

# Leg Club update

This is my first update on the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation's activities and comes after my first year as a part-time Chief Executive. Without doubt, the year has provided both great pleasures and strong challenges. Perhaps this report should start with the challenges faced by the Foundation.

With 24 Leg Clubs currently operating across England, Scotland and Wales, the Foundation may be one of the largest facilitators of care delivered in partnership between local communities and the NHS. Through the Leg Club model, a growing number of communities now have access to greater choice — both traditional GP and district nursing lower leg care, and a similar quality of care that is delivered in a social environment.

The Lindsay Leg Club Foundation should take pride in achieving so much in a relatively short space of time. However, there always remains the drive to achieve more. Various questions are central to the challenges faced by the Foundation, namely:

- ▶ How can the number of Leg Clubs be expanded and how does the Leg Club model best adapt to meet the changes occurring both in the NHS and the third sector?
- ▶ Should it remain a charity with the number of Leg Clubs growing whenever local communities want to open one?
- ▶ Would the Leg Club model move faster within the framework of a social enterprise where, either through direct employment or secondments from the NHS, the Foundation could proactively open new Leg Clubs to provide a wider geographical coverage of the UK?

These major questions have been evident over the past year and answering them will set out the Foundation's strategy for the future. Yet, regardless of the final route the trustees of the Foundation will select, one requirement remains constant — the

need to demonstrate the value of the Leg Club model.

For this reason one of my major activities in the past year has been to understand the data already collected within Leg Clubs as part of their regular audit of care, to identify gaps in existing data and to seek to fill these. From 2006—mid 2009 almost 5000 people attended a Leg Club in the UK, and the Foundation has accessed the data gathered about why these people attended, details about the care delivered and its outcomes. In May 2010 the first analysis of this audit data was presented at the European Wound Management Association (EWMA) conference, and has been accepted for publication in the EWMA Journal.

One gap in the data available to the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation focused on the experience of Leg Club members when they attend their Club. In early 2011, an audit of member satisfaction began across the current Leg Clubs and the data will be available for presentation and publication later in 2011. It will provide clear information about the patient-centred outcomes achieved within the Leg Clubs. The Foundation will thus be able to justify to healthcare commissioners and the public that the Leg Club model is a valid alternative to other approaches to the delivery of lower leg care.

If one of the major challenges over the past year has been obtaining data to help position the Leg Club model as a worthwhile route to deliver lower leg care, what have been the most pleasurable parts of being the new Chief Executive of the Foundation?

Meeting the lead nurses from the various Leg Clubs and increasingly travelling to see Leg Clubs in action have certainly been key highlights. It is easy to work on the challenges faced by the Foundation when you are aware of the value placed on each Leg Club by its members and staff alike.

The annual Leg Club conference held in late September 2010 was another high point. While many UK-based wound conferences have shrunk in delegate numbers due to the harsh financial environment of the NHS, the 2010 Leg Club conference increased its numbers attending. Delegates were able to interact with international speakers after formal presentations and also when in small group workshops. I never anticipated that one duty of a Chief Executive would be to blow whistles marking the end of one set of workshops to allow delegates time to move on to the next!

Two other highlights require mentioning. The Leg Club Industry Partners' meetings bring senior staff from major wound care companies together with the Foundation to explore how best industry can help the Leg Club model grow. The spirit of cooperation within the meetings is tangible, and, in my experience, I have never encountered a group from industry working so well with a charity to help it achieve its goals. There is clearly so much more to gain from industry than just funds to support events and activities, and I look forward to working with the Leg Club Industry Partners in the coming years.

Finally, the last highlight of the past year has been the growing working relationship between myself and Ellie Lindsay. When the news first emerged that I was to become Chief Executive of the Foundation, some thought that Ellie was retiring from the model she had developed and nurtured. This was certainly not the case, and Ellie and I have now developed a strong working partnership that benefits the Foundation and the development of the Leg Club model.

Here's looking to the next 12 months... 

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