DEVELOPMENT OF AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF PATIENT-DEFINED BENEFITS IN WOUND DEBRIDEMENT

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Aim: Develop an instrument which permits the assessment of patient-defined benefits in wound debridement. The specific purpose of the questionnaire is the evaluation of patient-relevant outcomes in comparative studies on different types of debridement.

Methods: In open interviews with n=50 patients suffering from chronic wounds (n=25 leg ulcers, n=25 diabetic foot ulcers), possible benefits of wound debridement therapy from the patients' point of view were recorded. The item pool thus generated was reviewed by a panel of dermatologists, wound nurses and patients and transferred to a 25-item questionnaire, including items specific for debridement as well as general items for wound treatment. The item list is used prior to therapy to assess patients' desired benefits and after therapy to record the perceived benefits. These individually selected therapy goals and the corresponding benefits are then used to generate a weighted 'Patient Benefit Index' (PBI). The procedure was tested for its validity and practical application.

Results: Patients accepted the instrument and deemed it to be easily understandable. The mean answering time of the questionnaire was below four minutes. There were almost no missing values. Additionally, the method proved itself to be internally consistent, constructively valid and sensitive to changes.

Conclusions: The Patient Benefit Index (PBI) in the specific form for wound debridement is a valid and highly accepted practical instrument for recording patients' benefit assessments. Beyond recording patients' level of well-being, PBI also offers the opportunity to produce an individualised, patient-weighted assessment of the benefits of debridement and of wound therapy in general.