

## **PROFESSOR FIONA WOOD AM ANNOUNCED AS AMBASSADOR FOR WOUND AWARENESS WEEK 2019**

Professor Fiona Wood AM, Australian of the Year 2005, has today been announced as the Wound Awareness Week 2019 Ambassador.

Wound Awareness Week will run from next Monday 15 July to Sunday 21 July. It is an initiative of Wounds Australia, the peak national body for wound prevention and care.

The theme of Wound Awareness Week is 'Let's Talk about Wounds', with Wounds Australia focusing on:

- conversations about giving healthcare professionals the support and resources they need to treat wounds
- governments supporting and funding Wounds Australia's 5 Point Plan for wound treatment
- educating the public about being wound aware.

Wounds Australia's 5 Point Plan will dramatically cut the number of chronic wounds suffered by Australians as well as the massive expense of treatment.

Professor Wood will help Wounds Australia promote their public health campaign messages and will be available for media and public comment, including conversations about her own experience in treating wounds.

Professor Wood first stepped into the national and international spotlight when she saved the lives of 28 patients who were airlifted to Royal Perth Hospital after they received horrific burns to over 90 per cent of their bodies in the 2002 Bali Nightclub Bombings terrorist attacks.

She also helped treat patients who suffered injuries in 2007's Garuda Indonesia Flight 200 crash that killed 20 people, including three Australians.

Professor Wood developed the ground breaking 'spray on skin' that uses small amounts of healthy skin mixed with an enzyme to treat burn victims and reduce scarring. The technique is now used worldwide and has saved countless patients.

Professor Wood is supporting Wound Awareness Week because the impact of chronic wounds needs greater exposure and awareness in the Australian community.

In addition to the burns victims who struggle with the debilitating effects of chronic wounds, around 420,000 Australians suffer from chronic wounds each year.

Treating chronic wounds costs the health and aged care budget over \$3 billion annually. People with chronic wounds spend an average of \$340 per month on dressings and painkillers.

Chronic wounds can affect anyone, but people over 65, with obesity, diabetes, or struggling with mobility are more likely to be affected.

Professor Wood and Wounds Australia are working to make all Australians 'wound aware' throughout Wound Awareness Week.

More information on Wounds Australia is available at [www.woundsaustralia.com.au](http://www.woundsaustralia.com.au) and more information on Wound Awareness Week is at [www.woundaware.com.au](http://www.woundaware.com.au).

Wound Awareness Week activities can be followed on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Look out for #LetsTalkAboutWounds and #WoundAwarenessWeek.

**ENDS**

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