Introduction
A 57-year-old man who lived alone presented to his GP with increasingly swollen, itchy and painful legs. The patient attended a day centre five days per week and enjoyed many of the activities on offer there. His legs and ankles were extremely swollen and oedematous, his mobility was poor and he was unable to find shoes that would fit his feet. Both legs were extremely oedematous, malodorous and weeping versus fluids.

Method
The patient had an holistic assessment carried out by the Tissue Viability Team and the Regional Clinical Advisor from L&R UK. His leg was too large for Doppler assessment, so foot pulses were palpated instead, these being infrapopliteal and pulsatile in both legs. Duplicates were performed later which confirmed infrapopliteal waveform. His mobility was poor and he was unable to find shoes that fit his feet. Both legs were extremely oedematous, malodorous and weeping versus fluids.

Results/treatment impact
Between the 13th Feb and 3rd April 2017, the combined limb circumferences for both legs had reduced by 102.5cm.

- Both call measurements were reduced by 20cm and ankle circumferences reduced by 20 and 23cm in the left and right legs respectively. During this time the patient’s mobility improved, he was able to walk faster and was no longer short of breath. He lost 2.2lbs in weight and was feeling more motivated to eat a healthier diet with less alcohol. There was also no longer any smell from his legs.

- The patient reports that people are nice to him, he can use the cafe and he has made new friends. He has booked a holiday abroad.

- This gentleman’s whole demeanour has changed. He is confident, more able to engage with others and he is happy.

- The patient was in a win-win situation as on-going maintenance initially which reduced his exudate further and he has since been measured for long-term maintenance in Actico® Lym phoedema bandaging.

Discussion and conclusion
The profound patient impact of lower limb wounds and lympho venous disease are well documented, however, it is not always clear how this condition can affect all aspects of the patient’s wellbeing. In the case of this patient it is clear that his quality of life suffered immensely as a result.

The patient is now able to visit his cafe, has made new friends and is planning a holiday. He has been discharged from the Leg to Clinic and continues to attend the Day Centre, with review planned every 6 months.

The team are delighted with how this collaborative approach to the patient’s management has impacted positively on all aspects of his life.

This case study highlights the need for patients to be referred as early as possible when presenting with conditions affecting the lower limb. Compression, good wound care and skin care remain the cornerstone of treatment for this patient group. A multidisciplinary approach to care is essential. The use of inelastic bandages combined with super-absorbent dressings and appropriate skin care was essential in reducing the patient’s limb volume and managing moisture from the limbs.

As a team we feel honoured to have been a part of this gentleman’s collaborative care. In 4 months we have changed his life and it is a testament to the commitment of the patient, his Support Workers and the Tissue Viability Service.