Management of time: reflection and positivity!

As 2019 came to an end, I reflected on where the past year had gone, as I recognised that it is so easy to lose sight of the bigger picture and achievements during the previous 12 months. This is particularly true in today's society, where, due to work pressures, it is sometimes hard to stop, take a moment and appreciate what has been undertaken, and, suddenly, on refection, one realises that the past year was filled with so many memorable events.

Over the past decades, the days of working Monday to Friday and returning after a relaxing, work-free weekend to answer phone messages on a Monday morning have become a thing of the past. Due to the modern technological world we now live in, with access to smart phones and internet communication, our work can easily encroach into our private lives at any time of the day or week, with no distinction between these two aspects of life.

There is a lot of truth to the proverbial statement 'less is more', and one must take a moment to pause, reflect and appreciate what one has, instead of being on today's treadmill. However, taking that moment is easier said than done. As with many of my friends and professional colleagues, I sometimes struggle to say 'no' and prioritise competing time and work- or family-related demands, particularly when confronted with meetings, deadlines and schedules.

On reflection, the past 12 months have been extremely important, both personally and professionally. On the personal front, I have had to adapt to a new lifestyle of travelling and working as a single person, but, since experiencing bereavement, I have come to truly appreciate and value my friends and fellow colleagues who, through their friendship, have enabled me to move on. Work-wise, the psychosocial Leg Club model continues to expand both in the UK and internationally, and, with the outstanding support of our foundation's Leg Club Industry Partners (LCIP), we have been able to produce a further three high-quality information leaflets addressing preventative care: *Application of Compression Hosiery*, *Taking Care of Your Legs* and *Healthy Legs for Life*. These are shared with the general public and the wound care community, and all 15 information sheets produced thus far are available in leaflet form or to download from our website (www.legclub.org).

In May 2020, it will be 25 years of the Leg Club model's journey, and sustained functioning in a healthcare sector such as the one in the UK, which is constantly and rapidly evolving, is a great achievement. Hence, I am particularly proud, especially as 11 Leg Clubs opened their doors in 2019, with more in the early stages and planning to open in Wales, Leeds, Surrey and Dorset during the first part of 2020. I think the steady increase in the number of Leg Clubs is mainly due to the Government's social prescribing commitment and GPs becoming aware of the impact that the psychosocial Leg Club model for lower limb care has had on people's lives.



Relaxed moment at the Basingstoke Leg Over Club



The Devizes Leg Club celebrating a birthday

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Christmas treats in the Devizes Leg Club



Official opening of the Basingstoke Leg Over Club

However, while 2019 was a progressive year and forward-thinking professional colleagues and management showed positivity, it saddens me that I am still challenged with negativity from peers and their continued reference to the Leg Clubs' breach of an individual's privacy and concerns over infection control and member confidentiality. Interestingly, in the majority of cases, those most vocal have never visited a Leg Club to observe the excellent work being done for members in an open, social environment. The individual's quality of life is not a consideration that is cited in their arguments, which highlights common misconceptions. I fully acknowledge that embracing change from a medical to a social non-medical setting and adopting a social prescribing approach to wound management may be difficult for some individuals. As the late John Harvey-Jones stated, during one of his management and change lectures: Management is not about the preservation of the status quo, it is about maintaining the highest rate of change that the organisation and the people within can stand.

The clinicians who have embraced the social Leg Club concept fully recognise that a fundamental aim of the model is to create an open environment in which members' (patients') conditions are destigmatised, and they can benefit from peer support and positive role models. Institutionalised, prescriptive nursing is not conducive to these ideals. Of course, it clearly states in the framework guidelines that Leg Club members are to be offered the opportunity to receive treatment in private, but they seldom, if ever, elect to do so. Indeed, it is more often nurses who initially have qualms about communal treatment, because it means their practice and interpersonal skills are open to scrutiny.

On a personal note, I have learned, over the years, that in any situation, there is resistance to the introduction of change relating to working practice. As Machiavelli (1513) stated in *The Prince*: There is nothing more difficult, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in success, than to take the lead in a new order of things, because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new.

My experience has also shown that any concerns are rapidly dispelled when dissenters see Leg Clubs in action, and I would encourage readers to visit a Leg Club to learn first-hand the views and experiences of the innovative staff, volunteers and Leg Club members. As always, I am sure any visitor would be made most welcome.

Further, do visit the video section on the Leg Club website to see Leg Clubs in action (www.legclub.org).

Medical Technology Group update: how healthy is the NHS innovation landscape?

Chris Green MP hosted a roundtable in Westminster on 28 January 2020 to discuss the Medical Technology Group (MTG)'s latest report, *Our NHS: a spotlight on the NHS innovation landscape*. This report examines the operations of and interactions among the key NHS innovation organisations and assesses whether previous recommendations for promoting innovation across the healthcare system have been followed through. Roundtable attendees included MPs, patient groups and industry members, with discussion centring on the drivers of and barriers to innovation across the NHS.

Conclusions from the discussion focused on the various requirements for change. This included a top-down approach to embedding a culture of innovation across the health system; increasing uptake and spread of evidence-based innovations, such as technology that has received NICE approval, clear leadership and the de-risking of innovation.

The MTG will continue to raise the profile of these issues during its annual Medical Technology Awareness Week, taking place at the end of April. It will be unveiling the next stage of its Ration Watch campaign, following the successful launch of this campaign in March 2019, which received widespread national media coverage.

For more information about the work of the MTG, please visit www.mtg.org.uk or www.legclub.org. **CWC**

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