

## **Press Release**

For immediate release

15<sup>th</sup> September 2014

### **Barnstaple Leg Club and NEW Devon CCG short-listed for prestigious award**

Northern Eastern Western Devon CCG and Barnstaple Leg Club have been short-listed in the primary care innovation category of the 2014 Health Service Journal (HSJ) awards.

The award entry entitled “Commissioning the Leg Club model” was based on the Barnstaple Leg Club in Devon, which became the first Leg Club to be commissioned in September 2013.

Leg Clubs are a social model of care where patients with lower limb problems are treated collectively on a drop-in basis in a non-medical setting. The model has been shown to reduce the social isolation that patients with leg ulcers feel and encourages Leg Club members to engage with self-management of their condition through peer support and an on-going well-leg regime.

Since it was launched, Barnstaple Leg Club has delivered some impressive outcomes in terms of healing rates. The rate of leg ulcers healed at six months was 42 per cent, which is a 33 per cent increase on the national average of just 9 per cent. Furthermore, just 7 per cent of patients at Barnstaple Leg Club had a recurrence of leg ulcers after six months as opposed to the national rate of 46 per cent. The associated cost savings of these results exceeded £18,000.

The innovative model of primary care works with volunteers from North Devon Volunteers Service to provide the social dimension to Barnstaple Leg Club. They arrange refreshments and activities for Leg Club members as well as coordinating transport options to enable as many house-bound patients to go to the Club as possible.

Suzanne Flannery, event executive for the HSJ Awards said: “We received the highest number of entries in the awards history, over 1300, so to be short-listed is a fantastic achievement.”

Mark Elster, Patient Safety & Quality Manager for the North Devon Locality of the CCG, said: “In a time where NHS resources are severely stretched and continue to be challenged, being able to share the Barnstaple Leg Club approach and success with the wider healthcare sector is a tremendous opportunity and privilege.”

Northern Eastern Western Devon CCG and the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation will appear in front of the HSJ Award judging panel on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October to give a final presentation before the winner of the primary care innovation award is announced at the HSJ awards ceremony on November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London.

**Notes to editors:**

1) The Leg Club Foundation Conference runs from 24<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> September and will be held at Worcester Rugby Club. Amongst those presenting will be Andrew’s colleague Mark Elster, Patient Safety & Quality Manager: North Devon Locality, NEW Devon CCG, who will be giving a presentation at the Conference on commissioning Leg Clubs, reflecting on the experience of his key involvement in the Barnstaple Leg Club.

2) Leg ulcers (and other chronic leg problems like lymphoedema) can affect people at any age, but are particularly common in people over 60. At present, over 80 per cent of all leg ulcers are treated in patients’ own homes by district nurses or by practice nurses in GP surgeries. However, patients often find it difficult to adhere to treatment plans, or to maintain the preventive measures needed to avert recurrence of the ulcer. Many leg ulcers consequently reoccur, or remain unhealed for many months or even years.

2) The Lindsay Leg Club Foundation exists to promote the national development of Leg Clubs. The Foundation also provides the necessary support and training

for nurses to establish Leg Clubs and follow the Foundation's guidelines, as well as ongoing training in new developments in leg care.

3) The Leg Club is an innovative model of care that has been shown to improve the health and wellbeing of people with chronic leg conditions. By healing chronic leg wounds and keeping them healed, Leg Clubs also have the potential to save commissioners up to 80 per cent of their wound care budget in comparison with conventional leg ulcer treatment. A Leg Club is a local partnership between community nurses, patients and members of the community. Run by a committee of members and local people, each Leg Club operates according to strict guidelines of care, monitored by the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation. The Leg Club title, the wording and logo are protected by Registered Trade Mark in the UK and Australia.

**For further information about the Leg Club Foundation and Leg Clubs visit:**  
[www.legclub.org](http://www.legclub.org)

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