

Press Release

For immediate release

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Leg Clubs commended in House of Lords debate on NHS wound care

Leg Clubs have been commended in a House of Lords debate on NHS wound care. The debate highlighted the impact of leg ulcers which affect around 700,000 people in the UK and cost just under £2 billion in treatment and management. Baroness Masham, a patron of the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation, took part in the debate and explained how Leg Clubs help to reduce social isolation while enabling leg ulcers to heal more quickly.

Baroness Watkins of Tavistock said she was delighted to see a Leg Club in Barnstaple, Devon. "Leg clubs are built around the notion of promoting peoples' independence and well-being. This social model of care is proving effective not only in the treatment of the physical wound but in promoting people's independence and mental well-being by reducing loneliness and isolation," she said.

Baroness Watkins, a British Professor of Nursing, also said that had she been aware of the Leg Club model as a nurse it would have benefited her patients more cost effectively than the intervention she undertook, particularly in terms of productivity in nursing time.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health Lord O'Shaughnessy encouraged fellow Lords to find out more about Leg Clubs because they provide "just the kind of activity and intervention that we want to see. It is not just about good care; it is also about individual psychosocial needs and health beliefs".

During the debate there were calls for proper diagnosis and classification of wounds as well as an increase in tissue viability nurses and an investment in products that are available. Earlier this year, the Foundation released a white paper, calling for a national strategy to improve care for leg wound patients.

Ellie Lindsay OBE, Lifetime President of the Foundation, said: "I was very pleased to hear that the Leg Club model was commended during the House of Lords debate on NHS wound care. For many years we have been trying to convince healthcare commissioners and providers that Leg Clubs are a cost-effective way to improve concordance with treatment and reduce social isolation."

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 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 a significant proportion of their wound care budget in comparison with conventional leg ulcer treatment. A

Leg Club is a local partnership between practice and 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.

For further information about the Leg Club Foundation and Leg Clubs visit: www.legclub.org

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