

Leg Club update

A year of global expansion for the Leg Club

The past months have been very busy for the Lindsay LegClub Foundation. In October, a two year randomised controlled study by Professor Helen Edwards and researchers from Queensland University of Technology in conjunction with St Luke's Community Nursing Service in Australia was completed. The report concluded that the Leg Club model of care for patients with chronic venous leg ulcers (VLUs) is more economically efficient than traditional community home nursing, and recommended that community nursing administrators should consider adopting this model of care. This led to two Leg Clubs being opened in Brisbane. Michelle Gibb, a Wound Nurse Consultant, Spiritus Care Services, is planning to open a further three clubs next year making a total of seven in the Brisbane and Gold Coast region of Australia. Plans are also in progress for two Leg Clubs to open in Wollongong and Illawarra, New South Wales by Debbie Blanchfield (Chair of the NSW Wound Care Association) and her team.

In November, Professor Edwards participated in the 3M symposium at the Wounds UK conference in Harrogate.

She presented data from the Australian RCT relating to the findings from the Leg Clubs about compression therapy and its impact on quality of life.

Also in November, the Scottish Speyside Leg Club team and their members celebrated their first anniversary and hosted the inaugural Scottish Leg Club conference, *Patient Centred Care – A Question of Balance*. The day began with an introduction from David Gray with Mike Hoskins (LegClub Foundation Chair) co-chairing the afternoon session. All presentations were extremely relevant for nurses working both in hospitals and the community. It was a privilege to have two foundation patrons, Professor Christine Moffatt and Alistair McInnes as plenary speakers. They and their fellow

speakers Janice Bianchi, Claire Stephens, Ally Lister, Jo Gander and Ellie Lindsay gave a comprehensive overview of patient care, with topics including the Lymphoedema Framework, sub-bandage pressure, sclerotherapy, dermatology, Leg Club model and care of the diabetic foot. The event was supported by 14 healthcare companies, whose stands were available for delegates to visit.

2006 came to a close with the opening of the 20th UK Leg Club, in Stoke-on-Trent, with plans for a further four clubs to open within East Lincolnshire and South Leicestershire within the first quarter of 2007.

Ellie Lindsay, Lindsay Leg Club founder

Wales' second Leg Club opens in Llandrindod

Llandrindod is now home to the second Leg Club in the country. It has welcomed members from the town, the surrounding rural area and the neighbouring towns. Since it opened in September, community nurses from the area are enjoying the challenge of a new way of working and have welcomed the chance for collaboration.

With support from Ellie Lindsay and Powys local health board it took a year to set up the club. The club meets at the local St John's Ambulance Hall and equipment was bought with a generous donation. The local community has been very supportive of the venture and an enthusiastic committee is now fundraising and promoting the club. There is also a group of volunteers who give much valued practical help running the club each week. The community nurses 'kick started' the fundraising and awareness campaign by organising a country and western evening and by holding a health promotion and wellbeing coffee morning in the Metropole Hotel in Llandrindod. This was attended by the mayor and the local press and it brought the Leg Club to the attention of the wider community.



Speakers at the Speyside Conference. Back row l-r: Mike Hoskins, Alistair McInnes, Janice Bianchi, David Gray, Claire Stephens. Front row: Jo Gander, Ally Lister, Christine Moffatt, Ellie Lindsay

Before the Leg Club was set up, the Llandrindod community nurses ran a twice-weekly leg ulcer clinic which had a caseload of approximately 10 patients. The district nurses running the Leg Club have treated a wide cross-section of members ranging in age from 30–90 years, and have encountered people that would not usually be on their caseload. Among the members is someone with learning difficulties who has a longstanding problem with lymphoedema in one leg, and a young man with paraplegia who has had a pressure ulcer on his ankle for many years. As well as VLUs, the nurses have been seeing people with arterial problems and diabetic foot ulcers and are finding the work very interesting and challenging.

By the end of December the club had 45 members of whom 22 were receiving active treatment, with the remainder having recently healed or receiving leg advice and care. Referrals have come from GPs, practice nurses, the minor injury unit, podiatrists and from the people themselves. The Leg Club benefits from medical/dermatology support from the local community hospital. The club is awaiting its first documentation and pathways designed specifically for Leg Clubs and clinical audit but so far the response from members has been positive and the nurses are pleased with what has been achieved. **WUK**

Jessie Bergstrom, District Nurse and Leg Club Lead, District Nurse Office, Llandrindod Wells Hospital, Powys