

# Moving forward

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Ostomy surgery is life changing surgery no matter the reason for it; the type of stoma formed and the person's age, gender, nationality or socio-economic circumstances.

The predominant theme of the three articles published in this first issue of the WCET® Journal for 2025 is ostomy care. Each article focusses on a unique perspective of the consequences of ostomy surgery. Their commonality, however, is improving quality of life outcomes.

The evolution of skin barriers over time to protect peristomal skin is a fascinating historical and technological journey. Despite advances made in ostomy surgery techniques to form stomas, and advances in the manufacture of ostomy pouches and accessory skin protection products, many people living with an ostomy have persistent or recurrent problems with peristomal skin complications such as peristomal moisture associated skin damage. In recent years, mouldable ostomy technology, as an alternative to cut to fit skin barriers, has proven beneficial clinically with reductions in pouch leakages plus a concomitant secondary benefit of reducing the need for skin care accessories. There are many factors to consider when choosing ostomy appliances for patients. In addition, product choice can be quite a confusing or a daunting task when patients are making these decisions for themselves. Understanding the nuances between these technologies is important. Beitz et al report the outcomes of a Delphi approach that will assist clinicians, patients and caregivers to better discern the benefits and application of mouldable ostomy technologies. The consensus statements provided guide clinicians and patients where mouldable ostomy technologies can best be used.

The suggested physiology underpinning the development of primary adenocarcinomas at ileostomy sites as a long-term consequence having an Ileostomy is conveyed by Vickers. As this is a rather rare and under-reported phenomenon, there is a dearth of information on how to manage them. Vickers uses two extraordinarily complex graphic case studies to provide some practical guidance on how to recognise the appearance of these adenocarcinomas and management options. Inherent in these case studies are reminders of the importance of regular scheduled follow-up appointments over time to review the stoma for the development of any abnormality or deterioration in the skill of the person to self-care. Secondly,

to be mindful of the person's level of health literacy pre and post ostomy surgery and their ability to comprehend lifestyle changes, demonstrate how to care for their stoma and how to recognise potential problems and who to seek assistance from.

Adults' and their care partners' perspectives of living with a stoma while residing in small or rural Canadian communities where access to stomal therapy nurses or other knowledgeable health professionals can be limited was explored by Kuhnke et al. Data from patient and partner interviews identified several sub-themes including factors related to self-management, change in employment, financial considerations and access to ostomy supplies. Family, social and ostomy support networks and the importance of education were also highlighted. The authors concluded that, "Though their paths are unique, the common thread is their determination to live fully, embrace independence and move forward with courage".

As indicated within the President and President Elect message, a common denominator that connects us all is care of the skin. Within News and views, advance notice is provided of two events that focus on maintenance of healthy skin and prevention of skin tears. Firstly, the International Skin Tear Panels (ISTAPs) World Without Skin Tears Day – a free virtual event on 10 April 2025 from 08:00 to 12:00 UTC-4. Please see News and views on how to register for this event.

The second event is a collaboration between ISTAP and WCET® to present a webinar entitled "Skin health and skin tears: doing the right thing: a shared vision for evidence informed clinical practice". The webinar, which celebrates Norma N Gill's Birthday, is on the 26th of June.

Further abstracts selected from the 24th Biennial WCET® Congress in Glasgow, UK in 2024, are presented here and once again demonstrate the diversity, scope and interprofessional practice of wound ostomy continence nurses around the world.

As WCET® progresses another milestone has been reached; the 45th year of WCET® Journal publication. The Journal's outreach helps to join us all together to keep moving forward as a global entity to improve the quality of life of people wounds, ostomies and continence issues.

With kind regards

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**Jenny Prentice**

PhD BN RN STN FAWMA