

Promoting Healthy Skin

Champions for Skin Integrity

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Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of our *Promoting Healthy Skin* Newsletter. Through these newsletters we hope to encourage you all to support and become a Champion for Skin Integrity.

The Champions for Skin Integrity project aims to promote the implementation of evidence based practice in prevention, assessment and management of wounds for residents in aged care facilities.

Residents of aged care facilities are at high risk of suffering with skin tears and chronic wounds and are in need of best practice with regard to assessment, prevention and management strategies.

The incidence of skin tears, pressure ulcers and chronic leg or foot ulcers increases with age and is a serious issue. Recent research suggests that over 60,000 older Australians in RACFs alone have a wound.

That's why a team of seven Residential Aged Care Facilities and the School of Nursing & Midwifery and Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation at the Queensland University of Technology have joined to address this problem.

The project is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aging under the *Encouraging Best Practice in Residential Aged Care Program*. The project team will spend 2009 and 2010 developing, testing and refining a sustainable program to promote evidence based practice in wound care, with the overall aim of promoting healthy skin and maintaining skin integrity for all residents.

Special Interest Articles:

- Wound Awareness Week 30th Mar to 5th April
- Project launch celebration

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Declare WAW on wounds - Wounds Awareness Week

Wound Awareness Week 2009 (WAW) (30th March to 5th April) is a national campaign designed to raise public and professional awareness of:

- The AWMA (Australian Wound Management Association) and the State/Territory associations
- contemporary issues and approaches to wound management
- best practice in wound management
- what dressing technologies can do or help with
- where the public can go to get help

Raising wounds awareness with policy makers and the general public reached a new high last year with the launch of the "Elephant in the Room" television advertising campaign during WAW 2008.

This campaign, supported by renowned author Bryce Courtenay, wants to expose the "elephant in the room"; the topic that no-one is talking about.

It aims to bring attention to the seriousness of chronic wounds as a significant social problem which demands urgent attention.

Sign the online petition at:

<http://www.elephantintheroom.com.au/petition>

<http://www.awma.com.au/wac/index.htm>



Skin tear in a wound clinic patient



“If a wound isn’t healing after four weeks - seek help.” Tal Ellis,¹ wound expert.



Leg ulcers can be healed with the right treatment.



Project launch: join the celebration

The project will be launched during Wounds Awareness Week on 31st March when we’ll hold our first consortium teleconference with all partners.

We are arranging a project launch cake for all our partner residential aged care facilities. So please join us for morning tea celebrations!

Project partners

- Masonic Care Qld - Cairns
- Masonic Care Qld - Sandgate
- Masonic Care Qld - Cooloola Coast Hostel, Tin Can Bay
- Crowley Care Centre - Nursing Home and Hostel, Ballina
- Avalon Blue Care Residential Care, Emerald
- Blue Care - Yurana Aged Care Centre, Springwood
- Jeta Gardens Aged Care Facility, Bethania

Getting to know the team: the project leader



Professor Helen Edwards DipAppSc., BA(Hons), PhD, RN, FRCNA

Professor Helen Edwards is the leader of the project.

Helen has worked in tertiary education for 26 years and has been Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Queensland University of Technology since 1997.

Under her direction, the School has developed a leading reputation, nationally and internationally, and is known for its extensive range of courses, positive graduate outcomes, effective industry linkages, quality PhD program, and high research profile.

Helen’s own research has focused on clinical and educational interventions

related to ageing, chronic disease and wound healing.

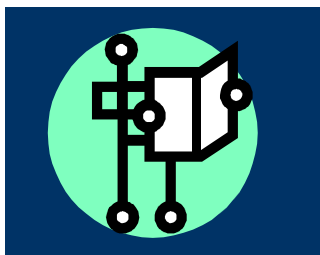
Prof Edwards is regularly invited to present her research at international meetings (e.g. Plenary Speaker at Wounds UK, 2005 & 2006; Invited paper: *Evidence based geriatric care*. 8th Asia /Oceania Regional Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Beijing, 2007), and has authored 72 published manuscripts and 7 book chapters.

She has received significant research funding to examine models of care for people with chronic leg ulcers, self management of chronic disease, family care-giving, resident-staff interactions, and the impact of quality of care on quality of life. In recognition of her pioneering work with chronic wounds, she has been funded by a philanthropic foundation to set up a community wound healing service.

Getting to know you: we would love to feature a team member (or the whole team!) from a different partner site each newsletter -

Please send your profile, photos and/or stories of your team activities to Bob Jensen, Email: r.jensen@qut.edu.au, or Ph: 07 3138 6113

¹ Ellis T, 2007, AWMA, <http://www.awma.com.au/wac/waw2.htm>



Champions for Skin Integrity Project

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*Champions for Skin
Integrity:
making a difference.*



*Compression hosiery
can prevent
recurrence of venous
leg ulcers*



UPCOMING EVENTS

Project Activities

- **Project Launch during Wounds Awareness Week (30 Mar - 5 Apr)**
 - local celebration at time specific to your RACF; and
 - Teleconference with QUT partners on Tuesday 31st March, 10 - 11am.
- **Champions, Wound Care Network Members and Link Clinicians**
A reminder to fill in the table sent last week with names and contacts for all the above team members. This can be sent back via email or you can ring at any time (Kathy Finlayson, 07 31386105).
- **Meeting Schedules**
A proposed schedule of meeting dates will be emailed along with this newsletter and information. Please check and let us know whether these dates need adjusting and place in your diary.
- **Wound Care Survey**
As discussed in our introductory visits, a staff survey will be forwarded to your RACF prior to our first intensive education and implementation week. It is envisioned the surveys will be sent in early May.
- **Teleconference with individual RACF teams and QUT team (April)**
- **Next teleconference with QUT and all RACF partners (May)**
- **June:** Start of the on-site intensive education & implementation weeks

Additional activities and items of interest

- **RNCA's Nursing and Health Expo**
Sun 26th April, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.
- **QWCA 2009 Biennial Wound Management Conference**
13th-15th Aug 2009, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre,
Call for abstracts closing 24th Apr 2009. (flyer attached)
- **WoundsWest website**
WoundsWest is an innovative project to improve wound prevention and management throughout Western Australia. They host a website (see link below) which offers information on the project and wounds in WA, and access to online education modules.
<http://www.health.wa.gov.au/WoundsWest/home/>



Scholarships for nursing staff in aged care

RNCA: Links

1. Nurse Scholarship Program - Continuing Professional Education:

Open to Rural and or remote RN's or "Enrolled Nurses" (Division 2) Used for programs, courses and conference attendances as either a presenter or delegate.

http://rcna.voodooweb.com.au/scholarships/nsp_pro_ed

2. Postgraduate Community Aged Care Nursing Scholarship Scheme:

Open to RN's (Division 1) with a demonstrated history in community Aged Care. Used for a) Postgraduate Tertiary Study, b) Short courses or workshops, c) Conference Participation.

http://www.rcna.org.au/scholarships/community_agedcare

3. Aged Care Scholarship Scheme- Postgraduate:

Open to RN's (Division 1) to enter or (Re-enter Nursing staff), into community Aged care sector. Used for Postgraduate courses, TAFE courses, training workshops and Conference attendance.

http://www.rcna.org.au/scholarships/ac_postgraduate

Other Scholarship Links:

Queensland Nursing Council (QNC): Application forms to this scholarship will be available from mid May 2009.

Open to Nurses with a current practicing license. RN's and EEN's. For Undergraduate studies, Postgraduate studies, Certificate and Continuing educational studies, Conference attendance.

[http://www.qnc.qld.gov.au/home/content.aspx?content=Grants, Scholarships & Bursaries/Grants, Scholarships & Bursaries](http://www.qnc.qld.gov.au/home/content.aspx?content=Grants,_Scholarships_&_Bursaries/Grants,_Scholarships_&_Bursaries)

Qld and NSW Wound Care Scholarship Links

QWCA Scholarships: Are available to members only. Qualifying period of at least 12 months membership. Use for Wound care Conferences.

<http://www.awma.com.au/state/qld.php>

WCANSW – Scholarships:

<http://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/wcansw/scholar.html>

NSW Nurses and Midwives Board: Category 4 provides scholarship opportunities to attend Conferences or seminars.

<http://www.nmb.nsw.gov.au/Scholarships/default.aspx>

