President's message

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I have the privilege of starting my term on the heel of an outstanding joint WCET™ and Nurses Specialised in Wound, Ostomy and Continence Canada (NSWOC®) Congress, which was held in Vancouver, Canada 24-28 April 2026. We welcomed over 1,200 attendees from 42 countries and presented 66 keynote, plenary and concurrent sessions. More than 300 poster presentations showcased cutting edge clinical practice and research and 76 global industry partners supported the meeting.

Highlights included simultaneous translation via Wordly, enabling access across languages and enhancing global participation; an inspiring banquet and awards ceremony; and a memorable lipsync and networking event that brought colleagues and industry partners together in fun and fellowship. Thank you to every delegate, presenter, sponsor and volunteer who made this Congress exceptional. Your engagement advances our shared mission to improve care for people with ostomy, wound and continence needs worldwide. We will be announcing our 2028 Congress location in the months to come. Stay tuned as this will be our 50th Congress and an event not to be missed!

Across the globe, Enterostomal Therapy (ET) nurses, specialised in the tri-specialty of wound, ostomy and continence, exemplify the art and science of nursing. As ET nurses we are the nurse specialists who provide critical thinking; educate our colleagues; navigate complex wound, ostomy and continence related issues; guide, care and advocate for our patients to amplify their voices; are a beacon of hope when hope seems lost. Across the globe and across all healthcare settings, ET nurses work tirelessly in visible and invisible ways to improve the lives of those living with wound, ostomy and continence related issues.

As I take up the honour and responsibility of serving as President of the World Council of Enterostomal Therapists® (WCET™), I am filled with gratitude for the giants on whose shoulders we stand and with conviction about the path we must forge together. Our ET specialty is more than a body of knowledge and a collection of procedures. It is a commitment to dignity, function and quality of life for people everywhere. It is a promise that we will stand up for patients when they are most vulnerable, and that we will keep learning, innovating and advocating until every person with a wound, stoma or continence concern receives the care they deserve.

WCET™ is at a pivotal moment in our history, the early resignation of Denise Hibbert, President Elect, and my subsequent early promotion to president, interrupted our usual sequence of governance. I understand the concerns this has raised across our membership and take them seriously. The WCET™ Board of Directors and I wish to assure you that we remain fully committed to honoring WCET™'s mission, vision and values, and to securing the long-term future of the organisation. In the spirit of transparency, we want to share the next steps we will be taking:

- We will undertake a refreshed strategic planning process over the coming months to clarify priorities, strengthen governance and guide our activities.
- We will be issuing a formal call for nominations for the President Elect position in the near future to ensure a fair and open selection process.

I greatly appreciate your patience and continued engagement during this transition. Your perspectives and participation are vital; we will share more details and timelines as they become available and encourage members to contribute to the strategic planning and nomination processes.

We must learn from the past to shape our future. WCET™'s history is rich with leaders who envisioned a global community of ET nurses advancing care through education, research and policy. Among them, Norma N Gill stands as a beacon: a leader, mentor and tireless advocate who helped to define and elevate our specialty. Norma's work reminds us that progress is rooted in rigorous clinical practice paired with relentless advocacy, for education, for resources and for recognition. We honour her legacy not by preserving it as a museum piece, but by building upon it, adapting it to today's challenges and expanding its reach to regions that remain underserved. I would be remiss if I did not thank two outstanding past presidents, Laurent Chabal and Elizabeth Ayello, for their support and friendship as I transition into the role of president.

The patient wound, ostomy and continence issues we treat are not only physical; they intersect with social determinants of health, access to resources, cultural beliefs and health systems that vary widely across nations. That complexity demands a specialty that is simultaneously precise and flexible, built on evidence, yet responsive to local realities. At WCET™ we

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strive to translate global knowledge into practical, culturally appropriate care at the bedside and to ensure that the voices of clinicians and patients inform policy at every level.

We must amplify the wound, ostomy and continence specialty as an indispensable pillar of healthcare. This means three things in particular: strengthening education and mentorship; driving research and evidence-based practice; and building coalitions that turn clinical expertise into systemic change.

I am inspired by initiatives that draw strength from global collaboration, campaigns that unify clinicians, patients and institutions around a clear, evidence-informed message. Mirroring the spirit of initiatives like the NSWOCC's® Power of Three campaign, we will harness the combined strengths of clinicians who bring advanced expertise in wound, ostomy and continence nursing to the global stage. Together these three elements create a force multiplier: clinicians bring evidence and practice, patients bring lived experience and urgency, and policy partners transform needs into systems-level change. When we align these voices, our impact multiplies.

As your president, I pledge to honour the legacy of past WCET™ leaders, learn from their achievements and boldly build on them, while steering WCET™ to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing global healthcare landscape. We cannot succeed in isolation. The future we seek requires each of you, every member, every national and regional association, every student and every patient advocate. I call on you to join us: contribute your expertise, bring forward your challenges and help us craft solutions that are bold, practical and compassionate.

Our specialty has always stood at the crossroads of science and humanity. Now is the time to step forward together with clarity of purpose and strength of conviction. Let us honour Norma N Gill and the many pioneers who gave us a foundation by building a future in which the world hears one clear, powerful voice for ET nurses, a voice that advances education, drives evidence, champions patients and transforms health systems.

Together, we will shape a world where every person with a wound, stoma or continence concern receives the skilled, compassionate care they need to live with dignity. This is our mission. This is our moment.

WCET™ Membership Benefits

The benefits of being a WCET™ member are many and include:

- WCET™ quarterly Journal (ISSN 0819-4610) in English (print) and other languages (electronic)
- WCET™ BullETin (ISSN 2652-1695) (electronic)
- Biennial Congress registration discount
- Educational materials
- Free access to members only webinars
- Twinning Project participation opportunities
- Access to Norma N Gill Foundation® Scholarships (NNGF™)
- Access to global communities of practice
- Opportunity to participate in WCET™ leadership roles
- Excelsior College online nursing programs reduced tuition
- Exclusive members only rate for an online subscription to *Advances in Skin & Wound Care*
- Ongoing professional development

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