Lindsay Leg Club launches in USA

Ellie Lindsay OBE FQNI (top), life president, Lindsay Leg Club Foundation; Abdul Seckam (bottom), stroke research and innovation manager, Cardiff School of Sports and Health Sciences, Cardiff Metropolitan University

The growing prevalence of venous leg ulcers in an ageing population presents challenges for wound care and management (McIntyre et al, 2021). Many people with leg ulcers are elderly, poor and alone, and experience reduced quality of life.

According to the work of co-author, Ellie Lindsay OBE, leg ulcer management presents several global challenges. First, it is costly in terms of nursing resource and wound care dressings. Second, healing times are protracted and recurrence rates are high. And third, there is often little help available in the form of support and advice on prevention of leg ulcers. The psychosocial Lindsay Leg Club® model for lower limb care was developed in 1995 to:

- Address limitations of existing mechanisms, such as home visits and leg ulcer clinics
- Meet patient needs
- Optimise wound healing
- Improve patient wellbeing and quality of life.

The model promotes a partnership that delivers true patient empowerment, enabling members (patients) to become expert partners in the process of their care, de-stigmatising their condition, encouraging informed behaviours and facilitating the sharing of sensitive and/or emotional concerns in a supportive, empathic environment (Lindsay, 2008; 2018; 2021).

Establishing an international network of Leg Clubs has united healthcare providers, nurses, general practitioners, patients, and the community in the common objective of improving patient health and wellbeing and to date has delivered dramatic improvements in quality of life for individuals (Upton et al, 2015). By engaging the community and empowering patients to become involved in their care, the Leg Club model reflects the current direction of global healthcare delivery. Also, in recent years and through published informatics (Clark, 2012), the psychosocial Lindsay Leg Club model for lower limb care has been recognised (Griffin, 2014) as an alternative approach to the management of leg health which can improve patient outcomes.

INAUGURAL LAUNCH OF FIRST LEG CLUB IN THE US

Following numerous virtual conference calls with Ellie Lindsay and sharing of materials and video links via the Leg Club website (www.legclub.org), Dr Jenifer Ty (chair, Excell Leg Club) expressed her interest and elected to pursue and introduce the Leg Club model into the United States of America (USA). However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the opening was inevitably delayed.

However, the inaugural launch of the first Leg Club (Excell Leg Club) in the USA took place on 4 September 2022 at the Ranch Restaurant, Long Beach, California. The event was attended by clinicians, allied healthcare professionals, gym instructors (from the Mayweather gym, Long Beach), academics, and members of the public. It was organised by future Leg Club officers (volunteers), comprising some of the diverse professionals attending.

Following a welcome address by Jennifer Ty, Ellie Lindsay provided an overview of the Leg Club ethos and explained her motivation for establishing this social care model from its inception to what has become an international Leg Club community. Volunteers and delegates attending found the rationale and Leg Club journey from 1995 to date extremely emotional.

Several lead volunteers were then introduced, with Dr Tran (CEO, Excell Integrated Medical Group; volunteer medical director, Excell Leg Club) and Joe Avelino (CEO, College Medical Center of Long Beach) articulating the importance of the Leg Club and how they plan to offer their knowledge and expertise by volunteering to make this initiative a success for the community. In addition, Michael Kerr (CEO, Kindred Hospital of South Bay), gave a moving account from personal experience. This was complemented by Abdul Seckam, who set out the rationale of the importance of the Leg Club from a researcher's perspective.

From a variety of disciplines, the newly formed officers of the Leg Club were introduced, and their enthusiasm and engagement enlightened and moved the delegates. A video reel show case of a 'dry run' day at the Excell Leg Club set up in the Mayweather gym was played. Additionally, the team were proud to produce a proclamation from a meeting with the mayor of California, Robert Garcia, endorsing the first Leg Club in the USA. The event was closed by Cindy Broadus, executive director at the National Alliance of Wound Care and Ostomy.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the launch was a great success, and as invited guests from the UK, the authors were delighted to see Leg Club Industry Partners (LCIP) as well as international colleagues supporting the venture. Along with all involved in the Leg Club community, they congratulate Dr Jennifer Ty and her team on the launch of the first Leg Club in the USA and wish them every success.

And, an exciting development is that the Excell team are in the embryonic stage of holding the first international Christmas concert, to be confirmed for early December in aid and support of the Excell Leg Club, Long Beach. As Jennifer Tye said, 'we plan to invite the community to join us and together we can make a difference to those who need and can't afford wound care'. **JCN**

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