

PPE PRESSURE INJURIES HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES FOR CLINICIANS

The peak body for wound prevention and management, Wounds Australia, has warned the latest COVID-19 outbreaks have led to a resurgence in reports of pressure injuries among patients, clinicians and essential workers.

Speaking on Day Two of Wound Awareness Week, Wounds Australia Chair Hayley Ryan said pressure injuries among healthcare workers relate to wearing personal protective equipment (PPE).

Some patients had also facial pressure injuries from wearing ventilators to manage respiratory failure.

“Device-related pressure injuries are commonly associated with the intensive or sustained use of medical devices on patients. This can result in compression and deformation of the skin and subsequent injury,” Hayley Ryan said.

Wounds Australia has consistently raised study results from 2016 that found over one quarter of hospital patients suffered from device related pressure injuries, and that some clinicians ‘were unaware of the implications of medical devices in contact with the skin’.¹

“With heightened and extended use of PPE and devices for protection and treatment, Wound Awareness Week 2021 is being used as an opportunity to inform and educate frontline workers about how they can protect and treat themselves and patients from these complications,” Hayley Ryan said.

“While Wound Awareness Week has always been a time for highlighting warning signs and risk factors for chronic wounds, the coronavirus pandemic is adding a new element to our public health campaign and professional development.

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¹ Barakat-Johnson, M., Barnett, C., Wand, T., and White, K. 2017. ‘Medical device-related pressure injuries: An exploratory descriptive study in an acute tertiary hospital in Australia’, *Journal of Tissue Viability*, Nov 26(4), pp. 246-253. doi: 10.1016/j.jtv.2017.09.008
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29050901>

“We are urging all healthcare workers to use Wounds Australia as a resource for developing their wound care expertise.

“This now includes taking advantage on expertise in preventing their own pressure injuries.

“Wounds Australia represents and provides education for anyone with an interest in wound care, regardless of your specific profession. This Wound Awareness Week is the perfect opportunity to join our organisation so you can enhance your skills and knowledge, while strengthening our numbers to drive reform in government policies and programs that lead to better patient care and outcomes,” Hayley Ryan said.

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

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

ENDS

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

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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 (Wounds Australia CEO)

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.