

News from the Finnish Wound Care Society (FWCS)

The Finnish Wound Care Society was established on November 17 1995 in Helsinki by Professor M.D. Sirpa Asko-Seljavaara, Head Nurse Helvi Hietanen, Assisting Head Nurse Raija Hietikko and Assisting Head Nurse Päivi Äikää from the plastic surgery unit in Helsinki University Hospital along with 54 other professionals interested in wound care.

The number of individual members of FWCS increased rapidly; in 1996 the society had 300 members and by 2000 over 1550 members. In 2006 the magic limit of over 2000 members was achieved and now FWCS has 2700 individual members. The corporate members also have an important role in supporting the activities of FWCS. The number of corporate members is 47, including wound product manufacturers, marketing companies, pharmaceutical companies and some private health care organisations.

The aims of FWCS are

- to promote multiprofessional co-operation in the prevention of wound problems and in the holistic care of wound patients.
- to promote good quality of care of the wound patients.
- to promote multidisciplinary research and experiments for the development of wound care.
- to promote professional education in wound care.

The activities of FWCS are lead by its president, vice president and board members (6-8 persons).The activities are divided across four committees; Research and development, Education and the National Conference, International co-operation and Journal Haava (=Wound). The board has 10-12 meetings per year and the committees have their own meetings when needed.

Since 1997 FWCS has organised an annual conference, which gathers together about 800–1000 professionals from all parts of Finland. This year the theme was Modern Wound Management. Next year the participants of the national conference are invited to participate in the EWMA 2009 Conference HELP IN HELSINKI.

In addition to the national conference FWCS has arranged 1-3 regional educational seminars per year, which aim to bring knowledge of wound care geographically and financially nearer to members with regional locations and low participation fees. These regional seminars are planned and implemented together with active members of FWCS in the region. This enables FWCS to take into the consideration the special regional needs for knowledge and information in regional areas.

This year FWCS celebrates the 10th anniversary of its journal HAAVA. HAAVA is published four times a year and all members get the journal included with their membership fee, which is only 25€. The HAAVA is also distributed to many hospital and university libraries. The printing is 3.500 copies. You can read more about HAAVA in the article below by the Editor Ansa Livanainen.

In 2003 FWCS appointed an accreditation workgroup, which defined the criteria for professional qualifications of TVN and described the application process. In the accreditation workgroup were representatives of educators, clinical practitioners and the Ministry of Social and Health care. The aim was to unify the competences of TVN and officially recognise wound management as a specialised area in Finnish nursing disciplines. Since 2004 it has been possible for registered nurses to apply for the accreditation. The prerequisites are that a nurse has at least 30 credits higher education studies in wound management and three years working experience in wound management including clinical care, consultancy, education and development and research activities. The accreditation is applied by portfolio, which is assessed by a multiprofessional group of specialists in wound care.

The register of TVN is held by FWCS and the re-evaluation of the competence is done every third year by sending information concerning the working time in wound care, minimum 12 months, and additional education in wound management, a minimum 10 days in three years

According to the follow up study on the impact of accreditation, carried out in 2006, the accreditation has increased the recognition of nurses' competences in wound

management and profiled TVN as a clinical nurse specialist among the other specialists in health care.

In the field of research and development FWCS is also active. The society participated in the International Pain Study conducted by professor Patricia Price and this year also published the results of the controlled questionnaire study "Wound care product availability for patients in Finland in years 2006-2007". The study was conducted by FWCS. The results of study showed that the free distribution of wound care products from health care centers varies and results in uneven patient care.

The Finnish Wound Care Society is a partner in the national project "Inno Haava", which aims to develop standards in the digital photographing of wounds and models of distant consulting in wound care. The project is lead by University of Jyväskylä, Chydenius Centre in Kokkola and funded by ERDF. The project covers the northern part of Finland combining education and clinical practice.

Future challenges for FWCS

Finland is a Nordic country with more than five million inhabitants. We are a so called welfare state and quality health care services are available with high standards for everyone. In the future the national challenge is how to keep the status of the welfare state. The problem of our ageing population is huge. In 2030 every fourth Finn will be over 65 years old and every tenth will be older than 75. The second challenge is the increased incidence of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart failure etc. In particular the incidence of type 2 diabetes is increasing rapidly; 2,8 % annually. According to the Finnish National Diabetes Federation every tenth adult Finn is diabetic. About 280,000 of them are treated, but 200,000 of them have not been diagnosed and thus fall outside the treatment programme. Based on these facts the biggest future challenge for FWCS is to promote the prevention of chronic wounds and support effective treatments of wounds by providing education and facilitating research of wound management. I believe that many national wound care/management associations and societies in European countries can share this future challenge with FWCS. Thus it is very important that national organisations co-operate and share their knowledge and experiences with

each other - and learn from each other. The EWMA conference is a great opportunity for all professionals in the field of wound care to share and learn.

On behalf of the Finnish Wound Care Society I have the pleasure of inviting you to the EWMA 2009 conference, 20-22 May, 2009 in Helsinki.
You are all warmly welcome!

Salla Seppänen, MNSc
President
Finnish Wound Care Society
www.suomenhaavanhoitoyhdistys.fi

The first decade of Haava Journal

Ansa Iivanainen, Editor of Haava
RN, LicNSc, Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences

SHORT HISTORY

When the Finnish Wound Care Society (FWCS) was established in 1995 it was decided to establish a national quarterly journal on wound care. At the same time it was realised that the first priority was to decide on the structure of the Society and build up the member base. Thus the publication was delayed. The matter was discussed in several board meetings but there were concerns about costs as well as the new competences needed in publishing. The first issue was published in November 1998.

The executive committee, after some lively pondering, arrived at a simple title Haava (Wound). At the time the Society did not have a logo, so the title's typography was designed together with the printing house. It was also decided that the motif of the cover page must be taken from nature. The first issue had 24 pages and the introductory print of 2000 was meant for marketing. The first editorial was written by MP Sirpa Asko-Seljavaara

From the start, the Journal has been in four colours to keep the picture quality high. The costs of the first print were covered by advertisements. After the first issue the

publication has continued quarterly. Haava is distributed to members of the society included in their membership fee. Organisations, non-members and libraries can also order it.

The articles of the magazine cover hands-on experience, research, studies, surveys, theory of wound healing, anatomy of skin, the care of wounds, dressings etc. as well as education, conferences and congresses in Finland and abroad.

The cover page presents the theme of the issue. There have been themes on diabetic foot ulcers, psychiatric patients and wound care, internationality, surgical wounds, nutrition, wounds of the elderly, chronic wounds, acute wounds, leg ulcers, burns and the use of products. Every year there is one issue dedicated to the Annual National Wound Care Conference. In 2009 the congress of EWMA will be in Finland and the Haava issue number three is the dedicated conference issue.

From the first issue the magazine has featured regular columns; the leading article, greetings from the editor and chairperson, a feature on education, the resolutions of executive committee of FWCS and discussion of new wound products. Articles have been written by medical doctors, nurses (RN), physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nutritional therapists, podiatric therapists and practical nurses. On the 1922 cumulative pages up to the end of 2008 there have been 319 authors. Today the number of copies published is 3500 per issue.

Haava is an important part of FWCS, because it keeps the contact between the society and its members. The three reader surveys (2000, 2005, 2007) indicate that the journal is seen as an important source of information and education.

Editorial Board Members 2009

Ansa Iivanainen, Editor

Heidi Castrén, RN

Anja Huovinen, RN

Taina Kelakorpi, RN

Tiina Pukki, RN

Päivi Salminen-Peltola, MD

Mikko Tuuliranta, MD

CELEBRATION

The decennial celebration was held in Helsinki in November 2008 with invited guests from Finland and abroad including MP, honorary FWSC president Sirpa Asko-Seljavaara, honorary FWSC president Helvi Hietanen, senior inspector Maire Kolimaa Ministry of Health, professor Christina Lindholm from Sweden and Teresa Krausman and Bent Búrke from EWMA, executive committee of FWCS, editorial board members of Haava, invited members of FWCS and companies in the Finnish wound care industry. Congratulations were received and published in Haava 4/2008 from President Marco Romanelli, professor Finn Gottrup and Professor Christina Lindholm.