

# Proposed merger will ensure a positive future for tissue viability

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In October 2006 I received my copy of the Wounds UK Pressure Ulcer Newsletter by e-mail and I was gripped by the editorial written by Mike Clark who said: 'Focusing upon the UK alone we have too many conferences, too many associations and little research', and went on to pose the question, 'How should we move forward?' The answer might appear to be obvious — all UK associations and publications should come together to form a strong unified voice for health professionals, their patients and the general public.

The TVNA committee and I believe the time has come to form a new society and I am delighted that the board of trustees of the Wound Care Society agree. Both societies have now approached their members with the proposal of dissolving both the TVNA and the WCS and forming a new society with the intention of not only safeguarding the voice of tissue viability in this country, but moving it forward. We are now awaiting their decision.

The TVNA has provided a voice for its members, responding to consultation documents, ensuring that the voice of this group of specialists is heard within the Department of Health and also providing a host of valuable resources. It also has created the talking viability forum where members can pose questions to each other, reaching out for professional support and guidance.

None of this will be lost by dissolving the TVNA within the formation of a new society. All of the above resources

will be included, and more. The Wound Care Society has a strong history of providing valuable education, in the form of booklets and study days, it also has a common aim with the TVNA of providing the necessary support for the development of future TVNs and others working in tissue viability. It is envisaged that the collective voice of the members from the WCS and TVNA will prove stronger and more insistent in driving

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forward the objectives of the new society. The proposed objectives of the new society are:

- ▶▶ To promote and further, multidisciplinary best practice through the provision of a members' network, educational resources, evidence-based guidelines and a communication forum.
- ▶▶ To provide a professional voice for significant national and international tissue viability issues
- ▶▶ To provide professional support and development to both specialist and non-specialist practitioners
- ▶▶ To provide user-friendly tissue viability information and resources for the public.

We envision that the objectives will be achieved using the internet, access to guidelines, open forum/ Q&A, professional representation to Department of Health/NICE,

Involvement in the direction of the 'Your Turn' Campaign, leaflets for the public, involvement in the 3M care home project, access to key speakers as a resource and involvement in any other tissue viability related projects/campaigns that develop nationally.

In his editorial Dr Clark also pointed out that the resources provided by industry are finite. Over recent years belts have been tightened and the amount of financial support provided to various associations has been reduced. The emergence of one new society will hopefully attract a new level of support than previously given to the TVNA and WCS. This support is invaluable, enabling resources such as a website for members.

I passionately believe that we need to ensure the future of tissue viability within the UK. There are many pressures, mostly financial, which all NHS trusts are facing, and this has resulted in specialist services being reduced or even cut, ironic when the NHS Institute for Innovations and Improvement is urging all trusts to deliver quality healthcare with effective use of public money. The most obvious nursing quality indicator is the incidence/prevalence of pressure ulceration, yet we are yet to agree on a standard tool to enable benchmarking. This issue and others must be addressed if we are to deliver quality care. I am optimistic that a new society will address the needs of the public by enabling healthcare professionals, including TVNs, with education and resources to develop and deliver an effective service which can be appreciated and will include user-friendly information for the public. **WUK**