

# USING AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO TRANSFORM CHRONIC OEDEMA MANAGEMENT ACROSS A HEALTHCARE TRUST



**Carolyn Kennedy, District Nurse Clinical Lead**  
**Rachel Jervis, Professional Development and Clinical Lead (Community Services)**  
**Maureen Dyke, Tissue Viability Nurse**

## Introduction

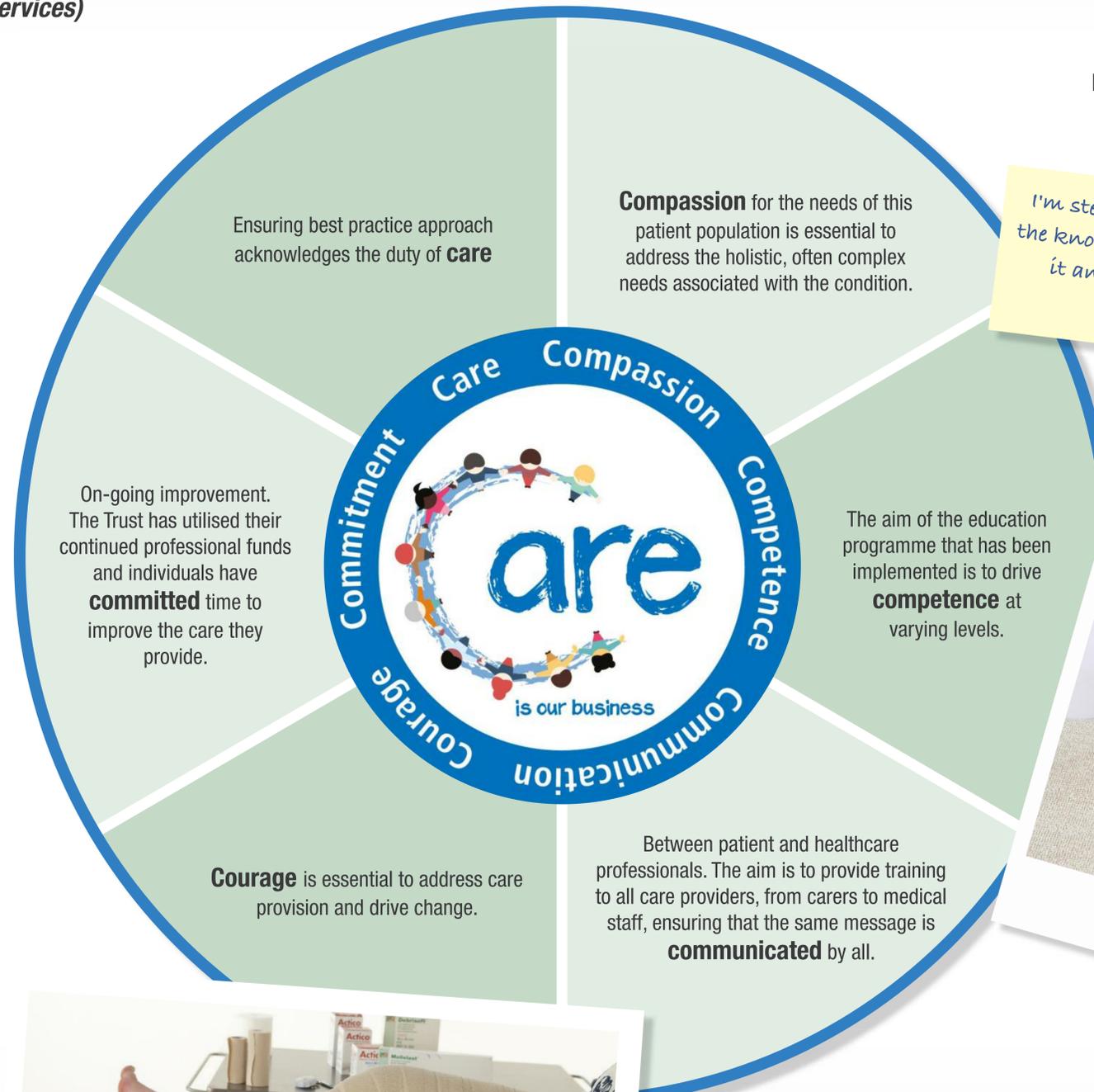
The aim of this project is to demonstrate how the care for those suffering with chronic oedema, particularly lympho-venous oedema, is being transformed. **Care, compassion, competence, communication, courage and commitment** are pillars of good care (NHS, 2013). This trust-wide strategy illustrates how these pillars can be put into practice.

High competence levels exist in the workforce in relation to the management of lower limb conditions without oedema. This has been achieved through training and support from Tissue Viability and related services. Whilst it had been identified as a significant issue, the care for those with oedema was more sporadic.

## Transforming the Service

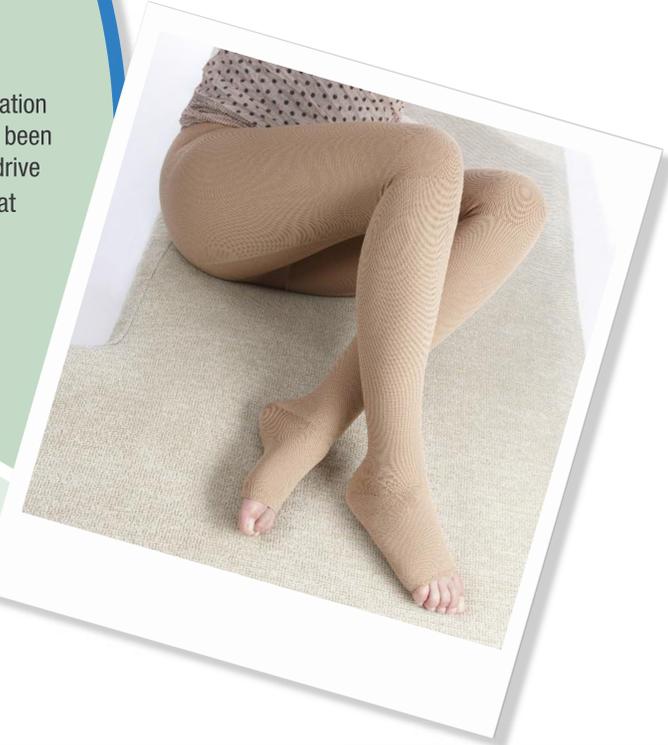
Service transformation is being achieved by adopting a multi-faceted approach. This includes the development of Trust guidelines for the management of chronic oedema, the implementation of a chronic oedema care plan and a tiered programme of education. Three District Nurses are currently undergoing accredited training to enable them to also act as link nurses. They are geographically located to ensure accessibility of care.

A training programme, supported by industry, has also been implemented for all qualified staff caring for such patients, to equip them with fundamental skills (for example the application of full leg bandaging with cohesive inelastic bandages\*).



In reflection, on the impact of a change in practice, one link-nurse stated:

*I'm steadily reinforcing my practice with the knowledge I've gained. Really enjoying it and the results. Life changing for patients.*



## Conclusion

- The described process has:
- increased the skills of professionals
  - improved access to chronic oedema management
  - led to increased job satisfaction
  - led to cost minimisation
  - most importantly, improved quality of life for patients