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20th March 2018

The Association for Podiatry and University of Medicine - Cluj, Romania

The role of the Podiatrist in the community and as part of a multidisciplinary team.

Podiatry is a branch of medicine and a specialty that is licensed in the examination, diagnoses and treatment of pathologies of the foot and ankle. The treatment includes both conservative and surgical modalities.

A Podiatrist is a qualified health professional who specialises in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders of the foot and ankle. Underlying lower limb structures such as the knee and the upper third of the lower limb may also be examined by a Podiatrist since this might be related to a foot or ankle problem. Podiatrist scope of practice includes Paediatrics, Geriatrics, Diabetes, Rheumatology, Dermatology, Sports injuries, Structural and biomechanical problems, Vascular, Neurological, Podiatric Surgery. Podiatrists also play a very important role in diabetic limb salvage. Understanding the biomechanics of the lower extremity is principally emphasized in the education and training of a podiatrist. This is particularly important in the context of the diabetic foot where biomechanical abnormalities often precede ulcer development. Preventive ulcer development strategies employed by a podiatrist include regular monitoring, routine care of calluses, and insert/shoe recommendations. Continuous podiatric management can prevent ulcer recurrence through offloading strategies and diabetic foot education. Rehabilitation, prevention and education are also responsibilities of the Podiatrists.

Podiatrists work closely with other medical practitioners such as doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and other health care professionals in the provision of multidisciplinary team delivery of healthcare.

Expanding the scope of the Podiatry profession in Romania interrelates to the rapidly advancing field of healthcare. This poses increased demands and rigorous training for newly graduate Podiatrists to offer a quality high standard service to their patients in harmony with their code of ethics and code of practice. Nowadays, the Podiatry profession across the globe has advanced giving Podiatrists more recognition, more autonomy and further individual rights. It is in the interest of patients and the healthcare system that legislation needs to be on par with International Standards.

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