Cathy Dickson RN, Community Nurse, Total Care Health Services, Hamilton.

Firstly, I would sincerely like to thank the New Zealand Wound Care Society (NZWCS) for awarding me a scholarship to attend the 2015 conference in Blenheim. The conference was extremely informative. The venue, and Blenheim itself were outstanding.

The three days in June were information packed and naturally created a lot of constructive discussion between my colleagues, Judy Osborne, Amanda Pressley and myself. The opportunity to network with other healthcare professionals, who also have a specialist interest in wound care, was thought provoking and inspiring. I was very impressed by the smooth organisation of the conference over the course of the three days, and the caliber of the expert presenters.

The presentations on the first day complemented one another well. Associate Professor of Nursing Bill Mc Guinness presented ‘skin integrity at a cellular level’. He discussed the cells involved in skin and wound healing, and also the different insults that occur to the skin. Jan Rice wound nurse consultant; Director of Jan Rice Wound Care services, discussed ‘advanced wound assessment’. Pointing out the importance of a systemic assessment to provide a baseline picture of a wound. The assessments we make are vital in evaluating what stage the wound is at and how we are going to manage it to promote optimal wound healing. As we are assessing wounds in our practice, constantly re-evaluating care, using assessment tools can help. TIME (T= Tissue, I= infection, M: Moisture, and E= edges) and HEIDI (History, exam, investigations, diagnosis and intervention) are useful. The ‘Heidi’ webinar series my colleagues and I attended in 2014, facilitated by the NZWCS’s Wayne Naylor at Hamilton Hospice, was an introduction to the HEIDI assessment tool, and Jan’s discussion of its use was helpful in relating it to my own practice.

Dr Mark Foley, dermatologist, owner of the Skin Clinic in Blenheim presented, ‘Identifying skin Lesions’. This was very interesting particularly as we here in New Zealand have the highest rates of Melanoma’s in the world. (1)

I attended the Sharp debridement workshop with Jan Rice which provided a theoretical and practical training opportunity on conservative sharp debridement. This was advantageous to attend after listening to Emil Schmidt (Nurse specialist wound care) discuss ‘debridement within in the context of the EWMA Debridement guidelines’ (2). These guideline are a invaluable read as are many of the EWMA’s other guidelines relating to wound care management which are available to download from www.ewma.org.

Other sessions which related well to my own practice included Dermatologist Dr David Young’s ‘differential diagnosis & ulcers of the lower leg,’ Emollients and Creams’ and RN, Pru Lennox discussing ‘which dressing for which wound’. We have a fantastic array of dressings available to us and there is certainly a skill in assessing a wound and using dressings appropriately. The exhibits present at the conference were a demonstration of the ever advancing technology in wound care products that we have available to use.
Poet and GP, Dr Glenn Colquhoun’s ‘Man with a wound’ was a interesting thought provoking talk. I happen to have his one of his books ‘Playing God’ at home;

“The rash places an advertisement in the personal column of his local paper. CULTURED, COLOURFUL, INFECTIOUS, BOLD, WITH AN ITCH ONLY YOU CAN SCRATCH” (3).

Thank you Glenn, for your words.

A conference is not complete without a Gala conference dinner! The theme of the night was ‘Hollywood Red Carpet Night’ It was great for everyone to be able to have some ‘balance’ in their lives by having some fun.

From left to right, Kim Kardashian, Ozzy Osborne and Lady Gaga. Hollywood Red Carpet Night Conference dinner attendees.

I want to thank the hard working organisation committee for the 2015 NZWCS conference:

Emil Schmidt -NZWCS president
Suzie Wendelborn- Marlborough Convenor
Jeannette Henderson- NZWCS Administrator
Committee: Jane Macfarlane, Rebecca Aburn and Wayne Naylor.
References:

1: Sneyd, Mary Jane; Cox, Brian. *BMC Cancer*, 2013, Vol. 13 Issue 1, p1-9, 9p, 7 Graphs. Publisher: BioMed Central.


3: Playing God, Glenn Colquhoun, ‘The Rash’, pg. 58, Published by Steele Roberts Ltd, NZ