in wound care		
Skin tears		
Wound debridement		
Burn injuries		
Traumatic wounds		
Unusual / Atypical wound presentations		
Management of fistulas and drains		
Multi-disciplinary teamwork in wound care		
Lymphoedema	1-2	
Malignant wounds / Palliative wound care		

**Table 7:
Assessments of
Clinical Competence**

Topic / Subject Area	Total (n=19)
Principles of asepsis / Non-touch techniques	16
Wound documentation	12
Skin assessment	11
Wound assessment	
Wound pain: assessment and management	
Wound dressings / bandages	9
Nutrition assessment and wounds	
Skin care	8
Skin anatomy and physiology	7
Skin function	
Physiology of normal and abnormal wound healing	
Pressure ulcers	
Surgical wounds	
Multi-disciplinary teamwork in wound care	6
MASD/ IAD	5
Factors affecting healing	
Wound bed preparation (TIME)	
Diabetic foot ulcers	
Psycho-social factors affecting healing	4
Wound debridement	
Management of fistulas and drains	
Wound Infection / Wound bioburdens	3
Leg ulcers	
Traumatic wounds	
Malignant wounds / Palliative wound care	
Legal and professional issues	
Effects of ageing on the skin	2
Skin tears	
Lymphoedema	
Adjunctive devices in wound care	
Burns injuries	
Unusual / Atypical wound presentations	1
Common skin conditions	

Table 8:
Assessment Methods, Faculty Members, Other Healthcare Professionals and Placement Opportunities

Assessment Methods	Wales (n=2)	England (n=6)	Scotland (n=6)	Republic of Ireland (n=5)	Total (n=19)
Essays	1	2	1	1	5
Short answer questions	2	3	4	5	14
Multiple choice questions	-	2	4	4	10
Objective structured clinical examinations	1	1	3	3	8
Direct observation in clinical practice	-	6	4	4	14
Other	-	-	1	1	2
Number of Lecturers	3-7	2-15	2-12	1-4	
Other Healthcare Professionals involved as Teachers					
Hospital / Community-based Registered Nurses	1	4	3	4	
Specialist Nurse (please state speciality below)	2	5	3	1	
Medical staff	1	1	-	-	
Podiatrists	1	1	1	-	
Dieticians	1	1	1	-	
Physiotherapists	1	-	1	-	
Occupational therapists	-	-	1	-	
Other	-	-	1	-	
Placement Opportunities					
Tissue viability nurse	2	5	4	5	16
Clinical nurse specialist	2	5	4	5	16
Specialist wound clinic	2	4	1	4	11
Burn unit	2	4	-	1	7
Leg ulcer service	2	5	2	4	13

The EWMA Teacher Network

The EWMA Teacher Network is open for all professionals engaged in wound management education. The network meets once annually during the EWMA Conference and is chaired by Samantha Holloway (EWMA Council member and Senior Lecturer, Cardiff University, Wales UK).

A primary objective of the network is to increase European collaboration on objectives, structure and content of future wound management education and training in Europe.

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