

Collaborations and Cooperation

A multidisciplinary approach to problem solving has long been advocated for, and notably, this issue of the Journal of Wound Management reflects this in some of the papers presented here. Examples include “Healthcare practitioners’ views on the assessment and management of pain in chronic lower limb wounds, the setup of a multidisciplinary wound clinic and a survey of physicians’ and nurses’ needs and expectations”. This type of approach supports critical thinking and problem solving and facilitates the blending of knowledge among various groups. Patients rely on teams to support their care, and these teams should therefore be evident in our research and practice.

Fostering collaboration and cooperation between disciplines can be further supported through interprofessional teaching and learning approaches. Surely, if we want people to work in teams in practice, we should seek ways in which we can learn together. Multidisciplinary approaches to education, by removing traditional barriers between subjects and disciplines to connect sectors, are required and should be promoted. These approaches facilitate the blending of knowledge between disciplines and fosters innovation and problem solving. We should also go one step further and seek to identify ways in which patients can contribute to our teaching and learning. Examples include having patients on programme boards or speaking with students about their experience with having a wound. Such insights can go a long way towards the goals of public patient involvement, which is advocated for in all major research grant funding schemes. We have to ask if we are teaching our students about problems of relevance to our patients.

The European Wound Management Association (EWMA) has been at the fore in promoting collaboration and intersectoral approaches to wound management. The current conference and journal is representative of many disciplines, specialities and countries and foster such cooperation and connectivity. They say it takes a village to raise a child, well, it surely takes a team to manage wounds. We need to push the boundaries of interprofessional or multidisciplinary teamwork and start to include patients as key stakeholders in setting agendas.

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