

The Katie Piper Foundation: supporting burn survivors in the UK

Further information

The aims and objectives of the Katie Piper Foundation are:

- To improve outcomes for burn survivors
- To deliver, directly or indirectly, intensive comprehensive burns rehabilitation in the UK (following the burn survivor's discharge from acute hospital care)
- To support burn survivors throughout their journey of recovery
- To advance a deep understanding of the context in which the Katie Piper Foundation acts (the burn care world) and of key stakeholders
- To develop key relationships, collaborations, associations and partnerships.

The Katie Piper Foundation was founded by Katie in December 2009, after she survived a brutal attack that led to her spending two months in the Burns Unit at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. Katie successfully rebuilt her life and is now a best-selling international author, speaker and campaigner. Her charity's vision is a world where scars do not limit a person's function, social inclusion or sense of wellbeing. In its early stages, the Foundation sought to understand the landscape it occupied and how to fulfil its goal of enabling people with scars or burns to flourish and thrive. Drawing on Katie's own experience, and looking to meet the needs of the many burn survivors who gravitated towards it, the Foundation established a range of services. Its aim was to fill gaps in UK provision of burns rehabilitation and scar management.

Over the past seven years, the list of services provided by the Foundation has grown substantially. They are provided either directly or through partners, carefully selected for their expertise. This approach underscores the Foundation's philosophy and its commitment to being a trusted source for the highest standard of advice and treatment. Having followed these principles, the Foundation is now able to do more than supplement the standard care that is currently available to burn survivors: it is also driving the national agenda for innovation and change in the field of rehabilitation.

To this end, the Foundation has succeeded in establishing the pilot phase of the first ever residential burns and scar rehabilitation centre in the UK. With its tailored facilities and treatments, it will serve as the nexus for a number of important endeavours: a research programme for burns and scar rehabilitation; the provision to burn survivors of the latest interventions and technologies, and the creation of a hub to integrate key services such as back-to-work programmes and peer support. Once this model is established, the Foundation hope to disseminate it throughout the UK and beyond.

The three pillars to the Foundation's strategy are:

- ▶▶ Charity services
- ▶▶ Training and education
- ▶▶ Burn rehabilitation and scar management.

Our services, which include hair restoration, medical tattooing and camouflage services, bridge what is not available or consistently accessible through the health service. These are supplemented by our peer support programmes.

BASED ON EVIDENCE

An important motivator for delivery of the highest levels of care is the availability of a base of robust scientific evidence to support the efficacy of treatment options for patients. Quite justifiably, this kind of evidence is demanded not only by patients, but also by potential funders of healthcare services; if persuasive evidence of effectiveness is not available — which is often the case with newer treatments — access to these interventions can remain restricted or unavailable for many years. For treatments that show the greatest potential benefit, the Foundation strives to create momentum by providing an arena in which to generate an evidence base, while also doing our utmost to protect vulnerable patients from any harm that could be caused by unproven treatments.

When it comes to burn rehabilitation, the numbers of patients are relatively low nationally when compared with other types of trauma. Moreover, their injuries are very diverse and individualised, so the array of variables affecting their recovery and rehabilitation is highly complex. This makes it very challenging to collect the body of data that is needed to provide vital evidence: it can take years, even decades, and the costs could prove prohibitive. The Katie Piper Foundation has decided to tackle the challenge of gathering evidence in a constructive and resourceful way, amplifying its voice by launching a new journal entitled *Scars, Burns and Healing*, the only peer-reviewed scientific journal to target scar research whilst also covering the related fields of burns and wound healing.

The Katie Piper Foundation has come a long way since it was established in 2009. Although the Foundation is still in its youth, its most profound contribution lies in its formula for putting patients at the heart of driving and developing services that recognise and meet their needs.



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