

Wound curriculum for nurses – post-registration qualification wound management



EWMA has just finalised the first curriculum in a series of several curricula intended for use in levels 5-7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)¹. The aim of these is to support a common approach to post-registration qualification in wound management for nurses across Europe. EWMA hopes and will work towards a close collaboration with European nurse organisations as well as educational institutions to implement these common curricula.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the care of people with chronic wounds has made enormous progress throughout Europe. To bring existing evidence based and best practice knowledge to all professional nurses is a key objective of the European Wound Management Association (EWMA). For this reason, EWMA has developed a curriculum for nurses that aligns with the EWMA curriculum on wound healing for physicians² which was approved by the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) in April 2015.

Since the vocational qualifications in Europe are not all at the same level and the pre-registration curricula may differ, three curricula referring to different EQF levels are under development. The first curriculum is intended for EQF level 5. Curricula intended for EQF levels 6 and 7 will be available in due course. Depending on the existing educational level of the undergraduate qualification of the participants the EWMA curricula can be adapted to meet the competencies expected at levels 5, 6 or 7.

SCOPE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRICULUM

This EWMA wound curriculum for nurses - post-registration qualification wound management takes into account that individuals with chronic wounds require very specific therapy and care needs related to their clinical presentation and the challenges related to multiple co-morbidities.

To be able to apply an holistic approach to and provide effective management of individuals with wounds, the nurse must therefore have specific knowledge, practical skills and awareness about patient safety, local wound care, the overall patient status and interdisciplinary teamwork. The nursing process provides the overarching framework for the curriculum and takes into account the outcomes of the interventions in the course of care (prevention, diagnostics and treatment).

The curriculum explores a range of comprehensive nursing interventions such as the assessment, planning, interventions and evaluation related to individuals with acute and chronic wounds. It should allow students to extend their knowledge of wound care to obtain specific competencies. This constitutes explicit knowledge of the relationships between the typical underlying diseases with the onset of chronic wounds, as well as their guideline-based care in terms of causal, local and concomitant therapy.

Finally, the curriculum also aims to support the development of the nurse's ability to assess the psychosocial and behavioural aspects of patients with wounds and to promote the patient's quality of life. The curriculum aims to provide the students with theoretical and practical skills to support appropriate decision-making (evidence

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based nursing and practice, problem based learning and practical based learning).

A professional Scope of Practice and Code of Conduct is considered fundamental and essential components to guide nursing practice. Clear guidance should be provided and defined in relation to professional boundaries, for example in relation to interventions such as wound debridement. These boundaries need to be defined according to national or local recommendations or legislation and have therefore not been provided within the curriculum.

FORMAT

The curriculum summarises the required learning goals, knowledge and skills related to the inter-professional and interdisciplinary that are suggested for inclusion in the post-registration qualification in wound management. However the curriculum may also be included or adapted in other relevant post- registration and postgraduate training programmes.

The learning goals (outcomes) have been developed with reference to Bloom's taxonomy³. All units include learning goals in the following categories:

- Knowledge/cognitive (K)
- Pragmatic, psychomotor skills (P)
- Awareness/behaviour (A)

The intention for the curriculum is that it is incorporated into existing programmes in different European countries⁴, specific details of the teaching and learning methods and assessment and evaluation methods are not included. These should follow the structure used by the education provider while incorporating the content and learning objectives provided in this curriculum according to local recommendations and procedures (legislation and accreditation processes).

The curriculum includes 16 units of study:

1. The role of prevention in wound care
2. Evidence based nursing/evidence based practice
3. Patient education and promoting self-care
4. Case management (patient centred care)
5. Wounds and wound healing
6. Nutrition and wound healing
7. Microbiology and wounds
8. Antimicrobial agents, hygiene and wounds
9. Debridement and wounds
10. Moist wound healing
11. Alternative or unconventional treatment options for wounds

12. Pressure ulcers
13. Diabetic foot syndrome
14. Lower leg ulcers
15. Health care delivery and health economics
16. Documentation

NEXT STEPS

To maximise the impact of these curricula, EWMA will seek collaboration with relevant organisations and educational institutions to disseminate the curricula and support their implementation in post-registration nurse education across Europe.

Additional plans to support the adoption and use of the EWMA curricula includes an online Delphi process as well as the continued process to develop and update EWMA Education modules providing more details on the topics to cover within a specific subject.

We hope that you will support this initiative to ensure common high standards for the education of the next generations of wound managers.

WHERE TO FIND IT?

The Curriculum can be downloaded via <http://ewma.org/what-we-do/education/>

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