

Diabetes and Foot Care: Time to Act



Gerry Rayman



Title: Diabetes and Foot Care: Time to Act

Editors: Bakker K, Foster AVM, van Houtum WH, Riley P on behalf of the IDF Consultative Section and International Working Group on the Diabetic Foot

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This publication is the fourth of the International Diabetes Federation's *Time to Act* series. It is written by international experts and aims to increase awareness of diabetic foot problems, demonstrate the benefits of preventative strategies and convince stakeholders to engage in implementing diabetic foot care services. The book is brilliantly devised and essential for those involved in developing diabetic foot care services wherever they are based in the world.

For those having difficulties convincing their purchasers to invest in establishing a multidisciplinary foot care team there is nothing better. I would recommend they immediately obtain a copy and loan it to the decision makers. It will not take long for them to become experts in the area and convinced of what they can achieve by investing in establishing a multidisciplinary team.

The book is cleverly laid out using a colour-coded key to direct various interest groups, which include patients and carers, healthcare professionals and decision makers. Thus, your chief executive will not have to spend time reading about

pathophysiology but can immediately navigate to the sections on how he/she can save money and do good. He/she will then be able to tell you what is required! The book should also be circulated around your diabetes network group, particularly to patient representatives on these groups. The colour-coding will help them navigate to sections relevant to their issues.

Throughout, the text is accompanied by excellent photographs and clear illustrations. Unfortunately, though, the photographs do not always relate to the associated text.

The book is written by enthusiasts, convinced by the benefits of organised foot care and as such it makes a positive and inspiring read. The sections on pathophysiology, diagnosis and treatment are concise and informative. Sections on prevention and education are more extensive. The final sections are on the organisation of foot care, from local to regional to national levels. Here there are examples of effective foot care programmes from Belgium, Brazil and Slovenia. There are also examples of pan-European research programmes and of international initiatives aimed at raising awareness.

The last chapter is a valuable survey of foot care worldwide. As expected there are marked disparities in care but this simply impresses on the reader how much can be achieved by very modest investments into preventative education and establishing foot care teams.

In his introduction, Karel Bakker states that:

'the ultimate goal of reduced amputation rates and improved quality of life should motivate the advocacy work of those fighting to make a difference for those living with diabetes around the world. It is hoped that this book will provide useful and persuasive arguments that will help achieve this goal.'

This book is surely a big step in the right direction. ■



From left to right: Nicole Johnson Baker (IDF Ambassador), Wim Wientjens (Chair of International Diabetes Federation [IDF] Europe) and Karel Bakker (Chair of the IDF Consultative Section and International Working Group on the Diabetic Foot) at the launch of the book Diabetes and Foot Care: Time to Act in Amsterdam, May 2005.