

A report from the EWMA Teacher Network



Samantha Holloway
EWMA Education
Committee,
Chair of the Teacher
Network meeting and
free paper session, 2014



David Hopkins
eLearning Consultant,
Warwick University,
Coventry, UK



Dubravko Huljev
Chair of the EWMA
Education Committee

Correspondence:
ewma@ewma.org

For the third time, teachers of wound management gathered to draw inspiration from their colleagues from institutions all over Europe. The meeting took place during the EWMA-GNEAUPP 2014 Conference in Madrid and was followed by the first-ever EWMA Teacher Network free paper session on the following day.

Since 2012, the members of the EWMA Teacher Network have met once a year during the EWMA Conference. The network offers an opportunity for teachers of wound management at educational institutions all over Europe to get together and share views, experiences, and ideas with peers from different teaching cultures and backgrounds. The theme of the meeting in Madrid was how the network and EWMA could mutually benefit from engaging and incorporating the network more in EWMA's educational activities.

The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss how to raise awareness of the importance of standardising wound education curricula for nurses across Europe. The intention is to provide a guidance document for educational institutions to follow to ensure that students throughout Europe graduate with an adequate knowledge level to enable them to practise as a qualified practitioner in wound management.

INITIATING AN EDUCATION PROJECT

A survey conducted by the then Teach the Teachers education development group of EWMA in 2009 among the EWMA Cooperating Organisations showed inconsistencies in the level of wound education in Undergraduate European Nursing programmes. In more than half of cases, as little as 2 hours and a maximum of one day of the total nursing undergraduate programme were set aside for wound management. The survey also revealed a common perception that the student nurse is not adequately prepared for the practice of wound management on qualification (Moore and Clarke, 2011). Recently, an article published in *The Lancet* demonstrated that downgrading education qualifications can adversely affect patient outcomes (Aiken et al., 2014).

Therefore, the Teacher Network has suggested to the EWMA Council that a project should be initiated aimed at defining learning outcomes related to the different levels of education and eliminating the inconsistencies in wound management education in Europe. However, to undertake this significant piece of work, a model of funding is required to finance the project. Furthermore, a working plan for the project is needed. The debate at the EWMA Teacher Network Meeting presented many interesting and useful suggestions from the meeting participants, information that EWMA will take forward.

TEACHER-SPECIFIC FREE PAPER SESSION

This year, the annual Teacher Network meeting was followed up by the inaugural free paper session where the network members were invited to present their work and experiences.

Mariann Csernus from Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary presented her findings related to the Wound Management BSc module and how project work has made an increase in the number of lessons taught possible. Irina Bakhtina from the St. Petersburg Post Graduate School of Nursing in Russia presented her report on the pilot professional supplementary vocational education module, which was carried out for the first time in 2013 and is built on a competence-based multidisciplinary approach to wound treatment and care.

These presentations were accompanied by a talk by David Hopkins, a learning technologist from Warwick University in Coventry, UK. His presentation dealt with the challenge of engaging students through new technologies. The aim was to showcase the developments and strategies for engaging and supporting students with new technologies in the delivery of teaching and learning.

WHERE WILL TECHNOLOGY LEAD US? – A LEARNING TECHNOLOGIST’S PERSPECTIVE

“The need for digital literacy... is not only a necessity for our children, but also for those who must educate them. To better educate our children, we need to better educate their educators.” Whitby, 2014.

Students are connected today more than they have ever been, whether it is with friends or family, or with their teachers or community leaders. The computing devices that they hold in their pockets have more computing power than NASA had when it put the first man on the Moon. However, how do we, as educators, manage the use of these devices in the classroom? How can we be sure that they are not being used for activities such as updating Facebook profiles, sending tweets or chat messages, playing games, or planning social events or a work shift? How can we engage the disengaged and bring their connections and connected lives into the classroom?

Called ‘Strategies for engaging students – where will technology lead us?’, the presentation focused on the assumption that those willing to come and listen were interested in what *can* be done with technology rather than what *should* be done.

From the appropriate and coherent use of an institutional virtual learning environment (VLE) to the use of moving images and broadcast video as part of a flipped classroom approach, the session briefly touched on different aspects of modern thinking and the tools available. It is not adequate to include an online assessment – i.e., a written assignment or multiple choice questions – into a module of study without considering the assessment strategy underpinning these. Such tests need to be implemented in a cohesive manner so they add value to the learning experience. Ideally, both types of formative and summative assessments need to provide opportunities for more than just fact recall; they need to demonstrate critical thinking, reflection, and personal research.

Trying to tackle the rise in the use of personal and mobile devices in classrooms and in learning journeys is not one to be taken lightly but, with understanding and sympathy for the users, is one that can have both a rewarding and positive influence. We know students are better connected than ever before and that they have the technological know-how to be prepared, sometimes more prepared than what the current learning materials allow. We need to meet the students in this world by utilising the Facebook-Twitter-SnapChat-Instagram-Tumblr networks they engage in so much to establish the advantages of these forms of communication in relation to learning. This requires engagement by university administrators as well as managers.

It is important to appreciate that technology is an enabler and can enhance a task or objective that is set for a specific learning journey. Educationalists need to work out what the students should be able to achieve at the end of a task and what they should know or understand at the end of a seminar or lecture. Subsequently, they should look to technology to enhance these experiences through video, reading lists and eBooks, augmented reality or mobile devices, supplemented by the student’s own online research. This requires that teachers look beyond what is provided by their institution.

THE MORE WE SHARE THE BETTER

EWMA and the EWMA Education Committee continue to find ways to improve the exchange of knowledge and experience for the Teacher Network members. New initiatives suggested by the members were discussed at this year’s meeting – for example, exploring the opportunities of financing an exchange programme between education institutions and an increased online collaboration.

The network only exists because of its members and the more individuals that join should mean the more we will have to share. It is hoped that this will lead to further achievements.

To learn more about the work of the EWMA Teacher Network or to express your interest to join us at the next meeting, please go to www.ewma.org or email ewma@ewma.org.

David Hopkins has just begun a new project in collaboration with some respected colleagues in the world of learning and educational technology to explore the question of what is learning technology, who are the learning technologists, and how they work, and hope to have some news regarding these topics very soon. For further information, follow the Twitter hashtag #edtech-book for updates.

References

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