

Leg Club update

8th Leg Club Annual Conference, Worcester Rugby Football Club, 1–2 October 2008

A highly enjoyable and educational two-day Leg Club® conference was recently held at the Worcester Rugby Football Club. This was the eighth annual meeting and the remit was to meet up, support and learn from each other; and develop knowledge and skills with professionals from a variety of settings. This year the Leg Club staff were joined by many other delegates who were eager to share their experiences and examples of differing practice, which led to much discussion and exchange of ideas.

Leg Club 'leads' ranged from those who had set up a while ago to those who had opened their doors only the week before. As well as clinical input, there were hints and tips on fundraising and about setting up a committee to help encourage those who were less experienced in running a Leg Club.

This year the conference emphasised the importance of networking with other practitioners who are not using the Leg Club Model. Education is paramount if nurses are to take the lead in clinical decision-making. It is vital they are equipped to properly assess patients, (in this case Leg Club members) in their care, and to be aware of their own boundaries and limitations. Thorough assessment can only be achieved if nurses possess the necessary skills to undertake a diagnostic procedure. In order to be effective they must develop listening, examining, analytical and observational insight. Once selected, treatments are only effective if they are delivered with expertise and precision.

This conference provided a wealth of educational opportunities. It mixed experts, mature and novice clinicians, patient representatives (Leg Club members), and others who were 'just very interested' to ensure all mixed together to share a range of experiences both within and outside the Leg Club Model.



Figures 1 and 2. Hands-on events at the Leg Club annual conference.

To this end the first day was especially important as interactive workshops offered opportunities for nurses to participate in hands-on sessions, to learn or develop skills (Figure 1). Each workshop was run by specialist practitioners who first delivered a short theorised evidence base, followed by hands-on demonstrations which aimed to engage each delegate.

In small groups, nurses rotated through a range of workshops including:

- Vascular assessment
- Nutritional needs
- Topical negative pressure
- Dressings, including maggot/larval therapy
- Compression bandaging
- Lymphoedema bandaging
- Compression hosiery.

The second day saw a more formal conference where several speakers, all senior in their field, spoke about current issues relevant to the world of leg problems. Eminent presenters included Christine Moffatt CBE, Sir George Castledine, Mary Jones MBE, Jacqui Fletcher, Jackie Stephen-Haynes, and included the lived experience and patient feedback from Mary James a Leg Club Lead, and one of her

members Mary-Rose Fawkes who both shared their own personal experiences.

Throughout the conference there was an exhibition from companies displaying relevant products, which both complement and promote the benefits of the Leg Club Model. Almost all of the companies are Foundation Partners believing in the concept of 'Healthy Legs for Life' thus promoting the Lindsay Leg Club Model.

On the first night of the conference, delegates went to a charity dinner based on the theme 'Black and White Ball' which brought together clinicians, partners and members alike. An after-dinner speech was made by Keith Cutting and awards were given by Alistair McInnes (Leg Club patron) to members and clubs for special contributions and to congratulate them for all their hard work. The evening also included a raffle, and donations were given to support the Leg Club Foundation which is a registered charity intended to improve the lived experience of those with leg problems.

On the second day of the conference a celebratory cake, donated by Valeria Westwood was cut by Sir George Castledine and was enjoyed by delegates during tea before the last speaker of the second day.

The event was not only a hugely enjoyable experience, but a highly educational and interactive conference. Leg Club volunteers are committed and passionate individuals who take their lead from highly motivated professionals. Teams of workers take their lead from the top, and this conference is testimony to the commitment and hard work of Ellie Lindsay, founder of the Leg Club.

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