IMPLEMENTATION OF A VENOUS LEG ULCER STRATEGY IN NORTHERN POLAND – PREVALENCE STUDY

Arkadiusz Jawien, Maria T. Szewczyk, Pawel Brazis, Justyna Cwajda, Michal Miszewski, Paulina Moscicka, Elzbieta Hancke, Peter J. Franks

1Polish Wound Management Association (PWMA), Wroclaw, Poland,
2Thames Valley University, London, United Kingdom

Introduction: The management of chronic venous leg ulceration represents a big problem in Poland. Current national epidemiological data shows that prevalence of venous leg ulcer either healed or active accounts for almost 3% of all patients with chronic venous disorder and is more pronounced in Poland than in studies of other western European countries. This may be partly explained by unequal access to services and medical devices such as duplex ultrasound examination and modern dressings. There is a lack of data assessing adequately the effectiveness of provided wound management. The Polish Wound management Association and EWMA decided to undertake project to produce evidence to improve leg ulcer management. The first part of the project carefully studied the prevalence of leg ulcers and is the basis for this presentation. The next steps will include more detailed evaluation of provided treatments, development of more effective strategies and their implementation in practice what will lead to improve current practices.

Aim: the complete project aim is to develop a rational approach to the leg ulcer management that will be available to all patients with chronic leg ulceration and that will serve as a model to other countries. The aim of the first part of the study is to gather data on which we can base further evaluations and proposals for implementation.

Methods: The city of Bydgoszcz, in the north of Poland, with a population of 363 468 was selected as study site. Questionnaires were sent to general practitioners offices to cover the population of 200 000 inhabitants. Prior to the questionnaire distribution meetings were held in institutions with general practitioners and their nursing staff to introduce the aim and the methods of the study.

Results: The study is underway and the final results are expected by the end of March 2008. The demographic data as well as prevalence of venous leg ulcer will be presented. Additionally, we will be able to answer questions about who is mainly treating the ulcer and how and where the treatment is performed.

Conclusion: The results of our study will guide us toward improvement of current diagnostic procedures and treatment of venous leg ulcer.