

**The Welsh Wound Network: first steps towards national reporting of the occurrence of pressure ulcers**

**Michael Clark PhD, Manager, Welsh Wound Network, Cardiff, UK**

Wound healing employs around 1600 people in Wales with a commercial turnover in excess of £70 million annually and a research income over £1.5 million. The total spend on wound healing in Wales is likely to be around £156 million annually.

Given the economic impact of wounds in Wales the Welsh Assembly Government has provided funding to support a Welsh Wound Network (WWN) to co-ordinate contacts between academics, clinicians and the commercial sector to maximise the potential for effective collaboration. The ultimate goal of the Welsh Wound Network (WWN) being to help bring wound healing to the fore as a key strength of Wales.

In 2010 the Welsh Wound Network will host five open events bringing industry, academics and clinicians together to share information and develop new partnerships and projects.

Recently the First Minister of Wales was introduced to the Welsh Wound Network.



**First WWN Open Meeting**



**Meeting Carwyn Jones AM – First Minister of Wales**

The Welsh Wound Network is managed by Michael Clark supported by a management team (Keith Harding (Cardiff University), Trudie Young (Bangor University), Jane James (Hywel Dda NHS Trust), Gwyn Tudor (MediWales), Greg Baily (ArjoHuntleigh), Jerry Hutchinson (ConvaTec) and Sharon Thomas (Welsh Assembly Government). Three of the management team are present at the EWMA conference and would be delighted to discuss the Welsh Wound Network in greater detail.



**Keith Harding**



**Trudie Young**



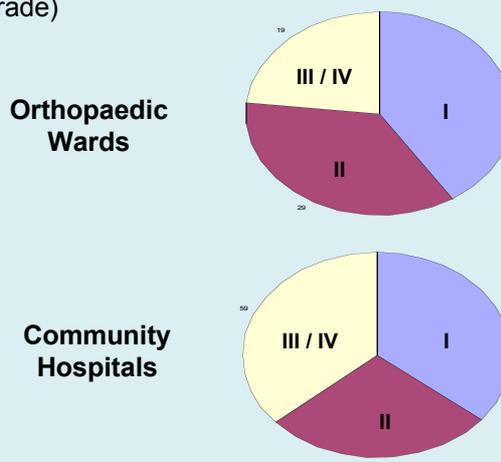
**Michael Clark**

A key starting point for the Welsh Wound Network was to assist the All-Wales Tissue Viability Nurses Forum to execute pressure ulcer prevalence surveys across orthopaedic units and community hospitals in Wales. Following the methods developed by the European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel (Vanderwee et al 2007) data was gathered upon 1196 patients (581, 48.6% within orthopaedic units with 615 located in community hospitals).

Pressure ulcer prevalence data were gathered across orthopaedic units between 2 and 6 July 2007 while the survey within the community hospitals occurred between 21 April and 2 May 2008.

Of the 1196 patients 81 (13.9%) and 162 (26.7%) had pressure ulcers in orthopaedic and community hospitals respectively with the severity of the encountered pressure ulcers shown in Figure 6

Figure 6 - Severity of pressure ulcers by category (grade)



While the majority of people experienced superficial pressure ulcers 78 had full-thickness pressure ulcers, with 36.4% of patients with pressure ulcers in community hospitals having severe wounds.

The collaboration between the All-Wales Tissue Viability Nurse Forum and the Welsh Wound Network has shown that through partnership progress can be made where common audit tools and processes can be shared across the entire country. Through such collaboration robust data upon wound occurrence can be established so providing a platform against which future wound healing initiatives in Wales can be judged.

Vanderwee K, Clark M, Dealey C, Gunningberg L, Defloor T. Pressure ulcer prevalence in Europe: a pilot study. *J Eval Clin Pract.* 2007 Apr;13(2):227-35

The Welsh Wound Network can be contacted at [info@welshwoundnetwork.org](mailto:info@welshwoundnetwork.org)  
Visit our website at [www.welshwoundnetwork.org](http://www.welshwoundnetwork.org) and become a member of the Welsh Wound