

TO OUTLINE EWMA'S ROLE IN PATIENT ADVOCACY

Salla Seppänen¹.

¹*Health Department Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences (Mikkeli, FI).*

The patients with wounds are an increasing group of patients. Despite of that the patients with wounds are not recognised as a patient group and thus their care is not well coordinated in national neither in regional or local level. The patients with wounds are cared in primary and specialised care and more often at home settings. Many professionals and also non-professionals, so called informal carers have role in the care of patients with wounds. It is obvious that chronic non-healing wounds impact to patient's life by decreasing the functional capacity and quality of life. The patients with chronic wounds are vulnerable and they do not necessary have power or capability to look after their rights.

EWMA has a mission to make a difference in wound care as the benefit for the patients. EWMA works continuously to improve knowledge and practice of wound care to be based on the best available evidence and to improve European wound patients' quality of life. One of the main goals of EWMA is to support patients to play a key role in prevention and their own treatment as a central member of the multidisciplinary treatment team. To make a difference in this issue EWMA regards the role of patient advocacy very important and thus EWMA has in recent years focused on intensively to patients' perspective in patient outcome group activities and has established in 2010 the working group for patient panel, which aims to define and develop communication channel between the professionals and patients with wounds. This work need to be done together with national co-operating organizations, while the care is always very much culturally bounded and the patients need to be met in their context. The role of patient advocacy aims to empower the patients and enable them to be active partners in their own care – this is what EWMA emphasizes.