

## **Press Release**

For immediate release

7<sup>th</sup> July

# **Powys Leg Clubs announced as winner at NHS Wales Awards 2014**

Powys Leg Clubs were announced as the winner of the NHS Wales Award for improving quality through better use of resources at a ceremony at the Swalec Stadium, Cardiff, on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

The judges selected 24 projects as finalists, but just nine were announced as winners of the NHS Wales Awards 2014 including Powys Leg Clubs for its work on improving care in the community for patients with leg ulcers.

Powys Leg Clubs impressed the judges by reducing the number of repeated hospital admissions for leg ulcers saving more than £700,000 in district nursing costs. The Leg Club has also improved patients' quality of life which judges saw for themselves at first-hand when they visited Llandrindod Wells to witness a Leg Club in action.

It is estimated that there are 3,000 patients with leg ulcers in Powys, of which 2,300 are now members of a Leg Club. Some patients have had leg ulcers for many years and many felt socially isolated due to the immobilising effect of the condition. Visits from a district nurse tending to their leg wounds would often be the only interaction some patients had during a week. However, as Powys is such a rural area each visit could potentially take three hours and involve significant travel costs.

The district nursing team sought to find an alternative method of treatment that would also address the issue of their patients' social isolation. Working in partnership with local communities and volunteer groups the district nursing team established four

Leg Clubs which have enabled patients to receive treatment collectively, on a drop-in basis in a local community venue rather than in their own home. Volunteer groups provide social support, refreshments, fund-raising and volunteer drivers.

As a result of the holistic nature of Leg Clubs and the social dimension they provide club members have an improved quality of life, the previously housebound have been mobilised and many new friendships have developed all of which help self-esteem and consequently concordance with treatment.

Jacqueline Griffin, Tissue Viability Clinical Nurse Specialist and Leg Club lead for Powys Teaching Health Board, said, “We are delighted that work to improve care for patients with leg ulcers has been recognised by the judges of the NHS Wales Awards.”

NHS Wales Chief Executive Dr Andrew Goodall, who presented the awards at a ceremony in the Swalec Stadium, Cardiff, today, said: “The NHS Wales Awards are a great opportunity to recognise and celebrate the wonderful achievements that healthcare staff are making in improving services and care for patients across Wales.”

Welsh Health Minister Mark Drakeford, who attended the ceremony said: “I have been very impressed to hear of the number and standard of entries to the NHS Wales Awards this year, which demonstrate just how much innovative and diverse work is being delivered across Wales to enhance patient care.”

The NHS Wales Awards are organised by 1000 Lives Improvement, part of Public Health Wales, which supports organisations and individuals to deliver improved health, healthcare outcomes and user experience in NHS Wales. The awards were launched in 2008 to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NHS.

## **Notes to editors:**

1) 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 on-going 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)

**For media enquiries please contact:** Julian Tyndale-Biscoe, InHealth Communications, on 07882 985597 or email [julian.tb@inhealthcomms.com](mailto:julian.tb@inhealthcomms.com)