

Meeting reports

Under Pressure: the South West Tissue Viability group's interactive study day

The South West Tissue Viability Group hosted its 6th Interactive Study Day at St Loyes College Conference Centre, Exeter, on the 7 September 2005.

The day was aptly named *Under Pressure* and was attended by delegates from a professional background of elderly care, community, and medical nursing.

Dr Chris Bower, Consultant Dermatologist at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital was the key-note speaker and got the day off to a splendid start by lecturing on 'The Red Leg'. Dr Bower delivered a charismatic and informative speech which lent itself to delegates feeling quite at ease to ask questions as the speech progressed.

Throughout the day, a number of interactive workshops were run by the South West Tissue Viability Nurse Group. The primary focus of the workshops was to meet the needs of the delegates attending, and to address the difficulties that practitioners face in their practice. The range of workshops was broad and offered choice and variety. The sessions available were:

- ▶ *Documentation* led by Tracey McKenzie and Shannon Franklyn-Miller, Clinical Nurse Specialists in Tissue Viability, Exeter
- ▶ *Dressing Selection* chaired by Heather Newton, Tissue Viability Nurse Consultant, Cornwall
- ▶ *Tissue Viability Interface with Clinical Governance* led by Kathy Knowles, Senior Tissue Viability Nurse for Specialist Support Services and Nursing Care Homes
- ▶ *Equipment Selection* chaired by Sue Robertson and Fiona Ballaste, Tissue Viability Nurses for Specialist Support Services and Nursing Care Homes
- ▶ *Systemic Assessment* led by Andrew Kingsley, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Tissue Viability, North Devon,

and Jacqui Murray, Senior Lecturer, Plymouth University

- ▶ *Class 4 Compression Hosiery? An Alternative Treatment to Bandaging* held by Jeannine Prytherch and Jane Pike, Clinical Nurse Specialists in Tissue Viability and Leg Ulcer Management
- ▶ *Larval Therapy* led by Alison Starkey and Catherine Miller, Clinical Nurse Specialists in Tissue Viability and Leg Ulcer Management
- ▶ *Diabetic Foot* chaired by Louise Vickery, Vascular Nurse Specialist, and Barbara Chappell, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Tissue Viability, Weston Supermare
- ▶ *Skin Care* led by Martyn Butcher, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Tissue Viability, Plymouth.
- ▶ *Vac Therapy* led by Helen Orchard, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Tissue Viability, Torbay.

The concluding key-note speaker, Jeannie Donnally, Specialist Nursing Research Fellow from the Royal Hospitals University of Ulster, lectured on the prevention of heel pressure ulceration. This informative lecture reviewed her research of heel ulceration, highlighting the issues and difficulties that all nurses face as care givers. As tissue viability nurses we have seen the incidence of heel ulceration increase and are concerned about its effect on quality care. This revealing speech gave an insight into the underlying causes and prevention of heel ulcers.

This study day was sponsored by a number of companies involved in wound care and the prevention of pressure damage. Without their continued support, this day would not have taken place and we are very grateful to them.

It was a full, stimulating, and exciting day for the delegates and all those involved in leading the workshops. With that I would also like to thank the Exeter Community Tissue

Viability and Vascular Team for all their hard work and efforts in organising this day.

Vanessa Redwood, Tissue Viability Nurse, Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust

From the laboratory to the patient: future organization and care of problem wounds

Over 2000 people attended the joint international meetings of the German Wound Healing Society (DGfW), the European Tissue Repair Society (ETRS), and the European Wound Management Association (EWMA) in Stuttgart, Germany on 15–17 September 2005.

A rich programme of plenary, concurrent, satellite symposia and poster sessions, together with an extensive trade exhibition, meant that there was something for everyone. The main sessions were presented in either English or German, with simultaneous translation being available. A number of awards were made for Best Poster, ETRS Young Investigator, EWMA First Time Presenter, Basic Research, and Nursing Research.

There were so many sessions and presentations that it is impossible to mention them all. They included the sessions mentioned above, as well as key sessions where the three societies invited leading experts to talk on specific issues. Workshops were also held where the topics presented were of a more practical nature.

Contentious issues that were aired included efficacy and cost-effectiveness of silver dressings, the relevance of critical colonization within the infection continuum, and the role of stem cells in the wound repair process. It is still too early to draw any firm conclusions about any of these issues but it is without doubt that the debate will continue and, at times, will be of a volatile nature.

There were many interesting posters on a variety of topics. One poster that in particular caught the eye was a preliminary evaluation of a bandage that delivers a small electrical charge to the wound. Here is a product with its own power supply that works on the principle of the current of healing. Is this a step forward or commercial wishful thinking? Only time will tell.

The conference also hosted the launch of the 4th EWMA position document. Entitled *Identifying Criteria for Wound Infection*. This document clearly puts into context how important it is to recognize that criteria for wound infection may vary according to wound

type – the catch-all approach or one size fits all is no longer relevant. Copies of the document may be downloaded from www.ewma.org.

**Keith Cutting, Principal Lecturer,
Buckingham Chilterns University,
Bucks**

The 6th Scottish Wound Care Conference

The 6th Scottish Wound Care Conference run by Wounds UK was held in the Thistle Hotel, Glasgow, on 8 September 2005. Over 300 delegates attended this event, which has now firmly established itself as the biggest and most popular conference

of its kind in Scotland. The conference attracted practitioners from all over Scotland, and some from further afield.

A large supporting exhibition provided current information from our commercial partners across wound care, leg ulcer care, and pressure ulcer management, and their support was very much appreciated. Delegates enjoyed being able to see and try new equipment and products and left with lots of new information to take home to their own areas.

Two major publishers also attended, providing an opportunity for delegates to peruse recent books

and journals. In addition, two of the major societies also had stands – the Wound Care Society and the Tissue Viability Society.

The programme was designed to provide something for everyone and, as in previous years, included top names from across the UK. The opening speaker was Alison Hopkins, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Tissue Viability from the East London Wound Healing Centre. Alison tackled the tricky topic of compression hosiery in leg ulcer management. She ably discussed the difficult issues involved in achieving concordance with clients, and also demonstrated how she ensures practitioners become competent in the assessment and fitting of hosiery.

Trudie Young, Lecturer/Practitioner at Glan Clwyd Hospital and the University of Bangor, brought to life the physiology of pain and discussed how pain was best managed in wound care, with careful reference to the recently published best practice and position statements.

Andrew Kingsley, Tissue Viability Nurse Specialist at North Devon District Hospital, provided a lively discussion on recent developments in the assessment and management of wound infection. He was followed by Linda Primmer, Tissue Viability Nurse Specialist at Lothian Primary Care Trust. Linda has experience of working as a Tissue Viability Nurse in both the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia, and contrasted the differences and similarities in care across the two continents.

After lunch, delegates were impressed with a self-confessed novice speaker, Liz McMath, Tissue Viability Nurse Specialist at Ayrshire and Arran Community Health Division. Liz described a series of complex case studies which provided valuable insight into the more

challenging aspects of patient care, and raised a number of questions.

David Gray, Clinical Nurse Specialist at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, concluded the day by describing the latest steps in Applied Wound Management and the associated assessment and treatment protocols.

Next year's conference will be held on Thursday 7 September in the Thistle Hotel, Cambridge Street, Glasgow. It will be a double conference, comprising the traditional Scottish conference, together with a concurrent session for nursing and residential care home staff. For more information on both these events, please visit www.wounds-uk.com in 2006.

Alison Coull, Chairperson, Scottish Conference

Challenging Pain and Improving Clinical Outcomes

The Activa Seminar entitled *Challenging Pain and Improving Clinical Outcomes* was held in the Beardmore Hotel, Clydebank, Scotland on 5 October 2005.

As part of a UK-wide initiative, Activa Healthcare and Wounds UK have developed a series of seminars aimed at raising awareness of the importance of wound pain and the possibilities surrounding its effective management.

Activa Healthcare was keen to share its experiences with the second-generation sheet hydrogel ActiformCool™ and its impact on wound pain. A large group of nurses and podiatrists from across Scotland and the north of England gathered to hear a variety of presentations. These ranged from the science of wound healing and second-generation sheet hydrogels, to case reports of complex and challenging cases where pain had been alleviated/reduced by the use of these products.

The day was chaired by David Gray. David highlighted the recent consensus

documents from the UK, Europe and most recently the World Consensus Document which highlights the unacceptability of wound pain.

Keith Moore presented the science behind second-generation hydrogels, and identified how these dressings differ from previous hydrogels and how they can positively impact upon wound pain. Keith pointed out that the structure of the second generation hydrogels meant they were able to both donate and absorb moisture from the wound.

Sylvie Hampton, Tissue Viability Consultant, then delivered a presentation which highlighted how second generation sheet hydrogels can be used to reduce the risks associated with debridement by donating high levels of moisture to dry eschar and thus facilitating debridement.

Achieving patient concordance and improving clinical outcomes was the subject of Julie Trudgian's presentation. It was identified that where patients fail to feel part of a partnership with the practitioner they can disengage with care. It was identified that unresolved wound pain can be one reason why patients fail to engage with their treatment and thus suffer more pain as a result.

Bringing the day to a close Deborah Hoffman enthralled the audience with her presentation which demonstrated how second-generation sheet hydrogels, in this case ActiformCool™, can result in the reduction or elimination of pain in patients with very complex leg ulcers.

The day ended with a lively discussion between the speakers and the audience and was finally closed by Marc Courtney, Managing Director of Activa Healthcare who thanked all those who had participated and reiterated Activa Healthcare's commitment to fighting wound pain.

Edward Rusling, Publisher, Wounds UK