On February 15, 2023 the province of British Columbia, Canada announced the availability of total contact cast (TCC) services for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers (DFUs).

The announcement stated: “In addition, for clients with BC PharmaCare coverage, custom orthotics and adaptive shoes will be covered for those with diabetic foot ulcers recently healed with total contact casting.”

Dr. John Hwang, a general surgeon and physician lead at the Fraser Health Complex Wound Centre in British Columbia, was posed the following questions on behalf of the *Limb Preservation Journal* by Janet L Kuhnke, RN BA BScN MSc NSWOC Dr Psych.

Q: What is your vision for the future of diabetic foot care for the province of British Columbia (BC)?

**Dr. John Hwang:** “As with many complex and chronic conditions, patients at risk for DFUs would benefit from a holistic, team-based, and multidisciplinary approach to their condition. Ideally, the foundation for this would be an entire network around the patient of healthcare providers and care partners emphasizing prevention and early detection, so that DFUs don’t occur in the first place.

If foot wounds in people living with diabetes are identified, it is important that the correct diagnosis is made, and that the patients then receive the right treatment, at the right time, delivered by the right care provider. It sounds simple…but it’s not.”

Q: What implications do you foresee in the short and long-terms?

**JH:** “In the short term, I don’t think it’s an exaggeration to say that this announcement will save both lives and limbs. We see a lot of patients who get recurrent DFUs because they’re unable to afford, or are otherwise unable to access, appropriate offloading footwear. In addition to being really deflating for patients, recurrent DFUs put patients at risk for serious complications like sepsis, amputations or even death. The 5-year mortality rate for DFUs is worse than many forms of heart disease and cancer. This is a big deal.”
Hopefully, in the longer term, this is the first step of many towards building an entire health system geared towards ensuring that every patient with a DFU gets the same standard of care regardless of location, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.”

Q: What existing partnerships can be drawn upon for this announcement to lead to measurable success?

JH: "Well, I suppose there are specific partners that are directly mentioned in this announcement: BC PharmaCare, wound care teams that provide total-contact cast treatment, orthotists that will build the offloading footwear, for example. But, again, the network that supports people living with diabetes with foot ulcers, or at risk for developing foot ulcers, goes far beyond just these few groups. Organizations like Diabetes Canada, Wounds Canada, and the Canadian Podiatric Medical Association are critical in advocating for, and then building, the networks that take patients through prevention and primary care of DFUs, right through to end-stage and palliative care. I'm probably beginning to sound like a broken record, but it really is about a health systems redesign to ensure that no one falls through the cracks. The provincial Ministry of Health and PharmaCare have taken a very important first step towards this."

Q: Can you comment on this announcement in relation to the release of the Wounds Canada Foot Health Pathway?

JH: “The two are in lockstep and are supportive of one another. Again, it's all part of collaboratively building a health system where DFU patients from British Columbia get the right treatment, at the right time, from the right person regardless of circumstances.”

References


Additional Resources


Janet L. Kuhnke, RN BA BScN MSc NSWOC Dr Psychology is Associate Professor in the School of Nursing, Cape Breton University, Sydney, NS, Canada.

John Hwang, MD FRCSC is a general surgeon and physician lead at the Fraser Health Complex Wound Centre in British Columbia, Canada.
Become a Wounds Canada Member Today!

As the leading wound care organization in Canada we provide you, our member, with the information and tools to help advance your career, your practice and your team. Your membership provides you with:

- **Exclusive access** to members-only sections:
  - Image bank: view and download images for personal or educational use
  - Video gallery: view scientific presentations from the Wounds Canada's conferences and webinars

- **Discounts** on our professional educational programs and eBoutique.

- **A member-only newsletter** with the latest in wound care information.

**How do I join?**

Visit [www.woundscanada.ca/become-a-member](http://www.woundscanada.ca/become-a-member) today to take your wound care knowledge to the next level!

- Individual Annual Membership: $100.00 CDN
- Student/Retiree/Patient/Lay Caregiver Membership: $50.00 CDN

Register today to take full advantage of these exclusive benefits!

Find us on social media

Find out more about us at [www.WoundsCanada.ca](http://www.WoundsCanada.ca)
SERVING THE TOTAL LIMB PRESERVATION COMMUNITY

The Limb Preservation Journal is an international peer-reviewed online journal dedicated to providing the latest research, expert experiences and clinical insights; examining new procedures and technologies and promoting a collaborative interdisciplinary approach to limb preservation. A key objective is to help to translate the latest evidence into improved best practices. Published annually with regular updates, the Limb Preservation Journal reaches a diverse audience of healthcare professionals and others working in this important area.

Launched in 2019 as Limb Preservation in Canada, the journal is the cornerstone of a limb preservation community that, in addition to clinicians, educators and researchers, includes patients, advocates, administrators and policy makers. Recognizing that the challenges associated with limb preservation are global and impact healthcare professionals around the world, and identifying the lack of a dedicated clinical publication, the Limb Preservation Journal has expanded its scope to also invite submissions from the international limb preservation community.

CIRCULATION

- Physicians
- Nurses
- Chiropodists
- Podiatrists
- Pedorthists
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Case managers
- Researchers
- Policy makers
- Administrators
- Other interested healthcare professionals

Over 10,000 cumulative downloads per issue!

We invite interested parties to submit high-quality papers in English for review and possible publication in the Limb Preservation Journal. The journal welcomes research papers, reviews, case reports and other manuscripts within the interdisciplinary scope of limb preservation.

The Limb Preservation Journal is supported and reviewed by an eminent group of editors and reviewers. The Editorial Board is composed of published academics, clinicians and related authorities. The Board oversees the stringent peer-review process including evaluating submissions, selecting reviewers, assessing their comments and making the final editorial decisions and recommendations to authors. Published articles are assigned a DOI number.

For full submission guidelines and to access the Online Submission Portal, visit: www.woundscanada.ca/health-care-professional/publications/submissions

Editorial inquiries should be submitted to info@woundscanada.ca

Phone: 416-485-2292 · Fax: 416-485-2291 · info@woundscanada.ca · woundscanada.ca
© 2023 Wounds Canada · 2003E

TOPICS OF INTEREST

- Original research
- Case reports
- Review articles
- Perspectives in practice
- Patient care
- Innovations in wound care/limb preservation
- Limb preservation dilemmas
- Letters to the Editor

We invite interested parties to submit high-quality papers in English for review and possible publication in the Limb Preservation Journal. The journal welcomes research papers, reviews, case reports and other manuscripts within the interdisciplinary scope of limb preservation.