

WoundsWest...helping you help patients with wounds



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Welcome to our WoundsWest newsletter

Welcome to the first issue of *WoundsWest... helping you help patients with wounds*. Through this newsletter we hope to help you provide better care for your patients with wounds.

This newsletter will give you access to evidence-based clinical guidelines, education and clinical support. We will also keep you updated on the latest wound facts and research.

WoundsWest is an innovative project that aims to improve wound prevention and management throughout Western Australia.

The three key components of the project are advice, education and audit. The combination of these components will enable clinicians and health services to provide evidence-based wound care quickly and easily no matter where they are in Western Australia.

WoundsWest is a partnership between WA Health, Silver Chain and Curtin University.

As an initial member of the WoundsWest Executive Steering Group I have been involved in the project since its inception in 2006. Recently I assumed the role of Project Director and look forward to the challenges of continuing to achieve the aims and objectives of the project.

I would like to thank former Project Director Veronica Strachan for her steering of the project over the past two years, which saw WoundsWest achieve great success in fulfilling many project deliverables.

Regards

Dr Jenny Prentice
Project Director WoundsWest



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Delivering a **Healthy WA**

Join our virtual classroom

WoundsWest education is an online interactive program designed by wound management experts. The program will help you provide better patient care by improving your ability to prevent and manage wounds.

As well as improving your clinical expertise, the WoundsWest program will help you develop your professional development portfolio and achieve your performance appraisal requirements.

To date we have had over 5,000 visits to our online education program. Around 450

people have successfully completed a module quiz and received a certificate for their efforts.

Through our online interactive program we are providing education to people from around the world. Western Australian participants include staff from hospital services, divisions of general practice, domiciliary care and universities.

You can access the program through our website.

Improve your burns knowledge

The burns module is the latest addition to our online education program. Due to be released soon, this module will assist both hospital and community clinicians in the management of burns.

WoundsWest developed the burns module in partnership with the burns teams at

Royal Perth and Princess Margaret Hospitals.

Interdisciplinary clinical groups are working on skin tear and leg ulcer modules for release in 2009. The core module has been revised and will be available online soon.

Visit our new website

Visit our new WoundsWest website to:

- access our online education program
- get the facts on wounds in WA
- find out about our advisory service
- discover more about WoundsWest

www.health.wa.gov.au/WoundsWest



Events

The West Australian Wound Care Association is holding a study day on February 20 2009. Topics include general practice, telehealth, allied health and mental health.

Visit www.wawca.org.au for details.

The 37th Australian Association of Stomal Therapy Nurses conference will be held in Perth, Western Australia, March 11-13 2009.

For more information visit www.stomaltherapy.com/AASTN_conference.htm

The facts on wounds in WA

State-wide audits undertaken by WoundsWest in 2007 and 2008 showed that almost half the patients in our public hospitals have one or more wounds at some point during their hospital stay.

The audits involved 468 clinical staff examining the skin of more than 6,000 inpatients across 85 hospitals.

As well as almost half the patients having at least one wound, between 20 and 25

per cent of the wounds were preventable hospital-acquired injuries such as pressure ulcers and skin tears.

As a result of the 2007 audit, WA public hospitals received \$5 million in Commonwealth funding for pressure reducing mattresses and other equipment.

We are now preparing for the 2009 audit, which will be undertaken in May and June.

Wounds across the health sectors

WoundsWest aims to facilitate wound management across the health sectors. The project team recently completed wound audits in the private sector and two residential care facilities. We are currently analysing these results and will be able to compare findings with the public hospital audit results.

In February WoundsWest will undertake a wound audit of a large domiciliary care service. This will test the transportability of the audit methodology into the domiciliary setting.

Call the experts on 1300 WOUNDS

We are about to start a pilot of a new telephone-based advisory service. The service will help clinicians manage complex and/or chronic wounds.

Clinicians at six rural pilot sites will be able to call 1300 WOUNDS and our wound

management experts will answer their wound-related enquiries.

The service will provide clinicians with support in wound management, benefiting patients and clinicians across Western Australia.

What's new in wound management

Honey may improve healing times in mild to moderate superficial and partial thickness burns. However, adding honey to compression does not appear to significantly improve leg ulcer healing at three months.

Jull, A.B., et al., 2008. Honey as a topical treatment for wounds. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, 4, Art. No. CD005083.

A recent systematic review of topical negative pressure found that while it did not result in earlier complete wound healing, it was associated with a one to 10 day reduction in the time needed to prepare the wound for secondary closure.

Ubbink, D.T. et al., 2008. A systematic review of topical negative pressure therapy for acute and chronic wounds. *Br J Surg.*, 95(9), pp.1185-6