Reviewer's report

Title: Health service pathways for patients with chronic leg ulcers: identifying effective pathways for facilitation of evidence based wound care.

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Reviewer: georgina T gethin

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This is an excellent and up to date paper which provides valuable insights to the provision of care for persons with lower limb ulceration. The paper outlines the current poor uptake of guidelines which have long been established in the management of venous ulceration and in particular the use of ABPI and compression therapy. It is notable the high percentage of people self caring for their wounds in the absence of specialist services and also the lack of multi-disciplinary approaches.

Major revision

The paper should say in which country the study was undertaken and the type of health care provision/reimbursement system as this can have an influence on how wound care is funded with consequent implications for patients and clinicians. it will also allow for more meaningful comparisons across studies.

Minor revisions.

There is a need to describe in greater detail the specialist wound care clinics in which the study was conducted, how are these organised, and how do patients get referred to them. This is important as the paper seeks to explore health service pathways but the actual pathway is not described.

The abstract is poorly written in places and confusing and I do not feel it adequately explains the study in terms of the methodology used and the flow of the study and I suggest it is revised.

A key finding is the poor level of assessment, without which proper treatment cannot be instigated. I think this point could be made a little stronger.

Discretionary revisions.

Could the data from Table 1 be analysed according to wound aetiology. This provides some important and comprehensive insights to co-morbidities in persons with lower limb ulceration and it woud be interresting to note the % with hypertension for example based on aetiology rather than a blanket presentation of all data.

There is potential in this paper to discuss the influence reimbursement systems may have on the results and outcomes of this study. In some countries persons over 65years have free healthcare, in others this is on a limited basis. Many person under 65 years must pay for all medical care, so this is an issue of particular significance and could explain some of the results.
**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests