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A multidisciplinary approach in managing lower limb diabetic foot ulcerations

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Diabetic foot ulcerations (DFUs) are one of the most serious and disabling complications of diabetes, 25% of patients with diabetes develop lower limb ulcerations in their lifetime. A majority of lower limb diabetic foot ulceration (DFUs) are avoidable but occurrence and complications related to diabetes mellitus is still high. The prevalence of DFUs in patients with diabetes mellitus is estimated as 3-10%. The treatment of DFUs requires that some of the major risk factors associated to the condition be identified and addressed individually. Multifaceted conditions of this nature should not be managed in isolation or by a single medical professional. A multidisciplinary team (MDT) should ideally be composed of specialists such as a general practitioner with interest in diabetes, podiatrists, dietician, a tissue viability nurse, a physiotherapist for rehabilitation, a psychologist and allied health-care staff. The main aim of the MDT is to enable patients to receive early or immediate access to relevant health-care professionals, education and, if required, interventions. A system needs to be in place that facilitates efficient and easy patient referrals between MDT members, effectively resulting in fast-tracking. The management of DFUs by a dynamic MDT aims to prevent the occurrence or deterioration of these ulcerations. The purpose of this study was to assess the importance of teamwork in the prevention and management of DFUs as well as highlight the use of adequate pathways to ensure that patients are assessed and treated by the correct medical professional.

Biography

Bahle Nteleki completed his BTech Degree at the University of Johannesburg. He is currently employed by the Department of Health as a practicing Podiatrist in Pretoria, South Africa. He has published research both nationally and internationally. He is now enrolled with the University of Pretoria and pursuing his Master's in Public Health.

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