



Spotlight: Interview with

Isabelle Dussarrat

Technical and Commercial, Osmose, Toulouse

DARCO products and brand value



January 2020

DARCO knows how important a good connection to customers is. That is why we rely entirely on direct contact and long-term partnerships with our distributors. Through personal contacts, competent support and attractive partner programs, we strengthen the cooperation with specialist retailers. Osmose is our partner since many years.

Alexandra Panizza, Editor-in-Chief of the DARCO Europe E-Journal: As DARCO distributor, you are our direct point of contact for potential buyers in France and you have been dealing with DARCO products for several years now. How well known, do you think, are the products in the French community?

Isabelle Dussarrat, Osmose: DARCO products are still not widely known in France. The “Barouk” shoe is still supplied in some regions but not primarily. Foot surgeons are looking for postoperative shoes with a sharper trend – more like running shoes and less like orthopaedic shoes – to be worn following their mini-invasive surgery. Many of them design their own shoes. So it’s become a very competitive market. The biggest problem encountered is referencing the products in the retail outlets. Pharmacies and orthopaedic stores do not systematically issue the product prescribed by the doctor. Sometime they sell off products that they have in stock. Nonetheless, DARCO has introduced new products which have changed the market. The gradual adaptation of materials, the potential for individual customisation – particularly with sole systems, new shapes or improvements in comfort and better compliance have drawn attention to DARCO. At the various conferences on the foot, ankle and diabetic foot, the DARCO solutions have been received with enthusiasm.

AP: So it’s not primarily about the price?

ID: Of course, the preoccupation with price is very important in the French market. It is impossible to imagine developing a product without a code on the list of reimbursable products and services and hence without reimbursement. But our clients respect the fact that product development involves intensive work and understand the price of quality. We are looking for straightforward products and want to offer modern effective solutions. Our clients know that medical devices progress step by step, developing products takes time and that there’s much to be done between the idea of launching a product and one that is established on the market.

AP: Which DARCO product would you describe as a “dazzling new concept”?

ID: When I look back over the last few years, the best product is probably the Relief Dual® Off-loading Shoe. The “blue-soled shoe”. First of all, it did not really belong to our conventional and traditional range where forefoot off-loading has always been achieved by a forefoot zone floating completely free of any contact, better known as “the Barouk shoe”. DARCO had a very clear idea of the product and then had to find a solution to ensure its success which didn't really take long. With the concept of the Relief Dual® Off-loading Shoe, DARCO moved away from the plateau design and this “newcomer” proved to be very effective and extremely well received within the medical community. Particularly in combination with modular sole systems. The low-profile shoe intuitively ensures a good walking pattern and the rigid shaft is sandwiched in the sole so that it covers the whole area. Now add the features of a negative heel and a rocker sole and the shoe can reduce pressure points significantly as well as decrease flexion during the standing phase of walking. The Relief Dual® off-loading shoe has already won a good reputation with healthcare professionals and orthopaedic shoemakers. The presence of a LPPR code gives an additional push.

AP: How do you get this information on the market?

ID: Firstly, we watch the market and pay close attention to client requirements. Then we try to offer appropriate solutions. The fact that patients, particularly those with sensory disorders or polyneuropathy, have developed dysfunctional models of walking and incorrect use of common forefoot off-loading shoes such as the Barouk by rolling above the pivot point and reversing above the edge encouraged us to find better products. The new shoe has provided a new solution and DARCO has been true to our philosophy and has supported us on the market with the strength and power of a market leader. We can benefit from DARCO's 30 years of experience.

AP: What sets the pace when selecting DARCO products?

ID: Product selection is guided by customer demand. We want to be able to respond to these questions with flexibility, not to mention customisation for promotional purposes. Finally, we need to mention that government regulations change again and again and affect the market or products have to be adjusted.

AP: How does DARCO help you with this?

ID: We work together at various levels: knowledge transfer, information campaigns or arranging events. Together we work on advertising strategy and promotional considerations. We benefit from a successful partnership!

AP: So, we await the rest with impatience. Thank you for talking to me.

