

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Huddersfield		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 3		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Improving Outcomes for Patients, Practitioners, NHS Trusts and Business with a Competency Framework for Wound-care Services		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2014-2017		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Karen Ousey	Professor of Skin Integrity	2005-present
Leanne Atkin	Lecturer Practitioner	2005-present
Joanna Blackburn	Research Fellow	2017-present
John Stephenson	Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Statistics	2010-present
Nigel King	Professor of Applied Psychology	1992-present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014-2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>The cost of chronic wound management in the UK is more than £5.3 billion annually. Researchers from the University of Huddersfield (UoH) have developed the Tissue Viability Leading Change (TVLC) competency framework; the first to provide equity in education and skills development for multi-professional teams managing chronic wounds.</p> <p>TVLC formed the cornerstone of the National NHS Improvement Stop the Pressure Programme education curriculum and the NHS England National Wound Care Strategy (NWCS) education stream. It delivered improved continuing professional development and education for Tissue Viability Practitioners. It is central to competency training of healthcare professionals across the UK, supported by a business skills course for senior Tissue Viability Practitioners. Its implementation has changed clinical pathways for wound care and delivered parity of skills and service delivery to NHS Trusts, enabling benchmarking and standardisation between services. It has provided commercial benefit to an industrial partner.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Common chronic wounds, such as pressure ulcers, are associated with patient suffering, increased mortality and morbidity and prolonged hospital stay. More people are developing chronic wounds, so implementing a consistently high standard of wound care continues to be a national priority for the NHS Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) framework. In the UK alone, the annual cost of managing wounds that healed was £2.1 billion with an additional £3.2 billion for the 39% of wounds that did not heal. Accordingly, strategies that focus on (a) wound prevention, (b) accurate diagnosis and (c) improving wound-healing rates will benefit patients and the NHS.</p> <p>The research underpinning this case study took place within the Institute for Skin Integrity and Infection Prevention (ISlAlP) at UoH and was led by Professor <b>Ousey</b> (Professor of Skin Integrity since 2005). Other members of the team were <b>Atkin</b> (Lecturer Practitioner since 2005), <b>Blackburn</b> (Research Fellow since 2017), <b>Stephenson</b> (Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Statistics since 2010) and <b>King</b> (Professor of Psychology since 1992).</p> <p>Tissue Viability Services (TVS) are nurse-led and support multi-disciplinary teams by providing specialist advice and care to clinicians and patients with, or at risk of, developing acute and chronic wounds. The Tissue Viability Nurse (TVN) role supports healthcare across specialities including</p>		

paediatrics, older people and mental health. Practitioners need specialist competencies to manage skin integrity and to implement evidence-based findings into their practice.

In 2014 Ousey and Atkin's research [3.1], in collaboration with the Chief Matron and the Clinical Lead for Tissue Viability at Northumbria Healthcare, established that the TVN role had no nationally accepted definition. The research included a literature review, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The absence of a definition prevented the consistent measurement of the effectiveness of TVS and resulted in inconsistent expectations of the TVN role. The research concluded that without an assessment framework for TVS it would not be possible to benchmark services as part of quality improvement strategies. Benchmarking, or comparing NHS services with each other, is a way to improve the quality of patient services by reducing unnecessary variations in care.

In 2015, Urgo Medical, a distributor of wound healing products, funded Ousey to explore the impact of the lack of a framework by examining TVNs' perceptions of their job roles and responsibilities using a mixed-methods design study with an online survey (n= 261, 63.7% employed as TVNs) and seven semi-structured interviews, undertaken at the Wounds UK Conference [3.2]. They asked delegates what they required to perform their role more effectively. Participants felt the TVN role was misunderstood because of an absence of any educational requirements or assessment criteria. Role responsibilities, person specification and grade varied across NHS Trusts, underlining the need for an assessment framework for TVS, aligning with Ousey's previous research findings [3.1].

In 2016, Ousey led a group of six TVS experts to create the first nationally recognised competency framework detailing the core competencies of TVNs: Tissue Viability Leading Change (TVLC). This was validated by independent experts from the Wound Care Alliance, the Journal of Wound Care and the Journal of Foot and Diabetes Wound Care and Wounds UK.

Further research led by Blackburn in 2018-19 confirmed that the TVN role has continued to become more complex due to an aging population [3.3] and a rise in the incidence of chronic wounds [3.4]. This resulted in increased demands being placed on TVS and demonstrates the complexity of running a service that lacks a framework against which to plan the training and education of pre-registration nurses [3.5] and support nurses in gaining the confidence and competence of appropriate wound care [3.6].

### 3. References to the research

[3.1] **Ousey K, Atkin L, Milne J, Henderson V** (2014) The changing role of the tissue viability nurse. *Wounds UK* 10(4): 54–61. <https://www.wounds-uk.com/journals/issue/40/article-details/the-changing-role-of-the-tissue-viability-nurse-an-exploration-of-this-multifaceted-post>

[3.2] **Ousey K, Milne J, Atkin L, Henderson V, King N, Stephenson J** (2015) Exploring the role of the tissue viability nurse. *Wounds UK EWMA SPECIAL*: 36–45. <https://www.wounds-uk.com/journals/issue/42/article-details/exploring-the-role-of-the-tissue-viability-nurse>

[3.3] **Blackburn, J., & Ousey, K.** (2018). Pressure ulcer definitions and core curricula—how does this affect wound care and the older patient? *British Journal of Community Nursing*, 23(12), S6-S12. [doi.org/10.12968/bjcn.2018.23.Sup12.S6](https://doi.org/10.12968/bjcn.2018.23.Sup12.S6)

[3.4] **Blackburn, J., Stephenson, J., Atkin, L., Southern, T., & Ousey, K.** (2018). Exploring and understanding challenges in clinical practice: appropriate dressing wear time. *Wounds UK*, 14(5), 56-64. <https://www.wounds-uk.com/journals/issue/554/article-details/exploring-and-understanding-challenges-in-clinical-practice-appropriate-dressing-wear-time->

[3.5] **Blackburn, J., Ousey, K., & Stephenson, J.** (2019). Nurses education, confidence and competence in appropriate dressing choice. *Advances in Skin and Wound Care*, 32(10), 470-476. [doi.org/10.1097/01.ASW.0000577132.81124.88](https://doi.org/10.1097/01.ASW.0000577132.81124.88)

[3.6] **Ousey, K., & Blackburn, J.** (2019). The positive impact of training and education on nurses' competence and confidence. *Wounds UK*, 15(1), 7-8. <https://www.wounds->

[uk.com/journals/issue/570/article-details/the-positive-impact-of-training-and-education-on-nurses-competence-and-confidence](http://uk.com/journals/issue/570/article-details/the-positive-impact-of-training-and-education-on-nurses-competence-and-confidence)

### Quality Statement

The research supporting this case study was published in leading national and international wound care journals. All outputs were subject to rigorous peer review as part of the submission process. Ousey was the lead/senior author for all outputs and Atkin, Blackburn, Stephenson and King contributed significantly to the conceptualisation, design, analysis and reporting of findings.

### 4. Details of the impact

The Tissue Viability Leading Change (TVLC) framework [5.1], developed by ISlAIP at the UoH, has improved NHS patient care by enabling the professionalisation of TVS and the practitioners who work within them. This has been achieved by informing and improving continuing professional development and education for TVNs; enabling parity of skills and service delivery across NHS organisations; enabling commercial impact for URGO Medical, a distributor of wound healing products.

### **Informing and improving continuing professional development and education for TVN**

In 2015, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), the body that sets professional standards for UK nurses (and midwives), issued guidance that all registered practitioners must improve their practice in line with the best model available. TVLC provides this model for practitioners to develop and update their wound care competencies. Completion of TVLC training, in tandem with the NMC and Health Care Professionals Council Continuing Professional Development (HCPC CPD) reflection documents, allows for nurses and podiatrists to demonstrate they have met the requirements for their annual revalidation. Preliminary analysis of the use of the framework in 2016 [5.2] showed downloads for the TVLC framework were 331 (Ousey, Stephenson and Carter, 2016), which represented 69% of the total number (n=480) of Tissue Viability Society members in 2018. Central Manchester, Pennine Care and Northumberland NHS Trusts have embedded the framework into their TVN training curriculum.

In 2016, following requests for higher-level skills training from TVNs, a TVLC Business Skills Course was created through a collaboration between ISlAIP and URGO Medical (accredited as a Masters module by UoH). Course evaluations identified that completion of the course equipped TVNs with the skills needed to take a service-based project to successful implementation, resulting in increased investment for TVS.

Student evaluations (2017-18) demonstrate increased confidence and in-depth understanding focused around business management acumen for their senior role, resulting in improved service delivery and patient care. Students said the course enhanced their professional and continuing development. "I was tasked to complete a business case to increase staffing required to reconfigure the service ..., there [is] no support in house to complete such a task. The business case was successful and the finances awarded ... submitting a business case to increase staffing is one of the most difficult ... and often such requests are declined. I am confident that the skills that I gained ... were integral to the success of the submission" (student [5.3]). Another student said: "The TVLC Business skills course ... supported me ... in my Tissue Viability role. ... I embarked on a large project to reduce variations in leg ulcer care across our Trust. I had ideas of what I wanted to do ... however at the beginning of the course I had difficulty articulating both verbally and written my vision and the benefits of the vision for the future in a clear manner. The course has developed me to think more business like ... [the course] has personally developed me immensely in carrying out this project leading to our launch of the Algorithm and Pathway last month" (student [5.4]).

TVLC has also provided a foundation for the development of a national, multi-professional, multi-level capability framework for wound care, the National Wound Care Strategy Programme (NWCSP), which was commissioned by NHS England. "Professor Ousey's work in relation to the TVLC competency framework is providing a foundation for the development of a national, multi-

professional, multi-level capability framework for wound care. Professor Ousey is a valued member of the steering group for this project” (Director of NWCSF [5.5]).

### **Enabling parity of skills and service delivery**

TVLC was the first framework to be embedded into practice for assessing roles and responsibilities of TVN. It consists of 10 core competencies, which enable consistent identification of education and training gaps and provides clarification of job roles and responsibilities. It facilitates the benchmarking, or comparison with each other, of services and standardised measurement of their effectiveness, as part of quality improvement strategies.

TVLC codified best practice and was launched in 2016 at the national Wounds UK annual conference, attended by 4,000 health care professionals (HCPs). Subsequently, the framework has been adopted across NHS Trusts in Greater Manchester, North East England, Yorkshire & Humber, Glasgow and London. The platform was developed by UOH and supported by URGO Medical UK.

In 2017 the NHS CQUIN (Commissioning for Quality and Innovation) framework announced new targets focussed on wound assessment. The launch of the TVLC framework in 2016 enabled Trusts to be prepared in advance to meet the standards of the new CQUIN, by ensuring that the skills and competencies of clinicians working within the field of wound care were in line with their clinical practice and that they could identify areas for development.

The NHS Improvement (NHSi) pressure ulcer core curriculum (2016) used the TVLC framework as its foundation. A section of TVLC, focused on pressure ulcers, was developed by Ousey and has been implemented in practice through the Stop the Pressure Programme National Education Curriculum since 2018. As part of the NHSi, it guides education for nurses and HCPs on preventing pressure ulcers. “The competency framework has been incredibly useful. Knowing that the TVLC framework is well embedded in practice and has been evaluated in use gave us confidence to include this comprehensive framework within our workstream.” (Senior Clinical Adviser, NHSi Stop the Pressure Programme [5.6]). The programme is used by all healthcare trusts in the UK, as well as providers such as care homes.

TVLC has been used at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MUNHSFT) Community Services (2016 – present) to provide a structured, self-learning environment to 98 district nursing staff, underpinning the creation of a new evidence-based practice clinical pathway. The new pathway, which integrated TVLC into the Trust’s wound care strategy, aimed to reduce costs while also improving patient quality of life (QoL). A key aspect of this was the incorporation of a wound care formulary that ensured the correct wound dressings were used consistently according to wound type. “Across MUNHSFT Community Services we adopted the TVLC competencies for leg ulcer management” (Lead Nurse, Tissue Viability [5.7]).

TVLC has also been used in Central Manchester NHS Trust to upskill and refresh district nursing competencies “The district nurses liked the competency tool as it gave them direction and goals to achieve.” (Lead Nurse, Tissue Viability and Infection Prevention [5.8]).

### **Enabling commercial impact on URGO Medical UK**

URGO Medical is the medical division of the international URGO Group, developing wound care products. The company has supported Professor Ousey’s research for the last decade. TVLC provides a consistent reference point for URGO sales staff to position discussions about customer requirements. The TVLC Business Skills course has driven sales because the graduates of the course have been successful in justifying greater expenditure on their service areas. “Working ... on the TVLC programme has to date enabled increased access and better engagement with 45 new key customers within Tissue Viability” (Head of Market Access, URGO Medical [5.9]).

Successful new customer acquisition has enabled URGO Medical to increase investment in their Healthcare Partnership Manager (HPM) role, expanding numbers from six to twelve in three years. TVLC and the TVLC Business Skills Course has encouraged a shift in mindset within URGO Medical to an outcomes-based focus. This shift resulted in a project to develop and implement a new evidence-based clinical pathway, with MUNHSFT. This project was recognised as an example of best practice by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence in February 2020. “A key benefit ...has been that the TVLC business course is unique and innovative in providing business skills for clinicians at postgraduate level linked specifically to the speciality of Tissue Viability. [Our] work with Professor Ousey and the University ... has provided new opportunities and helped overcome some of the boundaries between industry and health care professionals.” (UK Training Manager, URGO medical [5.10]). The company won the ‘2018 Partnership of the Year’ award from the Health Services Journal (HSJ) for their Clinical Pathway Support Service.

In 2017 TVLC itself was runner-up in the annual Journal of Wound Care Awards. In 2018 it was shortlisted in the Education Innovation category of the HSJ awards. And in 2019 the TVLC Business Skills Masters module was shortlisted for both the HSJ awards for education and the Journal of Wound Care Awards (placed third).

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [5.1] URGO TVLC website link <https://www.urgostartplus.co.uk/tvlc-tissue-viability-leading-chang>
- [5.2] Ousey K, Stephenson J, Carter B. Tissue Viability Leading Change competency framework: preliminary analysis of use. Wounds UK. 2016;12(3):30-5. [http://www.wounds-uk.com/pdf/content\\_11842.pdf](http://www.wounds-uk.com/pdf/content_11842.pdf)
- [5.3] Feedback from student evaluations - Quote from student on the 2018 TVLC course.
- [5.4] Quote from a student completing TVLC 2017 course
- [5.5] Testimonial. Director of the National Wound Care Strategy Programme (NWCSP)
- [5.6] Supporting statement from Senior Clinical Adviser, NHSi Stop the Pressure Programme
- [5.7] Supporting statement from Lead Nurse Community Services: Tissue Viability & Infection Prevention, Manchester NHS Trust (Link)
- [5.8] Supporting statement from Lead Nurse Tissue Viability & Infection Prevention, Central Manchester NHS Trust.
- [5.9] Testimonial from Head of Market Access at URGO Medical
- [5.10] Testimonial from UK Training Manager at URGO Medical