EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF THE WOUND ENVIRONMENT USING HYDRATION RESPONSE TECHNOLOGY

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**Aim:** To demonstrate efficient management of wound exudate in a patient with bilateral, circumferential leg ulcers in a hospital setting.

**Methods:** The patient was comprehensively assessed. Elderly obese gentleman with grossly oedematous legs and bilateral circumferential, malodorous, sloughy, macerated, infected leg ulcers. Positive culture for MRSA, Streptococcus Group G and P. aeruginosa. Patient was malnourished with a serum albumin of 27 g/L (normal range 33-48 g/L). Anaemic with Hb 11 g/L (normal range 130-180g/L). Obvious and significant patient discomfort was present.

Wound management was a major problem with dressing change taking at least one hour to complete often with two nurses. A variety of treatments including systemic antibiotics, topical antiseptics, myriad of dressings and bandages had all been tried with little or no success.

Patients legs were dressed with HRT dressing (below knees to toes) and retained in place with crepe bandages as compression could not be used.

**Results:** Day 1 – notable absence of malodour. No strike-through on bandages.

Day 2 – 48 hours after application of HRT dressings strike-through was visible. Dressings were removed. Peri wound maceration was noticeably reduced, slough has reduced in volume. Exudate had been efficiently absorbed by the dressings. Significant reduction in oedema was observed. Dressings and bandages were re-applied.

**Conclusions:** Wound bed preparation including efficient management of the wound environment was facilitated through HRT which lead to a successful outcome in these recalcitrant leg ulcers. A multi-functional dressing that not only absorbs but retains exudate, effectively debrides and manages wound mal-odour provides an extended dressing wear time. These features lead to improvement in patient quality of life and a reduction in overall costs.