

## The future of wound care in Poland



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The 2018 conference of the European Wound Management Association (EWMA) will be held on 9–11 May in Krakow, Poland, and is co-organised by the Polish Wound Management Association (PWMA).

PWMA was established in 2004 and aims to change the current methods and standards for the management of patients with acute and chronic wounds. Poland has a population of 38.5 million, with 6.2 million people over 65 years old, and it is estimated that there are 500,000 people with chronic wounds.

Poland has been trying to build a system for delivering advanced wound care. In most cases, treatment is not modern, which not only delays healing and often leads to worsening of the wound, but also makes treatment more expensive than new therapies. Therefore, PWMA's key activity is education.

The key statutory goals of the PWMA include:

- Raising the scientific and clinical levels of modern methods of treating wounds
- Organising a forum for discussion and exchange of experience in an interdisciplinary group of wound care specialists and medical practitioners
- Taking action to increase the availability of modern wound care in Poland
- Campaigning for the implementation of standards for wound healing in order to change the behaviour of clinicians
- Influencing medical educators to include wound care in training programmes for doctors and nurses in both graduate and postgraduate education
- Delivering educational activities in the field of wound care, such as conferences and workshops.

PWMA also wants to build an organisational system to endorse wound care progress and outcomes and to allow more patients to receive clinically proven and cost-effective treatment. We recognise the need for constant dialogue with authorities and payers to establish a consensus on understanding the essential benefits for all parties involved in wound management — payers, physicians, nurses and patients. The latter, of course, should always be the centre of our focus and we are trying to maintain that as a key element of our activities.

The main goal of PWMA is to cooperate with other medical societies in the development and implementation of training programmes for physicians and nurses and the introduction of clinical practice standards of excellence from Western European countries.

PWMA carries out scientific and educational activities on the treatment of wounds of different aetiologies; hence our members include general and paediatric surgeons, wound care specialists, vascular surgeons, dermatologists, nurses and family physicians. Member numbers are increasing rapidly. PWMA has organised five national congresses. In 2004, we established our quarterly journal *Wound Treatment*, indexed in CINAHL and EMCare.

PWMA board members actively participate in training programmes, sharing knowledge of chronic wound care at meetings. Monographs and guidelines have been published, significantly expanding knowledge in Poland about chronic wounds.

The PWMA is constantly drawing attention to the need to increase the availability of modern dressings. The National Health Fund established specific wound treatment procedures in 2015. Public National Health Fund financing of wound treatment is successful, but still very low. Ambulatory procedures have low funding, and hospital procedures are very complex and only available in specialised centres. There is still a high co-payment for patients using modern dressings, due to reimbursement set-up. There are financial barriers to accessing new treatment methods, e.g. negative pressure wound therapy.

Members of the PWMA's board worked with Polish Ministry of Health to develop a common consensus on the division of major dressings groups for the treatment of chronic wounds. As a result of several years of efforts, we are currently looking forward to the approval of the project and extending the refund list with specialised dressings.

PWMA is now collaborating with WUWHS and hopes to work with other European societies. We want to put more significant pressure on our educational activity and health authorities to deliver better wound care in Poland.

There are still many challenges to be overcome to make Polish wound management match the best global standards and the PWMA has plenty of work for the future.

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If you would like to contribute to a future issue of the journal, please contact Adam Bushby, Senior Editor, Wounds International, at: [abushby@omniamed.com](mailto:abushby@omniamed.com)