

Focusing on Pressure Ulcers



Sue Rosenthal

In October 2004, two events began to focus the attention of both the Canadian public and wound-care clinicians on a single issue: pressure ulcers. The first major event was the publication in *Ostomy/Wound Management* of the results of the CAWC-sponsored study by M. Gail Woodbury and Pamela E. Houghton entitled "Prevalence of Pressure Ulcers in Canadian Healthcare Settings." While the public will not have read the article, many wound-care clinicians and other health-care professionals most certainly will. The study highlights, through the first hard numbers available on a large scale, how pervasive this often devastating—and preventable—condition is, in a variety of health-care settings

"Pressure ulcer prevention ... can now be addressed in a methodical, co-ordinated manner."

across the country.

For the public, the death of actor Christopher Reeve served uncomfortable notice that anyone, regardless of the availability of financial and caregiver resources, could succumb to the complications of a pressure ulcer. For the many Canadians who have loved ones in health-care facilities, particularly in long-term care, the implications are very scary indeed.

At *Wound Care Canada*, we are committed to furthering the awareness generated by these two pivotal events; therefore, we

are devoting a large percentage of this issue to articles pertaining to pressure ulcers and to the results of the study.

As an indicator of quality in health care, pressure ulcer prevalence is a concern that can now be addressed in a methodical, co-ordinated manner. This issue of *Wound Care Canada* is the first step that the CAWC is taking to raise awareness of pressure ulcer prevalence among clinicians, patients and families, and policy-makers. ☺

Sue Rosenthal, Editor

Coup d'œil sur les plaies de pression

En octobre 2004, deux événements ont commencé à attirer l'attention du public canadien et des cliniciens en soins des plaies sur un problème particulier : les plaies de pression. Le premier événement important a été la publication dans *Ostomy/Wound Management* des résultats de l'étude commanditée par l'ACSP de M. Gail Woodbury et Pamela E. Houghton intitulée « Prevalence of Pressure Ulcers in Canadian Healthcare Settings ». Bien sûr, le public n'aura pas lu l'article, mais de nombreux cliniciens en soins des plaies et autres professionnels de la santé l'auront certainement lu. L'étude souligne, à l'aide des premiers chiffres incontestables disponibles à grande échelle, à quel point ce problème souvent dévastateur est omniprésent et évitable, dans divers contextes de

« On peut maintenant s'attaquer à la prévention des ulcères de pression d'une manière méthodique et co-ordonnée. »

soins de santé partout au pays.

Pour le public, le décès de l'acteur Christopher Reeve a servi d'avertissement déplaisant que n'importe qui, peu importe ses ressources financières et la qualité des soins qu'il reçoit, peut succomber aux complications d'une plaie de pression. Pour les nombreux Canadiens dont les proches se trouvent dans des établissements de santé, surtout de soins prolongés, les implications sont en effet très alarmantes.

À *Wound Care Canada*, nous sommes engagés à accentuer la sensibilisation générée par ces deux événements critiques; c'est

pourquoi nous consacrons un fort pourcentage de ce numéro à des articles portant sur les plaies de pression et aux résultats de l'étude.

À titre d'indicateur de la qualité des soins de santé, la prévalence des plaies de pression est un problème qu'il faut maintenant aborder d'une façon méthodique et concertée. Ce numéro de *Wound Care Canada* est la première mesure que prend l'ACSP pour sensibiliser les cliniciens, les patients et leurs proches, ainsi que les décideurs à la prévalence des plaies de pression. ☺

Sue Rosenthal, Rédactrice

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The Canadian Association of Wound Care is a non-profit organization of health-care professionals, industry participants, patients and caregivers dedicated to the advancement of wound care in Canada.

The CAWC was formed in 1995, and its official meeting is the CAWC annual conference held in Canada each year. The association's efforts are focused on five key areas: public policy, clinical practice, education, research and connecting with the international wound-care community. The CAWC works to significantly improve patient care, clinical outcomes and the professional satisfaction of wound-care clinicians.

L'Association canadienne du soin des plaies est un organisme sans but lucratif regroupant des professionnels de la santé, des gens de l'industrie, des patients et des membres du personnel soignant fortement intéressés à l'avancement des connaissances pour le soin des plaies au Canada.

Fondée en 1995, l'ACSP organise, chaque année, au Canada, un congrès qui lui tient lieu de réunion officielle, le Congrès annuel de l'ACSP. L'association consacre ses efforts dans cinq domaines particuliers : les politiques gouvernementales, la pratique clinique, la formation, la recherche et la création de liens avec la communauté internationale directement impliquée dans le soin des plaies. L'Association canadienne du soin des plaies vise une amélioration significative du soin donné au patient, des résultats cliniques et de la satisfaction professionnelle des spécialistes en soin des plaies.

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Reference: 1. Bowler PG, Jones SA, Walker M, Parsons D. The spectrum of activity of an antimicrobial Hydrofiber[®] dressing against potential wound pathogens. Poster presented at: the 16th Annual Symposium on Advanced Wound Care; April 2003; Las Vegas, Nev.

