

SERENAGROUP NEWSLETTER

Building the Nation's Leading Wound Care Team

**Bocca dell
Verita**



THOMAS SERENA, MD, CEO

It takes a sharp eye to spot the church of Santa Maria quietly tucked in among the Roman ruins along the Tiber River. On the portico of this unassuming medieval structure stands the **Bocca della Verita**. A centuries old legend warns that the menacing marble face is an arbiter of truth.

Liars beware.

The untruthful risk mangling or amputation when placing their hand in the mouth of truth. The ordeal terrified my seven-year-old grandson. I bravely inserted my hand into the jaws of the baleful stone necromancer. Suddenly, my mind drifted to wound care guidelines: documents based primarily on expert opinion rather than the objective truth found in clinical research. Taking no chances, I rapidly removed my hand.

Staring out the window of the plane on my return trip to the United States, I realized that all our advanced wound and hyperbaric centers need a mouth of truth: not an imposing marble statue, but a commitment to replacing opinion with objective evidence.



This year SerenaGroup® will introduce several post-market clinical trials specifically designed for hospital outpatient departments. Our research team will guide the centers through the process. Conducting post-market studies is straight forward, does not require a great deal of time and improves the profitability of the center. Most importantly, as wound clinicians we must work together to improve the evidence for our treatment regimens.



Medical Policies



MATT SCHWEYER, CCO



Last month we baked a cake. And for the novice baker, and non-baker, we learned if we do not follow the instructions, or if we take a shortcut, we have a less than stellar cake. This month I want to discuss the importance of prep-time in baking. Prep-Time allows us to gather all the specified ingredients and to conduct a recount review to ensure that we have all those ingredients in the mixing bowl. Like baking, wound care has prep-time and a recipe: our Medical Policies.

Prep-time is a factor in all Medical Policies. If you miss an element (ingredient) in the prep time, you have increased your center's potential for a failed audit. In fact, when reviewing the MAC (Medicare Administrative Contractors) website for audit guidelines, the reason for failure most often is lack of medical necessity or failure to meet medical necessity. First, let's look into the prep-time element and what that means for wound care.

For HBOT, Diabetic Foot Ulcers (Wagner III), Late Effect of Radiation, Compromised Grafts, and Flaps each diagnosis has an element of time in them, not only to start treatment but to continue treatment. Likewise, Cellular Tissue Product (CTP), Multi-Level Compression (MLC), Casting, applications, and, yes, even debridement has recipes with ingredients that need to be understood and adhered to.

Prep time allows us to ensure all of the elements of Medical Necessity are substantiated and/or if there is a period of time required, it is met. These elements are readily available in the medical policies and can be found in the documentation requirements. So, what happens if we miss an ingredient in our prep-time and submit the record for that date of service? Do we toss the batch out? Well, kind of! If your facility is

flagged for an audit, this is not the time to realize a shortcut or missed element occurred. For those that have gone through audits, present company included, the fun has just begun. As previously discussed, Target Probe Educate (TPE) is a kinder, gentler audit. A little education and move on to the next round. The other audit is Post Payment Review, wherein the provider(s), facility and professional provider give money back. So, what are the elements often missed or not substantiated in clinical documentation? Even with prep-time, items of Medical Necessity are missed. Why? Is it a misunderstanding of the policy that governs the prep-time? Typically, thirty days for HBO and often longer for other advanced modalities. I believe it is less a matter of understanding and more of forgetting elements by not fully reading or understanding the policies. Why?

All of our wound care procedures and supporting policies today require provider goals and plans of care. Simply creation and documentation of SMART goals during the consultation phase are no longer sufficient. Throughout the plan of care, you must also educate, measure, and document the progression or lack thereof these goals. There is no better time than the periodic reassessment wherein you must ensure that all elements are addressed, similar to the consolation. What about Vascular Assessments? Are there minimum ulcer size requirements for CTP's? The answer is yes. Debridement? yes, there are time elements.

In closing, please remember SG "Practices of Wound Care" Medical Necessity Must Haves; Pre-Assessment Treatment Forms and Templates ensure we gather all critical ingredients during our prep-time. It is these ingredients that create our "Recipes for Success!" Ultimately, our patients, provider(s) and we, individually, win and continue to ensure that SG is the Premier Advanced Wound provider.



Hyperbaric Patients Battling Anxiety and Depression

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Ally George



The psychological impact of body changes can be as significant as the social and emotional aspects of wound healing and chronic illness. Social isolation due to decreased mobility and diminished functional ability and contending with chronic illness and pain can cause a decrease in the quality of life, depression, low self-esteem, and a compromised self-image. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy can cause severe anxiety as patients try to cope with the unfamiliar obstacles in this new treatment. Healthcare providers discuss the hope of combating amputation, infection, and other associated risks that can lead to death. This includes our radiation patients as they face statements such as “There’s nothing else we can do for your hematuria” or osteoradionecrosis patients as they prepare for painful dental extractions. I get anxiety just going to the dentist and these patients may be having all of their remaining teeth extracted and their mandible debrided. Now, that’s extreme!

Hyperbaric technicians have a unique opportunity to connect with their patients. Why? Simple, they spend 2-3 hours a day with them, 5 days a week! That is a lot of face time with our hyperbaric team that allows us to recognize anxiety, sadness, lack of motivation, poor energy levels, low self-esteem, fatigue, and feelings of hopelessness. As a hyperbaric technician, how often do you ask your patients questions like “Did you eat today/what

did you have?” or “How did you sleep last night?” Asking these types of questions helps you to not only gauge physical concerns, such as blood glucose levels but also helps to gauge where the patient is today, mentally.

It is well-studied that poor mental health correlates directly to slow wound healing; and as wound experts, we should be maximizing efforts to improve all aspects of our patient’s health.

Resilient individuals have the power to adjust, resist stress, and potentially thrive in the face of adversity but resilience can be impeded by a lack of understanding of their condition, new physical limitations, and psychosocial consequences. There are many ways to improve your patient’s mental health:

Consider using some of the below ideas, and always report concerns to the healthcare provider. Remember, there is treatment for anxiety and depression!

- Build rapport and trust
- Ask the patient about their obstacles
- Be clear and concise about their treatment(s), risks, and goals
- Provide educational handouts that can be reviewed at home with their support system
- Speak directly to the patient’s face, in understandable terms
- Show the patient their progress (wound pictures/healing percentages & radiation cystitis questionnaires)



Education is one of many key benefits to partnering with SerenaGroup.

SerenaGroup recognizes that the key to continued success with positive clinical outcomes is education. Education is provided through different platforms to ensure the tools are available to our centers.

- Monthly HBO Safety Webinar
- Monthly Educational Series
- Roundtable Compliance Meeting
- Roundtable PD Meeting - Productivity | Community Education
- Journal Club
- Member's Portal
- Monthly Newsletter
- Policies and Procedures
- Clinical Guidelines
- On-line and on-site courses



2022 Educational Courses

April 21-24, 2022
Akron OH

SerenaGroup Blue Star Winner



Cindy Glaze
HBO Tech

"Cindy is focused on patient care, safety and teamwork and has helped in many areas to ensure the center continues to run smooth for the patients & team."

SerenaGroup

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