



WUWHS and the nurse

Wound care training programmes in Africa

The WUWHS is passionate about improving wound care standards for all concerned, including the patient and the interdisciplinary healthcare team; particularly the nurse. In this respect, the WUWHS believes strongly in providing educational initiatives, such as training programmes tailored specifically for the healthcare professional.

The WUWHS wants to ensure that all nurses, regardless of where they work, have a clear understanding and knowledge of wound healing and that they know how the patient can be managed and assessed most appropriately.

A training course in wound care specially developed for nurses has been created by the WUWHS. This training course will:

- Increase nurses' theoretical knowledge and practical skills
- Provide scientific information
- Offer the nurse specialist the opportunity of developing a career in wound management
- Improve the quality of care
- Reduce the cost of care
- Promote research and clinical trials in new dressings.

In April 2007, the first in a series of 4-day 'train the trainers' programmes was rolled out in South Africa, with immense success. The programme covered various aspects of wound care, including topics such as healing physiology, evaluation of wounds, care procedures, pain management and choice of dressings.

The need for education

It was evident from a survey of delegates at this meeting that there was a great need for training and education in South Africa on different types of wounds and the healing process in order that informed decisions could be made on the optimal management of the patient. Since many of the delegates at the meeting would use the information they had acquired to train their colleagues and also use it in discussions with other members of their healthcare teams, inclusion of accurate information within the programme was vital.

Training goals

The training programme in South Africa was specifically designed for nurses. At the end of the programme, 89% of delegates felt their training needs had been met. The combination of plenary presentations and practical sessions was greatly appreciated by the delegates and one commented that they wished that more workshops such as this could be held in South Africa. Indeed, the programme had inspired many to want to attend more advanced wound management courses and to visit other countries to learn how they managed wounds. The training programme had also encouraged some delegates to consider forming discussion groups and wound management teams within their institutions.

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Training programmes in Botswana

The success of this first training programme in South Africa demonstrates the immense interest that exists among nurses in education on wounds and their management. In addition, the applicability of this training programme to other African nations, such as Botswana is clear.