

ONE WEEK UNTIL WOUND AWARENESS WEEK 2021: 23 – 29 AUGUST

Wound Awareness Week 2021 is just seven days away and the peak body for wound care and management, Wounds Australia, has devised its most ambitious program ever to tackle the nation's 'hidden epidemic'.

Chronic wounds are a largely unknown problem, despite causing great personal and financial costs. That's why Wounds Australia has built a campaign to raise awareness and deliver innovative reform to health and aged care.

The inventor of 'spray on skin' and 2005 Australian of the Year Professor Fiona Wood will lead the 2021 Wound Awareness Week activities.

Professor Wood says the challenges of chronic wounds were huge, but they were not an insurmountable problem.

"In fact, the solution to chronic wounds is bleeding obvious!

"Whether you're a Health or Aged Care Minister, a healthcare or aged care worker, a concerned family member or even suffering from one, Wounds Australia has the straightforward answers," Professor Wood said.

"Every year over 420,000 Australians suffer from a chronic wound.

"Treatment for chronic wounds add more than \$3 billion to annual state and federal budgets. They cost unknown millions in lost economic activity. Sufferers face individual out of pocket costs thousands of dollars each year.

"Chronic wounds also damage mental health. They stop people from working, studying and enjoying the lifestyle others take for granted."

This year Wound Awareness Week will focus on three streams of activity.

"The first is a public awareness campaign that highlights risk factors and warning signs. We will educate people on how they can heal their wounds by simply seeking treatment," Professor Wood said.

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“The second is engaging with healthcare and aged care workers to improve their skills and enhance the treatment their patients receive.

“The third is persistent lobbying of governments to implement straightforward reforms proposed by wound care experts that will slash costs and patient numbers.”

Wounds Australia will launch its 11-Point Plan in Wound Awareness Week. The plan delivers a blueprint for enhancing health and aged care through the cooperation of government and the healthcare professionals represented by Wounds Australia.

“Wound Awareness Week has always been important, but it takes on a new dimension this year as Wounds Australia showcases its solutions to problems unearthed by the Aged Care Royal Commission and the shortcomings of national coordination exposed by the coronavirus pandemic.

“I look forward to my role as Wound Australia's Ambassador during the week and working with government, patients and clinicians to solving Australia's chronic wounds crisis,” Professor Wood said.

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DETAILS OF INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES OVER PAGE

Details on Wound Awareness Week is available at: woundaware.com.au

Information on Wounds Australia is available at: woundsaustralia.com.au

The Wounds Australia 11-Point Plan will be available online from its launch date of 23 August 2021.

Spokespersons for Wound Awareness Week 2021 are:

PROFESSOR FIONA WOOD AM FAHMS (Wound Awareness Week Ambassador)

Professor Wood is one of Australia's most innovative and respected surgeons and researchers. She is a highly skilled plastic and reconstructive surgeon and world leading burns specialist. Professor Wood has pioneered research and technology development in burns medicine, including 'spray on skin' to treat the 2002 Bali bombing victims. Professor Wood was named Australian of the Year in 2005 and a 'National Living Treasure' in '2014.

HAYLEY RYAN CNC (Chair, Wounds Australia)

Hayley is a leading educator in the Australian and New Zealand health and aged care sectors on the principles of wound management and infection control. Her specialities include chronic wound management, palliative wounds and pressure injury prevention. Hayley's expertise was central to the development of Wounds Australia's *11-Point Plan* and response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

BLAKE WILSON (CEO, Wounds Australia)

Blake's reputation as a reformist CEO has been enhanced by his work with Wounds Australia. He has built partnerships to make Wounds Australia a force in shaping efficient and effective healthcare, expanded the reach of Wound Awareness Week, and connected the wound care's commercial sector and other advocacy organisations.

ABOUT WoundsAustralia

Wounds Australia is the peak body for chronic wound prevention and management.

Membership comprises thousands of doctors, nurses, podiatrists, Aged Care workers and other professionals vital to treating chronic wounds and caring for patients.

Wounds Australia works to reduce the harm caused by wounds by supporting members with resources and continuous education. Wounds Australia works with governments and industry to improve wound management, knowledge and resources.