

# From the President and President-Elect

## Together we are stronger

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*“Building a strong future is living at the intersection of today and tomorrow: where living in the moment and who we have chosen to become dance together as one.” – Bill Jensen<sup>1</sup>*

This message is dedicated to one of the most appreciated WCET® Membership Benefits, our Biennial Congress.<sup>2</sup>

The 2024 WCET® – Association of Stoma Care Nurses-United Kingdom (ASCN-UK) joint congress has just concluded very successfully. It was amazing to have individuals living with stomas, fistula, wounds and/or continence needs as speakers and moderators, making this congress so very unique.

We sincerely thank all of you who worked so hard to make the event possible. We gathered together as more than 1150 participants from all over the world and you have all made us very proud!

Within our September President and President elect message we celebrated our WCET® awardees,<sup>3</sup> in this edition we would like to warmly congratulate all awardees from ASCN UK side:

- Emma Vermon and Pamela White for the Pat Black Award<sup>4</sup>
- Dr Terri Porret for the ASCN UK Chairperson's Award
- Cathie King for the Philip Salt Award, ASCN UK Stoma Care Nurse of the year
- Dr Jennie Burch for Special Acknowledgement by ASCN UK for her 2024 contribution to Stoma care and Specialty and implementing the WCET® – ASCN UK Scientific Programme
- Angie Perrin, ASCN UK Vice Chair, for having received the title of Queen's Nurse<sup>5</sup> in recognition of her commitment to improving standards of care in the community and to learning and leadership.

Many thanks for all your work and the very well-deserved acknowledgement with which we fully associate. Well done!

Congratulations also to our five WCET® – ASCN UK Best Poster Award winners, representing our tri specialty expertise:

- Hamadi L, WCET® Morocco International Delegate, for her Stoma Care Best Poster: *A First Step Toward the Deployment of Enterostomal Therapy in Morocco.*

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- de M Coelho M et al, from Brazil, for their Wound Care Best Poster: *Folder on Care to Prevent Diabetic Foot: Construction and Validation.*
- da Costa FA et al, from Brazil, for their Wound Care Best Poster: *Production and Validation of the “Doll Gill” Doll for Educational Actions with People with Intestinal Stomas.*
- Valença MP et al, from Brazil, for their Continence Care Best Poster: *Prevalence of Urinary Incontinence and its Impact on the Quality of Life in Pregnant Women in the Municipality of São Lourenço da Mata-Pe.*
- Silva C et al, from Portugal, for their Education Intervention Best Poster: *Contents and Functionality Searched in an Elimination Ostomy Self-Care E-Health Platform: APPOstomia.*

In the upcoming WCET® Journal, you will be able to read abstracts from this event, we hope also to publish some articles by authors who presented their work as an oral or poster abstract. As from previous WCET® Biennial Congresses, the 2024 abstract book will be posted on the WCET® website: <https://wcetn.org/page/PastWCETCongresses>. Also please watch for the next WCET® Bulletin publication, where you will hear from attendees and organisers about their experience at congress; and especially from our Congress Scholarship Recipients. If you were not able to attend this will provide some tasty bites of what you unfortunately missed. We are sad to say that some of our scholarship recipients did not manage to attend. These individuals will see that their applications have been cancelled so that, if they wish, they can apply another time.

We hope you will all be able to take away these tips, skills, new practice points and knowledge to implement and/or adapt into each healthcare setting improving daily practice and bring better outcomes.

As you may know, this is the very first time all Executive Board (EB) members have met face to face since 2018 at the WCET® Congress, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Despite this, a lot has been achieved, so thank you all and welcome to the new EB members who have committed to work for the next four years.

We would also like to thank all of you who have taken the opportunity to celebrate Ostomates as they deserve, especially as the WCET® – ASCN UK Congress dates were very close to their World Celebration Day.

To all attendees, we again apologise for not being allowed to have the lively celebrations we had envisioned for the Parade of Nations and the Opening of the Exhibition on September 28.

We were all disappointed to have to cancel the Scottish Pipers and Drums in order to abide with the MedTech requirements. But as the resilient and tenacious people that nurses and especially ET nurses are, we all adapted our natural skills and talents to build the excitement and atmosphere to engage all and carry us forward to a one of a kind unique and memorable Opening and Parade of Nations and an entrance to the exhibition hall. Huge thanks to all International Delegates or representatives for having made the best of it with your best national costume, as many thanks to Dee Waugh for coordinating, and running this Parade which is very 'our brand'.

To address the issues raised regarding MedTech rules and processes, the WCET® and other like organisations have agreed to write on your behalf in a joint action, to enable dialogue around standardisation. We will update you in the future.

We also would like to remind everyone that we keep your membership, registration and attendance lists confidential, in respect of the General Data Protection Regulation rules.<sup>6</sup> Any attempts you might receive to try to sell you this information does not come from us and so is most likely incorrect and has most definitely been gained unethically. We request/advise you not to purchase.

2024 has been a good year for collaboration. We also had the opportunity to partner with the European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel<sup>7</sup>, even though their annual conference dates in Lausanne, Switzerland, were close to our Congress. Dr Elizabeth A Ayello, our new WCET® Life Member, was able to represent WCET® as a keynote speaker at their 24<sup>th</sup> event, and we thank her for her dedication and ongoing efforts to support WCET®. Similarly, we thank Alison Crawshaw, our 2024 WCET® Congress Coordinator and new WCET® Life Member. This is the highest WCET® membership position in recognition of outstanding commitment to the WCET®, they both very much deserve it.

As the 2024 WCET® – ASCN UK Joint Congress is sadly over, it is now time to prepare for our 2026 plans in accordance with our 2023 four-year strategy.

We are sad to see our past Education Committee Chairperson, Yajuan (Julie) Weng and past Norma N Gill Foundation® (NNGF®) Committee Chairperson, Aihua (Alice) Chen, from China, leave, we are very grateful for all of their work and look forward to seeing them as members of the WCET® committees. As a board we must always look onwards and so we are very happy to welcome our new Education Chairperson, Dr Maria Angela Boccara de Paula, from Brazil, and our new NNGF® Chairperson, Dr Kathleen (Katie) Capitolo, from USA.

As you may know WCET® tries to move from one continent to another for its biennial congress in order to allow all members a chance to attend at least one Congress. We do not take bids for congress but we look for a venue country with a national association interested in hosting the event, and of course where we can get the best deal for all members. Our planning for 2026 was to go to a continent we had not visited for many years, but that was not to be, two sites and associations who had made a proposal sadly had to change their plans due to local and post COVID issues. We will have another opportunity

to bring Congress to these two continents at a later date. However, we have found a well established national partner with the resources and infrastructure ready to work with us. We sincerely thank our colleagues from Nurses Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence Canada (NSWOCC®)<sup>8</sup> for their enthusiastic and quick engagement, they have already provided very constructive responses which has allowed us to come to an agreement within quite a short period of time.

Although we will be back in North America sooner than we expected, this will be the first time in Canada for over 30 years when Congress was held in Toronto in 1990. We are sure this 25<sup>th</sup> upcoming WCET® Biennial Congress will be a real success, for both organisations WCET® and NSWOCC® representatives, are fully committed to work closely together over the next two years to make this event memorable. It will be the 45<sup>th</sup> NWSOCC® National Annual Conference while WCET® celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Biennial Congress, a lot to celebrate so we hope you will not miss it.

To echo the quote from Ryunosuke Satoro "Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.", this upcoming congress theme is *In it Together: Moving Mountains to Create a World of Better Wound, Ostomy and Continence Care*.

We sincerely thank, Alison Crawshaw, 2024 WCET® Congress Coordinator and WCET® Life Member, for her commitment over the past years spent on the editorial board and as an unconditional supporter member. We thank her in advance for mentoring the 2026–2028 WCET® Congress Coordinator, Louise (Sam) Samuel, from Canada, who will work closely with Mary Hill from NWSOCC®, the Programme Leader for their National Conference Planning Committee. See the upcoming BULLETin to learn more about her.

Finally we deeply appreciate the collaboration with the ASCN-UK, in particular Vice Chair Angie Perrin and Chair Andrew Bird, and their colleagues Maddie White, Wendy Osborne, and Carole Swash. All along the co-construction of the 2024 joint Congress was realized with collaboration, shared ideas and action in order to achieve our common goal and propose a diverse, inspirational and high quality up-to-date educational event which we hope will have been beneficial to all.

## REFERENCES

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