

UK Leg Club News

Community nursing tends to be solitary occupation with few occasions for team working. Experience has shown that Leg Clubs offer an ideal opportunity for nurses not only to work together with a common goal, but to truly 'get to know' the community they serve. There are many examples of enthusiastic motivated teams developing as a result of the shared challenge and satisfaction of setting up and running a successful Leg Club both in the UK and Australia.

To date there is increasing emphasis on health promotion and earlier intervention when health problems arise. The Lindsay Leg Club Foundation seems especially well placed in this regard and are determine how its good reputation locally can be levered to create new opportunities. The model has recently caught the eye of the National Institute for Innovation and Improvement , as the Leg Club model has been shown to improve healing and reduce recurrence within a highly cost-effective framework that offers genuine patient choice, delivers public health education and social outreach.

The Foundation has continuously worked in partnership with members of the public, Expert Patient groups, the Department of Health policy developers, NHS managers and Healthcare professionals with an aim to raise awareness of preventative management of all aspects of lower limb related problems. We have also promoted good practice by forging relationship with nursing and professional organisations / societies, patient and industry groups and in 2008 became an Associated member of the European Wound Management Association (EWMA), iLegx and the Knee Foundation. Also the Foundation's chairman Ellie Lindsay has regularly attended the Medical Technology Group Parliamentary meetings, representing the Leg Club Members (3.500 patients) group and is on the MTG Editorial board.

As a Foundation we have also experienced unfaltering public support: patients, volunteers and communities, and commendable (unconditional) support from the Foundations corporate Health Care partners.

The Foundation has been selected as finalist for the 2009 HealthInvestors Award. The HealthInvestor Awards promote excellence and recognise innovation in the healthcare sector, and the judges looked for organisations and individuals that have made an outstanding contribution to the industry in 2008

Worcester Leg Club

Debbie Andalo, journalist for The Guardian, visited to found out how Worcester Leg Club is helping local people overcome their leg problems and why the National Institute for Innovation and Improvement is interested in the Leg Club model. Both members and the nursing team participated in interviews for the Society Section, and

were delighted to represent the work and ethos of their Leg Club. To read the article click onto <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/feb/04/health-nhs>

Wales.

The current Leg Clubs in Wales continue to expand, especially in Powys through the outstanding support from Jacqui Griffin (TVN) and Paul Jenkins (Secretary, Blaenau Gwent Leg Club) have given to the community nursing teams. Blaenavon and Knighton are both aiming to open their doors in March.

Leg Club 2009 Conference date

Due to the 2008 conference evaluations and positive comments received via emails and telephone calls, by popular request the 9th Leg Club Conference will be held again over two days at Worcester Sixways Conference Centre. The conference dates are 30th September and 1st October 2009. Programme details will be available shortly on our website www.legclub.org

Australian news

During a recent visit to Brisbane, Australia, I was fortunate to have the opportunity of visiting a few clubs, both established and recently opened ones.

My trip commenced in Brisbane where Leg Clubs have been successfully operating and expanding since January 2002. The Leg Clubs are open to all age groups in the Brisbane metropolitan area and approximately 400-500 members access the current Leg Clubs per annum.

Toowoomba (nicknamed 'The Garden City') is a city in South East Queensland located 132 km west of Queensland's capital city, Brisbane, opened their Leg Club late 2008. The Toowoomba Leg Club has been formed through a collaborative approach by a partnership of Division of General Practice and other community providers and the Queensland Country Women's Association (QCWA). The club is organised and run by the local community and QCWA, with the support of Ozcare staff and other health professionals.

The next stop was a 4 hour flight to visit the nursing team at Sunraysia Community Health Services Lucky Leg Club (SCHS) located in sunny Mildura, in the State of Victoria, Australia. Sunraysia is an isolated area being 550km north of Melbourne, which according to the community nursing team provides some challenges in the areas of peer support and education for staff. According to the Leg Club lead, their club was initially a slow start with members only being referred from the District Nursing service. This changed following a presentation at the local Practice Nurses meeting and advertisements within the local community. Since then, there has been a steady increase in attendance and referrals, with the team now treating circa 19 members with new referrals each week. The atmosphere was buzzing, and the most exciting aspect was the interaction amongst the members. The members were encouraging each other, sharing their experiences and giving each other the empathy and support that gives individuals experiencing a problem of the lower limb

such hope. According to the nursing team they have become more positive about leg ulcer management and associated lower limb problems, as they see the success and the continuity of care, which has contributed to their members quality of life.

The team have recently introduced a weekly Podiatry service which has become extremely popular with both the community nursing staff and members. Due to vast travelling distances it has now become an integral part of the Leg Club service where members, especially those with diabetes requiring foot care monitoring are treated.



The next two visits were both 400Km away in South Australia. Mount Barker and Murray Hills Leg Clubs are both in close proximity to Adelaide and Mount Barker was the first Leg Club to open in Australia in 2002 by Kathy Rutledge. The club and nursing team have always received excellent support from their Program Manager and over the past eight years the club has proved extremely successful with membership continually developing and expanding.



Following the success of Mount Barker, Murray Hills with the support of Katy Rutledge opened their doors to the local community. It certainly was an inspirational visit. The nursing team have embraced the model in it's true, holistic entirety. The community nursing team have incorporate some of their professional disciplines into the weekly Leg Club meetings delivering for example; cognitive skills, physiotherapy and support group therapy etc. During my visit the local press media were present interviewing members and staff. It was a great opportunity to really promote the Leg Club concept and increase awareness in the local Murray Hills community about what is available for those suffering from chronic wounds and lower limb problems..

