

# It's About the Whole Patient, Not the Hole in the Patient

The central focus of a patient's care should be the patient themselves—their general health, experience, abilities, resources, environments, social networks and more. At baseline, plans of care must take all of these into account if they are to be successful. Wounds Canada's Best Practice Recommendation documents (BPRs) are built on the fundamental principle that wound care is, first and foremost, whole patient care. The BPRs emphasize, as illustrated by the Wound Prevention and Management Cycle, the requirement to incorporate holistic, patient-centred aspects of care that focus on each individual patient's needs. This approach does more than improve the chances for patient "buy-in" to any care plan. It helps to ensure any care plan can be carried out once the patient is at home, work, school or carrying on with their lives.

This holistic approach is a basic tenet of the Wounds Canada philosophy and is supported by the organization in multiple ways:

- **Education:** Conference session topics and structure, resources (including the articles in this issue listed in the box), Wounds Canada Institute programs, a patient and caregiver symposium scheduled for 2022
  - **Research:** Particularly with new projects (e.g., article listed in box)
  - **Advocacy:** Partnering with patients and family members to advocate to decision makers, enabling us to show the true impact of being at risk of developing or living with a wound
  - **Public Awareness:** Expanding significantly to grow the community via social media campaigns, resources aimed at all our audiences and allowing patients to tell their stories via videos, articles and testimonials
  - **Direct Engagement:** The make-up of our leadership program and various committees – includes patients and care partners to gain important perspectives and provide a means to be an active part of the community
- Wounds Canada's aim is to support a vision of health for all Canadians. We do this by showcasing patient and family journeys; providing clinicians with opportunities for learning about the importance of the patient perspective; creating supportive resources and making them available to all; advocating on behalf of the entire wound community; increasing the awareness of all Canadians about wounds, their impact, and how to prevent and manage them; and working to make wounds a health-care priority across the country. Together, using this approach, we can improve the lives of all Canadians with wounds or at risk for wounds.

## Go Deeper

Several articles in this issue have a significant patient focus or provide a patient/family perspective:

- **Patient Stories: What if the family had known more?** (p. 16): a poignant picture of one family's journey through a health-care system
- **Empowerment for Your Patients: Is it yours to give?** (p. 24): a look into a topic that's on everyone's mind—but is it being practised?
- **Patients' Voices, Stories and Journeys of Navigating Social Life while Having and Managing Complex Wounds: A Knowledge Mobilization Project** (p. 34): an overview of an important research project focusing on the experiences of patients and their families as they address health challenges
- **Wounds Sleuths** (pp. 36 and 39): both highlight the need to look deeper, especially with patients who have complex life circumstances that can impact wound development and healing
- **Conference session summaries:**
  - **The Role of Mental Health in Managing Wounds** (p. 44): important aspects to wound management that patients and clinicians alike need to consider
  - **The Continuum of Care: Improving Transitions of Patients with Wounds** (p. 46): how patients are impacted when they move from one care setting to another
  - **Improving Equitable Access to Quality Wound Prevention and Care in Canada** (p. 51): provides several case studies to illustrate the different challenges patients face in obtaining the care they need to be healthy