

An Interview with **Andrew Hoar**

The Role of Pedorthists in Wound Management

INTERVIEW BY Catherine Harley, Associate Editor, *Wound Care Canada*



Andrew Hoar

Andrew Hoar, CPed(C), is with the QEII Health Sciences Centre, Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre, in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Q What is your profession? What education does it require?

I am a Certified Pedorthist (Canada) and member of The College of Pedorthics of Canada. I'm trained in the assessment, design, manufacture, fit and modification of foot appliances and footwear. I provide devices and footwear to assist in the accommodation of foot deformities, re-alignment of anatomical structures, redistribution of external and internal forces, improvement of balance, control of biomechanical function, accommodation of circulatory special requirements, and the enhancement of the actions of limbs compromised as a result of an accident, congenital deformity, neural condition, or disease.

The educational requirements include a post-secondary degree in a related discipline such as, but not exclusively, kinesiology, plus completion of a two-year internship, or a Diploma in

Pedorthics from the University of Western Ontario.

Q What does your current job entail? How does it relate to wound care?

My position as a pedorthist at the QEII Health Sciences Centre, Orthotic and Prosthetic Department, entails providing foot-related devices as prescribed by a physician. My responsibilities include that of an attending clinician to a large out-patient practice and to the amputee, physical medicine, rheumatology, and leg ulcer clinics.

Q What role do you play as part of a multidisciplinary wound-care team?

My role in the multidisciplinary Leg Ulcer Clinic, as a pedorthist, is to fit and modify pressure off-loading devices, complete gait analysis, assess and fit footwear, fabricate custom foot orthotics and provide patient education

as related to feet and footwear.

Q What inspires you to come to work every day?

The individual challenges associated with each patient's needs and the opportunity to work with the patient to improve their foot health.

Q What types of wounds do you most commonly see?

Forty per cent of my practice is related to diabetic foot ulcerations. I also see far too many pressure ulcers on heels.

Q In your view, is there enough emphasis put on the prevention of lower extremity wounds within Canada?

No, there is not enough emphasis placed on prevention. The cost of prevention versus the cost of treatment is disproportionate. As we know, the best

form of treatment is prevention. The cost of hospitalization for a foot ulcer is far more than education, footwear and orthotics.

Q What is your biggest challenge in wound care?

My biggest challenge is the patient volume due to the post-ulceration continued service, which aims to avoid re-ulceration. Many studies show that proper footwear, when available and worn, can prevent re-ulceration in 60-85 per cent of patients with previous ulcers.

Q Do you have any key recommendations for health-care professionals who are caring for patients with diabetic foot ulcers?

Standard footwear and off-the-shelf orthotics are not appropriate devices for the treatment of wounds. Off-loading devices should be employed until wound

closure is achieved, at which point footwear and custom orthotics should be utilized to maintain good foot health. The EVA foam covers on diabetic foot orthotics should be replaced every four to six months due to the compression of the material to ensure maximum cushioning. This replacement consult also provides an opportunity to review the device's effectiveness.

Q What role do you play in patient education?

A pedorthist's role is to educate the patient regarding foot care, orthotics and footwear (including design selection, fit, size, and other foot-related appliances such as socks), and stretching and exercise programs for the feet. Education on the risk factors related to the diabetic foot is also essential.

Q Which Web sites do you use the most?

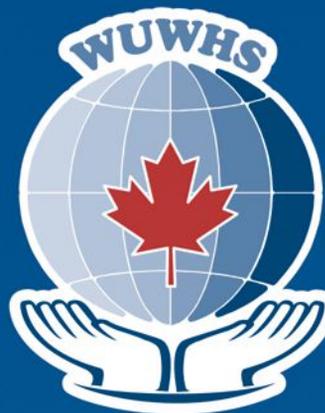
With regard to wound-care management, the CAWC Web site is my most common source of information.

Q What continuing education do you find essential to your professional growth and development?

Biomechanical research, foot-wear development, orthotic material and design development, as well as advancing personal knowledge of diabetes and wound care. I am looking forward to attending the World Union of Wound Healing Societies meeting in Toronto from June 4 to 8, 2008.

Q Do you have any last comments?

To learn more about pedorthics or to locate a pedorthist in your area, go to www.pedorthic.ca. See you at the CAWC meeting in Halifax! 🍷



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