

Legs Matter Week 2026 showed us that it doesn't have to be this way

From 8–12 June 2026, healthcare professionals, patients, carers, organisations and advocates came together for the seventh annual Legs Matter Week.

This year's theme, *It doesn't have to be this way*, shone a spotlight on a simple but powerful message: when guideline-based care is implemented, outcomes improve. People heal faster, unnecessary suffering is reduced and healthcare resources can be used more effectively [Figure 1].

Throughout the week, we shared evidence, resources and real-world examples demonstrating the difference that best practice care can make.

We made it easier than ever for people to access the latest lower limb guidelines and highlighted the human and financial cost of delayed diagnosis, inappropriate treatment and unwarranted variation in care.

We also shared compelling evidence showing that improving lower limb care is not only the right thing to do for patients but makes financial sense too. Research highlighted during the week included the incredible statistic that every £1 invested in implementing system change could generate a return of £27 through improved outcomes and reduced demand on healthcare services.

One of the most inspiring parts of the week was showcasing success stories from services across England that have successfully implemented guideline-based care. We shared the story of Bromley Healthcare, where 85% of wounds are now healing within 12 weeks and assessment times have been reduced from 78 days to 26 days. At Yateley PCN, 75% of leg wounds are healing within 7 weeks. Meanwhile, Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust has reduced specialist waiting times from 18 weeks to within 10 working days.

These examples demonstrate what is possible when organisations commit to evidence-based care. Behind every statistic are people receiving the right treatment sooner, experiencing better outcomes and avoiding unnecessary suffering.

As always, we were amazed by the enthusiasm and creativity of people taking part across the country. Healthcare teams

organised leg check events, wore bright socks to spark conversations and used Legs Matter Week as an opportunity to raise awareness of lower limb and foot conditions within their organisations and communities.

We were also delighted to host a series of webinars throughout the week, bringing together experts, advocates and healthcare professionals to share knowledge, insights and practical advice. We'd like to thank our industry partners for their support in helping make these events possible.

A particular highlight of the week was the Legs Matter Changemaker Awards. We were overwhelmed by the quality of nominations and delighted to recognise three remarkable winners. The People Power Award was presented to Gavin Bent from Nottingham in recognition of his dedication, determination and commitment to self-managing his condition.

The Together for Change Award went to the Specialist Leg Ulcer Service, Hertfordshire Community Services, for their outstanding work implementing guideline-based care and improving outcomes for people with lower limb conditions.

The Changemaker Champion Award was presented to Matt Hazledine from Lymphoedema United for his tireless work raising awareness, bringing people together and creating an invaluable resource for those living with lymphoedema.

Most importantly, Legs Matter Week once again demonstrated the power of a community united by a shared belief: that people living with lower limb and foot conditions deserve better care, and that better care is achievable.

Thank you to everyone who hosted an event, attended a webinar, shared a story, started a conversation or helped spread the message. Your support helps ensure that more people receive the care they need, when they need it.

We are already looking forward to next year. Seeing so many people come together to champion better lower limb care remains one of the highlights of our year, and a reminder that real change happens when people use their voice to make a difference. Because it doesn't have to be this way. ●

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Figure 1. Legs Matter Week campaign tiles