

# Leg Club update

## Leg Club® Foundation: working in partnership with the healthcare industry

The Lindsay Leg Club® was incorporated on the 10th February 2005 as a company limited by guarantee (CRN5360413), and the charity by the same name was entered in the central register of charities (CRN1111592).

### Objectives of the charity

The objectives of the charity are to protect and preserve health among those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, leg ulcers and/or associated conditions. This means:

1. Disseminating and facilitating the implementation of the Lindsay Leg Club model by highlighting its cost-effectiveness and improved patient outcomes to commissioners.
2. Advising on and promoting the provision and use of modern equipment, services and facilities aimed at diagnosing, preventing and treating leg ulcers and/or associated conditions.
3. Advancing education in, and increasing understanding and awareness of leg ulcers and associated conditions and how they can be diagnosed, prevented and treated.

### Helping industry meet its objectives

The nature of the work of the Leg Club Industry Partnership (LCIP) varies from organisation to organisation, according to culture and ambition. The Leg Club is flexible in its approach and will always try to find a way to align its objectives with those of its partners.

However, there is common ground for everyone working with the NHS. With flat real growth from 2011 and pressure to release £15bn to £20bn of savings by 2013 (Department of Health [DoH], 2008), the NHS will increasingly demand cost-effective care and treatment, combined with evidence of improved patient outcomes.

The benefits of partnership include raised profile through association with the LCIP.

The Foundation has already helped to raise awareness of leg ulcers and associated conditions. In 2009 the Leg Clubs were featured in *The Guardian*, *Health Service Journal (HSJ)* and were a runner up in last year's Health Investor Awards. The Leg Club model is now being used as a source of reference by the Department of Health in its quality, innovation, productivity and prevention (QIPP) programme.

Recent successes include:

- ▶▶ New Leg Clubs opened with support from nurses and management
- ▶▶ Representation at parliamentary meetings (Medical Technology Group)
- ▶▶ Support from the Association of British Healthcare Industries (ABHI)
- ▶▶ Being invited to attend all three party political conferences;
- ▶▶ Being invited to exhibit at a parliamentary showcase
- ▶▶ Recognition through awards received by Leg Club nurses;
- ▶▶ Community Initiative Award received by a Leg Club voluntary committee
- ▶▶ Publication of Queensland University of Technology research outcomes
- ▶▶ Annual Leg Club conference and dinner with plenary presentations from the patrons
- ▶▶ Publication of the Foundation's book, *Leg Ulcers and Problems of the lower Limb: An holistic approach* (Lindsay and White, 2008).

### Access to networks of practising nurses

Industry already has good access to tissue viability nurses (TVNs), but partnership with the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation gives greater access to practising nurses and grassroots members. In addition, collaborative partners are able to participate in a growing and potential significant treatment alternative, serving an informed base of nurses and patients. However, to ensure protection of both parties, it is essential that clear guidelines are in place, the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation (2005) issued



Figure 1. Leg Club Industry Partners taken at the gala dinner.



Figure 2. LCIP meeting held in January 2010 in Cardiff.

a comprehensive Code of Practice which all Leg Clubs adhere to. This was formulated in partnership with industry partners and incorporated guidance provided by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), Surgical Dressing Manufacturers Association (SDMA) and the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI).

### Marketing profile

Despite the uncertainties and economic pressures, Leg Clubs have continued to expand. A major area of focus for 2009/10 is the development of a business model to maximise the potential for growth in a commissioning environment. The challenges of 'resistance to change' that Leg Clubs have encountered are slowly improving. As an example of their rapidly developing profile, their work was raised in parliamentary debate by Andrew Lansley MP, Shadow Health Minister (Hansard 21 Nov 2007: Column 1258).

### Goodwill

Above all, partnership gives the opportunity to generate goodwill through association with the charity

# Leg Club update

and promotes positive perceptions with nurses and communities.

## Rules of engagement

As any third sector organisation will tell you, its name is a valuable asset. The value comes from the confidence that people have in the charity, built on the reputation it has gained. For the LCIP, this value can be attributed to the dedication and commitment of its founder Ellie Lindsay.

According to the Charity Commission (2007), trustees have a duty to make the best use of their charity's assets. In practice, this means putting assets to work to the overall advantage of the charity, while safeguarding them against damage or loss of value. The Commission also encourages charities to maximise the benefit of any partnership they enter into.

The Lindsay Leg Club Foundation has set out a number of conditions it believes should be met when entering a joint venture with a commercial company to minimise the risks involved.

## How corporate partnership benefits the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation

Establishing a network of Leg Clubs that provide the highest standard of evidence-based care for local communities and ensuring that prescribed standards are maintained through education, training and audit, takes time and manpower. The Lindsay Leg Club Foundation needs capital to meet its objectives.

Following extensive consultation with a coalition of companies, there was general agreement that corporate partnership was the best way forward to help the Foundation achieve its goals.

Building collaborative partnerships has been challenging. It has involved identifying opportunities for change, finding the resources to bring about these changes, choosing an effective

group structure, developing a vision of long-term change, and generating trust among collaborators alongside developing opportunities for partners.

## How partnership works

When securing the commitment of a partner organisation, the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation asks for designated representatives to be responsible for taking the agreement forward. This makes it more likely that the same people will be at the table every time we meet. It also helps move decisions along quickly if organisation representatives are authorised to make commitments on behalf of their company.

The joint partnership structure has enabled corporate partners to be active within the Foundation and Leg Club network.

Since the corporate partnership model began, the Leg Club has been able to develop a collaborative philanthropic approach to educational marketing and effective communications strategies. Activities have ranged from providing educational grants (enabling the Foundation to produce public health information), to actively participating in the Leg Club conference workshops.

## Summary

Collaborative relationships evolve over time. The Leg Club movement has made considerable progress, raising awareness of its activities with the government, the NHS and the public at large. Together with industry, the Leg Clubs have forged a strong, productive working relationship. The result is that nurses have benefitted from the generic education and support that the corporate partners provide, leading to improved patient care and appropriate product usage. As a partnership, a generic teaching programme is being drafted to achieve recognised approval by the European Wound Management Association (EWMA).

Corporate partner feedback is crucial to enhance the performance of the working relationship. This collaborative approach is a long-term commitment to maximise the benefits for all community stakeholders.

The LCIP is proud to be associated with the following corporate partners, whose commitment and support contributes greatly to the successful realisation of the Leg Club concept:

- ▶▶ 3M Health Care
- ▶▶ Activa Healthcare
- ▶▶ Advancis Medical
- ▶▶ BSN medical Ltd
- ▶▶ Coloplast Ltd
- ▶▶ ConvaTec Ltd
- ▶▶ Huntleigh
- ▶▶ Mölnlycke Health Care
- ▶▶ Scholl
- ▶▶ Sorbion
- ▶▶ Sumed
- ▶▶ Systagenix
- ▶▶ Urgo
- ▶▶ Wound Solutions

If you would like to find out more about corporate partnership with the Lindsay LCIP, please contact: Lynn Bullock (email: [lynn@legclubfoundation.com](mailto:lynn@legclubfoundation.com) or phone: 01473 7495650. [WUK](http://www.woundsuk.com)

## References

Department of Health (2008) The NHS in England: The operating framework for 2009/10. DoH, London. Available online at: [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_091445](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_091445)

Charity Commission (2007) Fundraising through partnerships with companies. Charity Commission, London

Lindsay E, White R, eds (2008) *Leg Ulcers and Problems of the Lower Limb: An holistic approach*. Wounds UK, Aberdeen

**Ellie Lindsay is an Independent Specialist Practitioner and Visiting Fellow at Queensland University of Technology, Queensland, Australia and Founder of the Leg Club model and the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation; Julian Tyndale-Biscoe is Managing Director, InHealth Communications and a trustee of the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation**