

"Success is an iceberg"



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I'm very excited to be joining the journal as the new Academic Editor but know I have some big shoes to fill! I hope I can continue Karen's excellent work in providing a valuable contribution to the success of the journal.

For this first editorial, I would like to take the opportunity to share with you my career journey to illustrate that successes can take a while to come to fruition, and often rely on opportunities arising, some of which need to be sought. I follow Hugh Kearns on Twitter, who is a recognised expert in self-management, positive psychology, work-life balance, learning and creativity. His metaphor of success as an iceberg was the inspiration for this editorial:

"When someone has a paper published or wins an award or gets promoted you only see the final success. You don't see the earlier rejections, revisions and setbacks. You might assume they found it easy but that is rarely so." (Kearns, 2019)

I left school having achieved a moderate level of academic success, including five O-levels and one A-level. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. My Mum had been training as a nurse when she was younger and had to give up her training when she got married (as was the case in the 1950s). She often talked to me about how she regretted being unable to finish her training, hence began my journey into nursing. In the mid-80s, applying for nurse training was a simple matter of writing to a hospital you were interested in. Following a rejection from Portsmouth School of Nursing, I was accepted at the Cheltenham School of Nursing and commenced my training in September 1985. I loved my time in Cheltenham, but it wasn't without its setbacks as I failed the first and the final exams. However, on the second attempt of both I succeeded. I started in Cheltenham as a Staff Nurse on a Urology ward where wounds were scarce as patients were mainly admitted for prostate resections. However, pressure ulcers were not uncommon and although

moist wound healing (MWH) wasn't necessarily something that was discussed, we certainly followed MWH principles, using a variety of dressings. From early on, I developed a keen interest in managing individuals with wounds.

Following a move from Cheltenham to Cardiff, I took a new post on a vascular surgical ward. I hadn't particularly enjoyed my vascular placement during my training and was, therefore, nervous about starting this post. As it turned out, I gained invaluable experience with wounds, especially in individuals with diabetic foot ulcers. In addition, working at a University Hospital within a specialist Wound Healing Research Unit (WHRU) meant that I absorbed a lot of knowledge through my interactions with the specialist team, including Keith Harding, Sue Bale and Vanessa Jones. I have much to thank them all for, but Vanessa, in particular, was an inspirational mentor for whom I have the greatest respect. After taking on the role of the 'Wound Link Nurse' on the ward, I was encouraged to be part of the monthly teaching programme, eventually taking over responsibility for this, but was not without a great deal of trepidation.

STARTING ACADEMIC LIFE

In 1997, I was successful in being appointed as an 'Education Assistant' in the WHRU and so began my academic life in wound healing. Initially, my responsibilities included undertaking ward rounds as well as a programme of teaching commitments. I completed my Certificate in Education (FE) after studying for two years part-time. Subsequently, I was seconded to the School of Nursing on a part-time basis to run the Diploma in Wound Management.

At this time, degree level courses for wound management were identified as necessary to meet the needs of nurses. I was responsible for developing the curricula for three degree level modules, including leg ulcers, pressure ulcers and diabetic foot ulcers.

The Wound Healing Research Unit (WHRU) was responsible for developing the first Wound Healing and Tissue Repair postgraduate programme in 1996, which from 1999 became the Master in Wound Healing and Tissue Repair (MSc WHTR). In 2004, I began to work on this programme alongside Vanessa Jones. At the same time, I enrolled in a Master in Social Science Research. This was a part-time programme of study over three years, so I continued to work as well as juggling family life. This experience means I can truly empathise with my own students who face the challenges of part-time study, and understand the sacrifices individuals have to make. Successful completion of this Master meant I was eligible to apply for promotion to a Lecturer. In 2007, following Vanessa Jones' retirement, I took over as the interim Course Director for the MSc in WHTR, and a year later, following a competitive process, I was appointed as a Senior Professional Tutor with overall responsibility for the programme. A change in generic job roles and responsibilities within the University meant a change in title to Senior Lecturer in 2009. For the following few years, much of my time was taken up with settling into the new role and ensuring the continued success of the programme.

JOINING THE INTERNATIONAL SKIN TEAR PANEL AND EUROPEAN WOUND MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Up to this point my list of publications was relatively modest, but it was a commissioned article for the British Journal of Nursing on 'The importance of skin care and assessment' (Holloway and Jones, 2005) that led to me being invited to be part of an inaugural meeting of the International Skin Tear Panel (ISTAP) in 2011 in Florida. Subsequently, I have had the privilege of being part of ISTAP's journey, watching it go from strength to strength to now being considered a global influence in growing the evidence base for the prevention, assessment and management of skin tears (LeBlanc et al, 2018). The experience of working with international experts gave me the confidence to seek out opportunities to work with the European Wound Management Association

(EWMA), initially as a member of the EWMA Teacher Network. Chaired by Professor Zena Moore, the purpose of the network is to share wound management teaching practice across Europe. In 2014 I was invited to take over as the Chair of the network, since which time the group have undertaken work examining the level of pre-registration wound management teaching across Europe (Holloway et al, 2018).

As a member of the EWMA Education Committee, I was part of a working group that developed the first European Wound Curriculum for Physicians (Strohal et al, 2014) and subsequently the Level 5 (Porkorná et al, 2017) and Level 6 curricula for nurses (Probst et al, 2019). In 2017, I submitted my expression of interest to join the EWMA council and following nomination was appointed to the Council in May that same year. These activities, along with an increasing number of publications and conference presentations, were fundamental in me achieving personal promotion to Reader in August 2018.

I hope that by sharing my journey others will reflect on their own journeys and experiences and consider where they are now, where they want to be and what might help them achieve their goals. Often this requires individuals to step out of their comfort zone and accept that persistence, failure, disappointment and sacrifice are necessary parts of a successful journey. **WUK**

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