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Grand convergence in wound healing - The imperative for collaboration in research, innovation and quality improvement

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In this edition of the journal, there are a number of papers that describe research or efforts to improve wound care from different parts of the world. The diversity of these papers reflects the emerging international focus on delivering patient centred high quality evidence-based health care that delivers the best possible outcomes through the prudent use of the human, economic and social capital.

Improving of the quality and safety of healthcare at a national and global level requires a systematic approach in which professionals and other key stakeholders collaborate to share their insights, knowledge and expertise in order to deliver the best possible patient outcomes [1]. The World Health Organisation's sustainable development goals (SDG's) for 2016–2030 [2,3] underscore the global imperative for healthcare professionals and other key stakeholders to work collaboratively to improve the quality, safety and equity of healthcare at a population level through research and innovation. The WHO SDG's have focused attention on global learning in healthcare with a view to achieving universally low mortality rates in developed, transitional and developing countries – a concept which is known as 'grand convergence' [4–6]. The achievement of grand convergence requires the generation of robust empirical and theoretical evidence locally and nationally to improve healthcare across the world through a population health approach. There has been some acknowledgement of the importance of grand convergence with regards to skin health where it is commonly referred to in the context of 'grand challenges in global skin health' [7,8]. However, the concept of grand convergence has had minimal application in

relation to wound care.

The breadth of ongoing research, innovation and quality improvement work that is being undertaken presents a unique opportunity for everyone with an interest in wound healing to work collaboratively to achieve grand convergence in wound care. This is typified by the fact that in the UK alone, a number of world leading publicly funded skin health and wound related studies [9–18] have been conducted by professionals from different disciplines who work in a diverse range of academic and clinical settings as well as austere healthcare environments that arise in the wake of conflict or disaster. Many of these researchers are now working collaboratively through the Wounds Research Network (WReN) to share learning that can be utilised to inform and improve wound care throughout the world. Across Europe, there has also been a clear shift towards a more collaborative population health approach to wound care through the joint EPUAP and EWMA pressure ulcer prevention and patient safety advocacy project [19]. These two projects appear to be the tentative first steps towards achieving grand convergence in wound care through collaboration in research, innovation and quality improvement.

Achieving grand convergence in wound care also requires a change in culture in order to ensure the success of efforts to improve the quality and safety of patient care at a national and international level. The successful implementation of interventions to improve population health at a national and international level is predicated on the commitment of all key stakeholders to collaborative learning, innovation and quality improvement [20–22]. Therefore, it is important to make the most of the opportunities that are available to contribute to the improvement of wound care globally through research and innovation by harnessing the knowledge, expertise and insights of all key stakeholders at a national and international level. The Tissue Viability Society (TVS) Conference and WReN Annual Scientific Meeting in April 2018 are an opportunity for you to find out how you can work with others with an interest in wound healing to improve patient care. I invite you to attend the TVS Conference or the WReN Annual Scientific Meeting next year. More importantly, I challenge you wherever you are to make your contribution towards grand convergence in global

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wound care by sharing learning from research and innovation with others at a national and international level.

Conflict of Interest

None (The author is Chair of the Tissue Viability Society Journal which publishes the Journal of Tissue Viability).

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