


‘Nutrition has everything to do with wound healing’—health professionals’ perceptions of assessment and management of nutrition in individuals with diabetes-related foot ulceration

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Funding information

Wounds Australia

Abstract

Determine how healthcare professionals perceive their role in nutrition assessment and management, and explore barriers and enablers to assessment and management of nutrition in individuals with DFU. Mixed methods including a cross-sectional online survey derived from current international guidelines and theoretical domains framework, and semi-structured interviews with conventional content analysis was performed. One hundred and ninety-one participants completed the survey, with 19 participating in interviews. Many health professionals are not confident in their ability in this area of practice, are uncertain their nutrition advice or management will be effective in assisting wound healing outcomes and are uncertain their intervention would result in adequate behaviour change by the individual with DFU. Major barriers to implementation of nutrition assessment and management were: inadequate time, lack of knowledge and lack of clinical guidance and enablers were as follows: professional development, a standardised clinical pathway and screening tool and a resource addressing wound healing and diabetes management. Nutrition assessment and management in individuals with DFU is not consistently applied. Whilst health professionals believed nutrition was important for wound healing, they lacked confidence in implementing into their practice. Further dissemination of existing guidance and implementation of education programs and resources would help overcome cited barriers.

KEYWORDS

clinician perspective, diabetic foot, dietitian, nutrition assessment, wound healing

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