The Status of Wound Care Education

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THIS MONTH'S ISSUE begins with two articles that focus on the current state of wound care education. The old paradigm for wound care training is outdated and does not match the substantial increases in technology and therapeutic options currently, and soon to be, available. The wound care market is estimated to be a 15 billion dollar per year worldwide market, with the United States representing 40% of the total market share. With an increasing number of diabetic patients and aging population and an epidemic of obesity, there will be continuous growth in the number of patients with nonhealing wounds. Wound care clinicians are becoming more involved in acute wounds, inpatient wound care, patient safety issues, and assisting with formulary development for hospitals. Although traditionally a nursing field, wound care now includes clinicians from all aspects of the healthcare delivery system. Currently, wound care education is a patchwork of review courses, certification exams, wound societies, and on-the-job training.

The following two articles attempt to outline some of the changes in the delivery of wound care education, which may shape the future formation of an actual wound care specialty. The education of wound care physicians is discussed in the first article.¹ The creation of the American College of Wound Healing and Tissue Repair in the United States is one step toward formalizing a physician wound care curriculum. In the second article, Lisa Corbett describes the transition in the nursing community as more wound nurses go back

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for advanced nurse degrees such as the Advanced Practice Nurse and Nurse Clinical Specialist.² These practitioners have Medicare provider numbers and autonomously function with a physician collaborative agreement in place. Wound care education within the nursing community is in a state of change and this article attempts to shed light on the process.

Another perspective on the current state of wound care education was offered by Dr. Gottrup in the June issue of *Advances in Wound Care*.³ In Europe, there are several methods in place to achieve wound healing education, and Dr. Gottrup described the European Wound Management Association's approach as well as formal physician training in his native Denmark. Although this issue does not feature articles on these topics, the fields of physical therapy and podiatry are also undergoing substantial changes in their educational structure. In these dynamic and changing times, it will be a challenge to include a new approach to wound care education for all healthcare providers.

REFERENCES

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