

## From the archives: a new column of notable events and publications in wound care



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It will not have escaped anyone's notice that this year marks the centenary of the beginning of the Great War 1914–18. Coincidentally, it also marks the first decade of *Wounds UK*. In recognition of the former, a new column will make a regular appearance in the journal: it will be known as 'From the archives' and will feature comments on significant events and publications associated with wound care. There is so much important history that constitutes the provenance of modern-day wound care that *Wounds UK* journal has decided to dedicate space in each issue to highlight the foundations on which the specialty rests.

For example, every day we rely on many therapies, such as compression, antiseptics, debridement, larvae and mattresses, as well as diagnostics such as microbiology. Where and how did these arise and who were responsible? Significant figures such as Paré, Lister, Larrey, Gamgee, Tissot, Bisgaard, Guttman and, more recently, Winter, Norton, Stemmer, Waterlow, and Lowthian among many others have all made vital contributions. But what did they do? What was so significant about their practices that made them part of wound care heritage?

There is today an unjustified requirement in some quarters to cite only those articles less than ten years old. Indeed, students in some universities are urged to do so. However, this gives the mistaken impression that 'old is bad, new is good'. There are many, much older texts that are of great relevance to wound care today, and indeed to healthcare in general.

I shall begin this inaugural column with a brief illustration of what this means. Readers may not have noticed an article by Morris et al in 2011, its title rather obscure: *The answer is 17 years,*

*what is the question: understanding time lags in translational research*. This stimulating article looks at the translation of evidence from research into clinical practice, with the stated period — 17 years — the average timeframe; some concepts can take much longer! Materials published in the journals will often take a while before they become textbook inclusions. The first case in point is a small textbook by Colin Torrance (1983), entitled *Pressure Sores: Aetiology, Treatment, and Prevention*. This book, a little over 100 pages, covers predisposing factors, risk assessment, prevention, support systems and management. Given that the contents are based upon evidence available up to and including 1982, one might reasonably expect it to have been translated into routine clinical practice. However, we were still talking about basic treatment and prevention of pressure ulcers at the Harrogate 2013 conference, as if it were a recent phenomenon.

The second case in point is that of wound infection criteria. To my mind, definitive criteria were published in the *Journal of Wound Care* in 1994 by Cutting and Harding, yet very few clinicians, particularly in community care settings, have any knowledge of them. In the 20 years elapsed since this seminal publication, it has been referenced in hundreds of articles and many textbooks, not to mention in educational materials. Why is it not common knowledge?

What do you think? Please email your thoughts, ideas and suggestions to the editor of *Wounds UK* at [edda.hendry@woundsgroup.com](mailto:edda.hendry@woundsgroup.com).

The first full piece will appear in the September issue and will be a brief review of significant wound-related developments that came about as a result of World War I.



### REFERENCES

- Cutting KE, Harding KG (1994) Criteria for identifying wound infection. *J Wound Care* 3(4): 198–201
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