### Membership survey

# Results of the WCET® 2019 Membership Survey: Implications and planning

#### **ABSTRACT**

Data from the 2019 WCET® Membership Survey are reviewed and analysed. Discussion of the implications for WCET® Executive Board (EB) consideration and action planning are presented.

Keywords WCET® membership, membership survey results

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

For many years the WCET® has greatly valued feedback and comments from its members. Their responses to our biennial membership surveys¹-⁴ help us to assess and revise our Strategic Plans. As in previous years, the most recent survey (2019) was available for members to complete electronically. As the WCET® believes in a team effort; this time the 2018–2020 Vice President (VP) and 2018–2020 President (P) partnered with the WCET® Central Office Director of Operations to analyse the 2019 survey results, and these are summarised in this manuscript. Overall, even though the number of participants was reduced, the collected data are quite similar in themes and meaning to the feedback obtained in previous surveys¹-⁴.

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#### **2019 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY PROCESS**

In contrast to previous surveys, the 2019 survey was simplified; the number of questions included decreased to 25 compared to 41 questions in 2017<sup>1</sup>. As usual, members had an opportunity to suggest survey items. Executive Board (EB) members reviewed the proposed 2019 survey and then approved its revised final version. It was still divided into the same seven sections: section 1 about the participants; section 2 about the WCET\*; section 3 about the WCET\* Congress; section 4 about the WCET\* Journal; section 5 about the Norma N. Gill Foundation\* (NNGF\*); section 6 about the website; and section 7 about the future. Copies of the last three survey questionnaires are available on the WCET\* website under the members only library section.

As the WCET® is a worldwide organisation, the 2019 survey was translated into five languages other than English (LOTE). Once again, we can never thank enough the WCET® members who graciously volunteer to translate the survey into Bahasa Indonesia (Arum Pratiwi), Chinese (Michelle Lee), French (Laurent Chabal), Portuguese (Vera Santos, Sandra Marina Gonçalves Bezerra and Magali Thum) and Spanish (Lupita Lobo and Heidi Campos).

Jen Wood continues to be instrumental in formatting and uploading the revised 2019 membership survey onto Survey Monkey and providing the WCET® survey team with a summary of participants' responses to all questions. Both the WCET® VP and Director of Operations sent reminder emails to members inviting them to participate in the 2019 survey. Invitation to participate in the survey was also included into the WCET® BullETin. The survey opened in October 2019 and closed on 15 January 2020, giving members several months' time to participate.

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We would like to thank all our members who completed the 2019 membership survey. However, it is noted that we had a drop in the number of member responses – less than 50% compared to the previous survey – for first time since 2011. We can only assume as to why this occurred:

- · A biennial survey could be too frequent.
- Running this survey at this time of year may not have been the best timing – some parts of the world had already been impacted by the COVID crisis; members had to vote on other topics at the same time such as the proposed Constitution changes; end of year celebrations?
- Perhaps the fact that we have increased communication with members, as it was requested in the 2017 survey, reduced the perceived need to reply¹?
- · Other reason/s we did not think of?

All data were reviewed by the WCET® VP and P with the assistance of Jen Wood, Director of Operations, who provided the 2018–2020 tables, graphs and comments from the collected data. Again, we deeply thank all our volunteer members for their time in translating into English all the narrative responses to questions written in a LOTE. Compared to the 2017 survey results, more members completed the survey in one of the LOTE; 37% instead of 31%¹. For the first time, the majority of respondents in the LOTE group responded in Portuguese, followed by Chinese.

As the WCET® 2020 Congress has been postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 worldwide healthcare crisis, for the very first time we were not able to present the results of this survey in a face-to-face EB meeting. However, the EB have had the opportunity to discuss these data, and have expressed ideas, implications and proposed action items for 2020–2022, through an online virtual meeting. A short summary of the survey results will be presented to IDs and members as well as Industry at the virtual general meeting in November 2020 and, as with previous surveys, this manuscript also reports some of its major findings.

#### 2019 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY PARTICIPANT PROFILE

#### Members' scope of practice

The 2019 survey continues to suggest that most respondents (33%) work in all the three areas of stoma, wound and continence. One fifth (21%) identified as working in ostomy and wound. The number of respondents who only provide ostomy care has changed over the years and continues to be a lower percentage (13%). The majority of respondents still work mostly full-time (79%).

#### Members' education

The majority of 2019 respondents have specific ostomy, wound and/or continence care training. Most (61.95%) were trained at a WCET® recognised Enterostomal Therapy Nursing Education Program (ETNEP) and 7% at a WCET® Recognized Education Program (REP). These data are quite similar, if not the same, to the 2017 results¹.

Twenty percent of respondents indicated that either a lack of funding to pay for their training, or no requirement to have special training to practise ostomy, wound or continence care for their employment, as the reasons that they had no specific training. Through the NNGF®, the WCET® continues to provide scholarships so that nurses have financial support to attend an ETNEP or REP.

Other reasons why survey respondents stated that they had no specific training included that they did not have the opportunity to attend a program, or that they had not experienced that continuous education was necessary. Only 13% indicated that education was not offered in their country.

#### Members' reasons for joining the WCET®

These survey results are consistent with 2017 results¹. Once again, the top two reasons why respondents join the WCET® are wanting to be part of a worldwide organisation (84.49%, 2019; 76.8%, 2017) and to keep up-to-date with the latest care developments worldwide (81.63%, 2019; 76.2%, 2017). The next reason was to further their professional development/ career (60.41%, 2019; 51.8%, 2017) and to gain knowledge of other countries via the *Journal* (59.20%, 2019; 55%, 2017). This is followed by the opportunity to network with other specialist nurses (56.73%, 2019; 56.8%, 2017), and to gain knowledge of other countries via the *Journal* and Congresses (55.62%, 2019; 55%, 2017). This is consistent with results of previous surveys¹-⁴.

ETNEP continue to play a key role in providing their students and graduates with information about the WCET®. Most respondents continue to hear about the WCET® when completing their training (30.04%, 2019; 31.6%, 2017¹; 36%, 2015²). ETNEP directors attain a pdf of the WCET® membership brochure from the central office. A PowerPoint slide deck that provides information about the WCET® is also available for ETNEP use. Both of these can be downloaded for free from the WCET® website (www.wcetn.org).

Each of you play an important role in telling your nursing colleagues about the WCET°. The importance of nurse-to-nurse referral is the next most frequent way as supported by the following data; from a colleague (24.54%, 2019; 24%, 2017¹; 22%, 2015²). We are grateful that nurses took the time to specifically identify which professional conferences and/or names of individuals who told them about the WCET°. This is very helpful and validates that the EB has selected wisely which conferences to have a booth/stand at. Many members of the EB attend a wide variety of conferences that are funded by sources other than the WCET°. This enables them to promote the WCET° without spending WCET° funds.

## 2019 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS: WHAT DO WCET® MEMBERS VALUE?

The survey asked questions regarding what members considered to be the most important issues to them and also what they considered to be the WCET®'s major strengths. As with previous surveys¹-⁴, the respondents continue to rank ETNEP/REP (74.13%), the WCET® Journal (73.68%), the Congress



Figure 1. Returns of the WCET® Journal

(67.57%) and the website (63.95%) as the top four most valued WCET® assets. This year for the first time ETNEP/REP was ranked first over the WCET® Journal for the response as to what is most important to members.

The WCET® Congress is still considered the WCET®'s strongest asset (30.77%)¹-⁴, followed by the WCET® Journal (28.57%)⁵, WCET® assistance in the development of new education programs (14.29%) and twinning programs (12.09%). Respondents wrote that all the activities of the WCET® are important and have many strengths. Just having the WCET® exist as an international entity to provide credibility for our nursing specialty is valued.

The highest response to the greatest weakness of the WCET® were the qualitative comments under 'other' (76.06%, compared to 37.95% in 2017¹). These comments are very helpful and included a desire to see representation from different countries on both the EB and committees. Please consider volunteering your time to become an active member of our standing committees, both Education and NNGF®. There is much work that these committees do and your volunteer participation is most welcome. Please contact the Committee Chairpersons to express your interest in joining a committee. We are sure they will be delighted to hear from you. There was also a wish expressed by survey respondents to get more members from African countries to join as well as from Latin America. Also expressed was more focus on ostomy care.

#### The WCET® Journal

The WCET® Journal is the official journal for both the WCET® and the International Interprofessional Wound Care Group (IIWCG). The Journal is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Our long-standing relationship with our publisher, Cambridge Media and our new Journal Editor, Jenny Prentice, is a great asset to the quality of the WCET® Journal.

As with past surveys<sup>1-4</sup>, survey respondents highly value the *WCET*® *Journal*. Based on respondents' feedback from past survey data<sup>1-4</sup>, the EB acted and made an important decision to have the *WCET*® *Journal* available in languages other

than English. Translation of a journal into other languages is extremely expensive but at this point the *Journal* is now published electronically in four LOTE. They are Chinese, French, Portuguese and Spanish as, along with English, these are the top five languages spoken by WCET® members.

Most respondents (54%) continue to prefer to receive the WCET® Journal as a printed copy by post. This is one of the reasons that the WCET® continues to send each member a printed copy of the English version of the Journal as well as posting it electronically on the WCET® website. However, the number of those who want the Journal online rose to 46%. If you do have your Journal posted, please double check your member profile to make sure that your mailing address is current and complete. The mailing labels for the Journal are generated from the information that you, our members, have entered into your individual member profile. Unfortunately, our publisher Cambridge Media gets several journals returned to them as people have moved or their address is lacking full information for the post office to deliver (Figure 1). Remember that back issues from 2002 onward can be found in the members only section of the library on the WCET® website.

Although respondents want to see the *WCET® Journal MEDLINE* and SCOPUS indexed, the *Journal* is already CINHAL indexed. The application process for MEDLINE indexing takes a few years. Based on feedback from previous surveys¹-⁴, the EB, in conjunction with our Publisher, have implemented a plan to help achieve this goal. As you probably have noticed, several modifications to the *Journal* that are required by MEDLINE have already occurred. Your positive comments about the scientific rigour of the *Journal* – thank you to our authors for submitting their manuscripts and to Jenny Prentice and the Editorial Board – as well as the new format of the *Journal* are extremely helpful. Thank you again to Greg Paull and his team at Cambridge Media for the new look and redesign which respondents "loved" and described as "very professional". We anticipate submitting an application to MEDLINE at the end of 2020.

#### The WCET® Congress

The biennial Congress continues to be evaluated as one of the greatest strengths of the WCET®. Far ahead of anything, respondents valued the presentations by ET nurses (39.07%) followed by the opportunity to present a paper or poster (10.19%) and presentations by speakers other than ET nurses (9.01%). These data are useful information for the Congress planning committee to have as it helps plan the next Congress. The WCET® Congress has always assigned a significant proportion of time for delegates to have an opportunity to share their knowledge, research and practice innovations in this educational forum.

Many respondents (60%) have attended a WCET® Congress, of which half (51.22%) have paid for themselves to attend. Employers paid for 16.46%, with just about one quarter being sponsored by Industry (23.78%). This may be due in part to the business ethics rules in the United States (ADVAMED) and in Europe (MedTech Europe) that severely restrict company

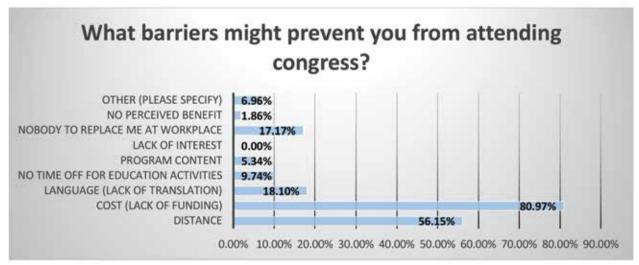


Figure 2. Main barriers to attend a WCET® Congress

sponsorships of individual attendees. This is a good time to remind members in good standing that they can apply for a NNGF® congress travel scholarship. Please check the WCET® website for application forms and the due dates.

As with previous survey results, the top two barriers that prevent respondents from attending the Congress remain lack of funding to attend (80.86%, 2019; 80.97%, 2017<sup>1</sup>) and distance (48.05%, 2019; 56.15%, 2017¹) (Figure 2). The WCET® is a global organisation, so this is one of the reasons that Congress locations are rotated to different areas of the world. After being in Africa (Cape Town, South Africa) in 2016, then moving further east to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, for 2018, the next WCET® congress will return to Europe (Glasgow, United Kingdom) in 2021. Based on respondents' comments that indicated that they wanted another Joint Congress, the next WCET® Congress is being held in partnership with the Association of Stoma Care Nurses United Kingdom (ASCN UK) in Glasgow, Scotland. Be assured that Dee Waugh, with Jen Wood and our colleagues from ASCN UK in the Planning Committee, and Denise Hibbert and the members of the Scientific Committee are busy working on the next Congress. For 2022 and beyond the EB is considering areas of the world that a Congress has not been held in for a while.

Even though translation is quite costly, the WCET® does its best to provide translations when 50 or more attendees whose first language is a LOTE pre-register for the Congress; respondents have told us that there is not enough translation and language is a barrier. Another concern expressed by survey respondents is that the Congress registration fee is too expensive, even though the WCET® has reduced registration fees, provides early bird registration fees at a significantly reduced rate, and offers Congress scholarships through the NNGF®.

#### The WCET® website

Even though we are in the internet and digital era, only 24.52% of the respondents, compared to 37.56% in 2017, consult the WCET® website more than once a month; 39.08% consult it between 1–3 months, compared to 21.14% in 2017, and

29.89% of respondents consult it less than every 3 months (29.10% in 2017). Only 6.13% stated that they never consulted the website, which was almost half of that compared to 2017 (12.19%)<sup>1</sup>.

For members who have difficulties navigating the website, we remind them of the two existing tools that might help; both of these are available on the WCET® website.

- On the top right of the page you will find two search boxes.
- On the bottom of the screen, in the green horizontal banner, a WEBSITE MAP link is provided. This map is updated as necessary.

For those who are struggling to log in, or have forgotten their username or password to access, please get in touch with Jen Wood to ask for help and support.

We also know that you may have some problems in online membership payments or because PayPal is not working properly or because you do not have credit cards. We have tried to see how MemberClicks, which is our membership database provider, can help us resolve this issue. We will not give up trying to solve this problem. Until then bank transfer is always another option; do not hesitate to contact Jen Wood for assistance if needed.

#### **WCET®** educational resources

We would like to thank Jen Wood who has created the WCET® online store at https://wcet-online-store.myshopify.com/collections/all, where anyone can purchase our publications such as the WCET® International Ostomy Guideline (the new 2020 version will be available late 2020), the pocket guides (available in Chinese, Spanish and English), and the WCET® Wound Care Tool Kit.

Thanks to the WCET® Education Committee for providing amazing webinars. Some are available online for members only, while others are available for free access. They are all posted under https://wocet.memberclicks.net/wcet-webinars-othereducational-resources, where more education resources are

listed. Some webinars are available in a LOTE. More will come, so stay tuned!

#### **WCET®** International Delegates (IDs)

International Delegates (IDs) are important WCET® members. They serve as a link between the WCET® members of their country and the EB. Each country elects an ID to represent their country. The ID votes on behalf of its country members when required by electronic voting or in person such as at the General Business Membership Meeting at the Congress. Please do remember that the ID term is for 2 years and can be renewed once. This term length is defined to give every country member the opportunity to become the ID for her/his country.

The way ID election is conducted can be different from one country to another and the WCET® does not interfere in those processes. We are only informed of the result of those elections, giving us the name of who will fulfil this role so we can update the ID list which is posted on the WCET® website and published into the WCET® Journal and BullETin.

Communication is one of the crucial roles of the ID position and function. For the third time consecutively, survey respondents indicate a new increase in communication from their ID compared to the previous membership survey results. 18% compared to 12% in 2017 hear from their ID more than once a month; the majority (35%) hear from them between 1–3 months compared to 27% in 2017¹. The number of respondents who never have heard from their ID has decreased over the past two surveys¹,².

We encourage all IDs to continue improving their communications with their WCET® colleagues and to continue to promote the WCET®. We applaud and give a huge thank you to all the IDs for their increase in communication to their country members and to the 24 IDs who have included a country-specific welcome message greeting on the WCET® webpage. As stipulated in the WCET® BullETin, if your WCET® ID would like to have an ID welcome message posted on the website, please send us your message – which can be written in your own language – to be uploaded and added it to the other ones online. We would love to see a country-specific message from all the IDs; do you think that could be possible?

This year data have been shared with the IDs by email and the updated ID Handbook (available at www.wcetn.org) which have been periodically revised. We hope it helps IDs understand and implement their role as well as to introduce new IDs to the WCET®. The communication form, which was presented in Kuala Lumpur in 2018 based on a request received from members from the last survey to be used to inform the EB of the results of an ID election, has been received only once by the VP.

#### **EB and other WCET® communication**

There were many compliments about the increase in emails and information from the EB and you want that continued; we will continue to do so. Do not hesitate to send us information you might think will be useful to share. Linking to this COVID crisis; solidarity is our strength.

Respondents still wish to have more translation. The WCET® have found a way to finance some, but as the cost of professional translation is extremely high, we cannot afford to do so in every existing spoken language for the *BullETin* nor *Journal*. If you, as a member, are happy to volunteer to do translations for the *BullETin*, with the responsibility to ensure that the translation reflects the original text, please let us know.

As the WCET® BullETin is a way to share information about what is happening in your country, please share your stories at wcet.bulletin@cambridgemedia.com.au, no matter whether you are an ID or a member. A brand new page on the WCET® website has been made including the WCET® BullETin author guidelines and has a direct link to send your articles: https://wocet.memberclicks.net/bulletin-submissions.

We are pleased to read that 53% of the respondents follow us on social media. Most of the ones who do not, do not use social media, do not have time, are not social media savvy, or prefer to be informed through emails, the website or the *Journal*. Very few members were not aware we have social media accounts; in addition to Facebook and Twitter, used since 2016, we are now on LinkedIn and Instagram. Links to all the WCET® social media accounts can be found at the bottom of each page of the WCET® website by clicking on the icons.

#### Norma N. Gill scholarships

Most 2019 respondents (75%) are aware that NNGF® scholarships are available, and most of them continue to be interested in NNGF® Twinning projects. We take the opportunity to thank all NNGF® scholarship recipients who have submitted manuscripts to either the *BullETin* or the *Journal* about what they were able to accomplish in their practice as a result of receiving the scholarship. It gives all members and donors a chance to see how this financial and/or educational support has contributed to increase quality of care as well as personal and professional development and ET nursing awareness.

To be able to give these scholarships and help those projects to run is one of our strengths, but it is really related to the available budget we have and what can allocate to them. We rely on donations and specific sponsorships from members, Industry or organised fundraising done by one or the other. We warmly thank all our financial contributors for their support; we could not have fulfilled this mission without you! As you may know, these contributors are acknowledged through the Roll of Honour now published in the WCET® BullETin.

In order to help us to get more money for that purpose, some members have suggested to raise the membership fee by a few pounds to give to the NNGF® or, when joining/renewing, that we ask for a donation. Different and interesting fundraising ideas have been shared, such as for each ETNEP to run activities, or to ask employers or governments to provide donations. We do hope you will succeed. As requested, we will continue to have at congresses on our booth a special box for donations and run a NNGF® fundraising stand by selling traditional items brought by each country delegates who wish to contribute to this important mission.

#### **Educational programs and materials**

When it comes to education, respondents were clear that although they deeply value and appreciate what is available, they want more. This is not only in the number of educational resources - programs, written materials (pocket guides, guidelines etc.) webinars - but, given our global perspective, they want these resources in their own language. Respondents want more educational programs in emerging countries and want to see more support for education in emerging countries through twinning projects. Specific areas of the world are mentioned such as Asia, Africa and Latin America. The WCET® provides NNGF® scholarships for those wishing to start a WCET® approved program. They also would like the WCET® to assist nurses in countries that are trying to have our specialty recognised by their nursing boards/government and to consider having a WCET® certification which would be globally recognised.

Under Denise Hibbert's leadership and with Jen Wood's technical assistance, coupled with the generous participation of the speakers, the WCET® Education Committee has achieved a record number of online webinars based on our tri-specialty scope of practice. Some of the webinars are also in a LOTE. Please continue to send the Education Committee your ideas for topics. More will come, so stay tuned.

#### **WCET®** EB and leadership

Thank you for the many constructive ideas and numerous compliments. The EB and Committee members contribute many long hours to achieve the WCET®'s goals so your positive statements such as "You are doing a great job and thank you" were much appreciated. Similarly, you urged the EB to "continue the scientific standard of the WCET®" and "maintain[ing] the quality".

A previous suggestion in Kuala Lumpur to decrease the size of the eight-member EB has been realised. With the 2020 Constitution change to eliminate the Publications and Communications Committee, the EB was reduced to six members.

Your remarks about the increased communication, that our "team is very efficient" and that the "WCET® has done well" are greatly encouraging, thank you. Your suggestions to work with other associations and to "get newcomers involved and have older members help and mentor them" is also appreciated. To that end, the Congress Scientific Committee has planned a leadership program at the next WCET® Congress. There were specific suggestions for the EB to continue to keep an "open mind through the many changes", and to "continue to increase the profile of WOC as a specialty".

Respondents want to see representation from other countries involved in the WCET®. If you have the time and expertise to share, consider volunteering to be on one of the committees (Education or NNGF®), the Constitution Advisory Panel or the Journal Editorial Board. With regards to succession planning, members who meet the eligibility criteria can run for the following positions – President-Elect and Treasurer. Committee

Chairpersons are nominated from each committee, so if you are interested please join a committee.

#### The WCET® as an association

For the first time, 100% said yes when asked "does the WCET" meet your needs and expectations". The many compliments that respondents wrote in about the good job that the WCET" has been doing and that the "WCET" does a lot for its members" are greatly appreciated, as well as the constructive comments and ideas as to how to make the organisation better. Be assured the EB will consider all your suggestions and decide which are actionable and financially doable.

Respondents would like to see more on Facebook and other social media. Respondents also want free or a reduced cost for WCET® membership fees; others thought the fees should be higher. As a reminder, there are NNGF® membership scholarships available for those who cannot afford the membership fee. The EB has already implemented a reduced membership cost fee for anyone who joins for multiple years, as well as a pro-rated fee for new members that join at various times during the year. Please go to the website (www.wcetn. org) for the details about the membership fee amounts.

#### **SUMMARY**

The WCET® has continued the tradition of surveying it members every 2 years. Data from 2019 respondents have been analysed and compared for trends when available compared to previous surveys in 2017¹, 2015², 2013³ and 2011⁴. Overall, the respondents are pleased with the WCET®. The EB is grateful for your thoughtful and honest responses, narrative comments, suggestions and compliments. These data have been reviewed, discussed and will help guide budget, initiatives and the Strategic Plan for the next 2 years. We thank all who participated in the 2019 survey and hope that even more members will participate in the next survey. Due to the cost of the survey, the EB is considering changing the frequency of the membership survey. Please look for emails inviting your feedback about any revisions to the membership survey questions and as to how and when the next membership survey will be available.

#### **DISCLOSURES**

There were no conflicts of interest. Conducting and analysing survey results were part of the role functions for Mr Chabal as the 2018–2020 WCET® Vice President, Mrs Wood as the Director of Operations at the WCET® Central Office, and Dr Ayello as the 2018–2020 WCET® President.

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