

Transcript Details

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Elevating Post-Surgical Care: The Role of Multidisciplinary Wound Teams

Announcer:

Welcome to *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll hear from Dr. Karen Bauer, who's a certified nurse practitioner wound specialist at Emory Heart and Vascular in Atlanta. She'll be discussing multidisciplinary models for surgical wound management. Here's Dr. Bauer now.

Dr. Bauer:

Multidisciplinary care is extremely important in post-surgical wound management for a lot of reasons—when you look at it from an administrative standpoint, even just our key metrics, like hospital readmissions, time to closure, surgical site infections, and things like that—but most importantly, we need to look at it from the patient aspect.

We know that oftentimes the skin gets overlooked, but post-surgically, it's really important to be looking at the patient's comorbid factors. We know that patients who are immunocompromised will heal more slowly. We know that patients who are diabetic will do the same. Our patients with other comorbid factors will be at more risk for infection. So it's really important that in those patients who have a lot of comorbid factors, we're involving key specialists from the start.

The ideal multidisciplinary care pathway for post-surgical wounds first off would start to look at the patient and the potential outcomes prior to surgery. So we're starting to see the term "prehab." Getting some of the involved specialists on board prior to surgery is really important.

From there, I think that our protocols need to be standardized. I feel like the wound management field is positioned well to do this because we want to make sure that we aren't unnecessarily involving specialists that maybe don't need to be or otherwise, but for those patients who are at high risk for surgical site infections or poor outcomes post surgery, involving a wound care practitioner or specialist will allow us to triage what's going on with the patient and get them set up with the proper specialist from the skin standpoint if they haven't already been put in touch with those people prior to surgery.

There are a lot of digital tools nowadays that are good for collaboration. We are starting within the wound management field to leverage AI. So there are companies and programs out there that make digital programs where we can help track our patients. We can better document wound characteristics, risk pre-surgically for infection, and surgical site infection. There are programs like that that are geared toward helping the patient coordinate throughout their transitions.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Karen Bauer discussing multidisciplinary collaboration in surgical wound care. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!