

From pockets of passion to a national movement: The Legs Matter Champion programme

Everywhere we look, we see healthcare professionals quietly championing leg and foot care in their own ways. The Legs Matter Champion programme is about recognising that passion, connecting it, and turning it into a collective movement for change.

Across the UK, healthcare professionals are quietly doing extraordinary work to improve leg and foot care. We see it every year during Legs Matter Week: the posters pinned up in community clinics, the conversations started on wards, the social media posts reaching beyond the wound care community.

What stands out most is the passion. Time and again we meet people who care deeply about changing things for the better, who want to speak up and make sure patients get the attention and treatment they need.

At Legs Matter, we have always known these pockets of good practice exist. But we have also asked ourselves: how do we connect them? How do we make sure these sparks of energy do not fade in isolation, but instead build into a collective force for change?

Why we created the Champion programme

The idea grew from a simple question we are often asked: "What can I do to change this?" It comes from healthcare professionals who feel frustrated by poor care and who see the consequences of late or inconsistent treatment every day. They know it does not have to be this way and want to be part of changing the story.

The Champion programme is not a training course or a qualification. It is not about being a badge-carrying expert. It is about recognising and connecting the people who are already championing leg and foot health in their workplaces and communities. It is about giving them a shared identity and a sense of belonging to something bigger.

Who can be a Legs Matter Champion?

The short answer is anyone in health or social care who cares about leg and foot health. Nurses, podiatrists, GPs, healthcare assistants, care workers and people working in the voluntary sector are all welcome. You do not

need permission or a particular job title. You just need to care enough to do something.

That "something" might be as simple as putting up a poster in your clinic, wearing a Champion badge or sharing resources with colleagues. It might mean bringing leg health into your teaching, raising awareness online or running a stand during Legs Matter Week. However small or large the action, it all matters.

Building a community

Since launching the programme, we've welcomed around 100 Champions from across the UK. They represent a wide mix of professions and settings but are united by the same motivation: to stop people being harmed by inadequate treatment of leg and foot conditions.

We know how important it is for Champions to feel connected, so we are building that community together. We have held our first online meet-up, with more planned. We have set up an online platform where Champions can share updates, ideas and encouragement. We also send regular updates to keep the conversation alive.

This is very much a two-way relationship. Champions are not just signed up to the programme. They help shape it by suggesting topics, sharing stories and telling us what would be most useful.

Our ambition

Our long-term goal is simple: to have at least one Legs Matter Champion in every healthcare setting in the UK. That's how we'll create the pass-it-on effect we're aiming for. One Champion sparks another. One conversation leads to the next. Together these small actions can shift culture and practice in meaningful ways.

The programme is also helping us build a clearer picture of what's happening on the ground and connecting dots between isolated

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pieces of good practice. Most of all, it is giving healthcare professionals the confidence to know they are not alone in wanting things to change.

Looking ahead

The Champion programme is still young, but the energy behind it is real. We have been inspired by the enthusiasm and determination of those who have already stepped forward. And we know there are many more people who

feel the same drive to make things better. If that is you, we would love you to join us. Applications will reopen soon, and we will be sharing more about how to get involved.

Change does not only happen in policy documents or strategy meetings. It happens when healthcare professionals in every corner of the UK decide to speak up, share what works and encourage others to do the same. That's what being a Legs Matter Champion is all about. ●