

Global gathering will give wound healers one voice

Douglas Queen, Gary Sibbald

The third meeting of the World Union of Wound Healing Societies (WUWHS) will take place in the summer of 2008 in Toronto, Canada. It is hoped that all the preparation and planning will help to ensure that it will be a very different meeting to those that have been held before. It will be the result of a true partnership between wound care associations, wound care publishers and also the wound care industry.

As individuals we all participate in the creation and dissemination of knowledge in the field of wound care. We all share the common problem of treating wounds and together provide a unified voice to ensure the development of wound care as a clinical specialty. With a common problem and a common objective it is the intention of the WUWHS to provide a global forum for the dissemination of evidence-informed practice, beginning with next June's congress. Through the ongoing support of the many participating organisations, the World Union will coordinate the collection, review and dissemination of the international evidence base for wound care. The aim is not to circumvent the initiatives of individual countries, but rather to supplement them. The union will channel the power of the collective voice of the many participants involved in wound care and embrace its multidisciplinary nature.

The mission of the World Union is to enhance the life of people with

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wounds worldwide. Its objectives to accomplish this mission include:

- ▶▶ Contribute to the improvement of wound care standards for patients, healthcare professionals' performance and facilitate universal access for patients in all healthcare systems
- ▶▶ Educate all healthcare professionals in the interprofessional team approach that delivers best practices for improved patient outcomes
- ▶▶ Develop and disseminate educational training toolkits or resources in practical, relevant, and

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adaptable formats to meet the local needs of developed, developing, and emerging health care systems

- ▶▶ Appraise and organise the evidence base to encourage best practices for optimised patient care
- ▶▶ Coordinate a worldwide exchange of information among wound care societies and other relevant stakeholders, including regional, national, international, and global agencies.

The primary goal of the World Union 2008 Congress will be to present summaries of the wound care evidence base and share the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to improve patient outcomes. Evidence-based medicine

requires a higher level of evidence particularly the randomised controlled trial. Is this appropriate for wound care since most of the products used, including gauze, are not pharmacological in nature. Imagine trying to justify a large, expensive RCT on gauze — it is simply not practical. It may be that the whole area of EBM needs to be better tailored and adjusted to suit the wound care arena. Do we need to control our destiny with regard to the development of wound care and take it back into our own hands? To address this the union hopes to redefine evidence-based medicine to evidence-informed practice at the conference in the hope that it better suits the clinical needs of those practitioners caring for people with wounds.

Treating acute and chronic wounds is an ongoing challenge for healthcare professionals around the world. Social, economic, and technological differences, however, can create a vast divide in approaches to wound care. The WUWHS 2008 congress embraces the multicultural, multidisciplinary nature of our profession and provides an opportunity not only to network but also to work together for the benefit of all wound healers around the globe. Information and participation will embrace all levels of experience.

As a global community of wound care specialists, we need to share our insight, data, and awareness of common wound care concerns and solutions. When we do this, we can build new initiatives to advance wound care practices and to improve patient outcomes globally. **WUK**

If you would like more information about the 2008 conference go to www.wuwhs2008.ca where you can also submit an abstract (deadline 15th December).