Editorial

Securing our future

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Recent attendance and participation in the joint WCET™ and Nurses Specialised in Wound, Ostomy and Continence Canada (NSWOCC®) Congress (Vancouver, Canada), the European Wound Management Association Conference (Bremen, Germany) and the Wounds Australia Conference (Adelaide, Australia) reaffirmed the complexities and challenges of managing the consequences of ostomy surgery, complex, atypical or slow to heal wounds and continence issues. Conference themes and speakers addressed these complexities and challenges from the perspectives of: the consumer, impacts on quality of life and differences in equitable access to evidence-based care; advances in dressing and point of care technology and clinical guidelines to support clinical care; political agendas and the effects of war wounds; health economics and environmental factors; diminishing health workforces; debates on the growing influence, role and impact of artificial intelligence (AI) in the tri specialties of wound ostomy and continence care; and research initiatives. One could be forgiven for thinking at times the future is rather daunting and insecure.

However, further reflection on the richness and diversity of presentations and ensuing dialogue, associated skill and expertise, degree of interprofessional collaboration, courage of people living with chronic wounds or difficult ostomy and continence issues, depth of current and prospective research and emerging new talent across the spectrum of clinical specialties and research was palpable and thrilling to experience. In addition, industry participation and contribution to research and development, the generation of new wound healing, ostomy or continence products and supporting educational materials and forums during the conferences augmented this atmospheric excitement.

Overall, the combined impact and stimulus of these conferences left delegates with positive feelings that, despite the clinical and geopolitical challenges raised along with many unanswered questions, all bodes well for securing future healthcare needs of people requiring wound ostomy and continence care.

In terms of the future of our tri specialties under the umbrella of WCET™, the new vision and mission underpinned by strong governance and strategic choices as outlined by our president Kimberly LeBlanc within her President's message provide added assurance that collectively we have the ability to ensure our future is secure.

It is hoped that selected poster and oral presentation abstracts from the Joint WCET™ NSWOCC® Congress in Vancouver within this and forthcoming issues of the journal will reflect the scope of topics and initiatives discussed at the Congress.

Overcoming complex clinical issues associated with the management of multiple wounds involving extensive tissue loss from necrotising fasciitis in an oncology patient are described by Neiva et al. The importance of horizontal integration of multiple clinical teams to assess, plan, coordinate and evaluate clinical care arising from multiple surgical procedures and changing wound management strategies during a prolonged period of hospitalisation that led to successful wound healing are outlined.

The results of an integrative literature review on the positive impact of social support on ameliorating the consequences of diabetic foot disease and diabetic foot ulcers are described by de Oliveira DC et al. Positive correlations were found between social support that influenced stable glycemic control, improved self-care, adherence to recommended treatments and dietary advice and improved health-related quality of life, all of which are fundamental elements for preventing diabetic foot complications.

Peristomal skin health and clinicians understanding and consideration of the formulation of skin barriers in preventing leakages when choosing an ostomy skin barrier is the focus of Purnell and Defante's article. They advocate that skin barrier formulation as well as skin barrier fit are complimentary factors in preventing peristomal leakages and maintaining peristomal skin health.

Peristomal skin health is further discussed by Baggetta et al who relay the results of their observation of a prospective, multicenter product evaluation of a novel soft convex skin barrier. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine product performance and user satisfaction in preventing leakages in the presence of complex abdominal and peristomal contours in a variety of patient populations and geographic regions within four US institutions.

de Oliveira LM et al explain the processes used in developing five recommendations for the treatment of infections in hard-to-heal wounds using the Choosing Wisely® paradigm to guide clinical practice. The recommendation's include guidance of

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the use of topical antimicrobial solutions and dressings with antimicrobial properties as well as appropriate collection of wound swabs and the use of systemic antibiotics.

Before the abstracts, in an evidence summary for low- and middle-income countries, Haesler analyses the evidence for water sitz baths promoting anorectal wound healing.

With kind regards

Jenny