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EXPLORING THE ROLE OF THE TISSUE VIABILITY NURSE

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COMPLEXITIES OF THE TVN ROLE

COST EFFECTIVENESS

- Wound Management Formulary
- Healing Rates
- Pathway Development
- Admission Avoidance
- Audit
- Reducing Length of Stay

PATIENT CARE

- Skin Integrity
- Prevention
- Diagnosis
- Management
- Advanced Practice
- Specialist Advice

EDUCATION

- Local
- Regional
- National
- International
- Research
- Publication

PATIENT SAFETY

- Governance, Policy and Procedure
- CQUINS
- Surgical Site Infection/ Infection Control
- Standard Setting
- Safety Thermometer
- Root Cause Analysis

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Defining Equipment
- Specification
- Partnership with Procurement
- Monitoring Outcomes
- Resource Allocation
- Cost

METHOD

A literature review exploring the evidence discussing the role of the Tissue Viability nurse/specialist was undertaken. Forty six (46) papers were retrieved. Studies were eligible for inclusion if they included information on the Tissue Viability role. Papers were excluded if they focused on the advanced nurse role.

RESULTS

Analysis of the literature review highlighted that there had been no investigation into the Tissue Viability role since 2003, aside from a few editorials discussing the role. There are a plethora of job titles used for the role with nurse and specialist being used interchangeably.

There has been some discussion that Tissue Viability should be aligned with a medical speciality, for example, dermatology (White, 2008) to increase the profile.

Tissue Viability specialists need to debate the role, develop clear and achievable competencies, an educational framework, a job title that is consistently used and research that supports the role. This paper will deliberate these concepts.

CONCLUSIONS

There is a lack of definition of the TVN role. An absence of valid and reliable tools that can be used to measure the effectiveness of the Tissue Viability service. A lack of standardised audit tools from which to work with no nationally accepted job descriptions that incorporate the totality of the TVN post with the diversity of pay bands across the UK. We need to reconsider the educational standards required of the post holder, if the post demands business acumen in addition to clinical skills and knowledge, should a TVN be expected to hold a business degree? The TVN is also expected to be able to critically understand, analyse, appraise and implement relevant research into clinical practice as such, should they as a minimum, hold a Masters Qualification?

REFERENCE

White R (2008) Tissue Viability in Tomorrow's NHS Journal of Wound Care 17 (3): 97-99