

Alistair McInnes



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When I first met Alistair we were both considerably younger, *The Diabetic Foot Journal* was not yet a reality, FDUK did not exist, Putting Feet First and a number of UK foot initiatives were not on the government's agenda and there were not that many people who were prepared to do something about this. Alistair, was, and remains, passionate about diabetic foot care and over the years he has been at the forefront of so many UK and international initiatives to drive forward foot care for people with diabetes.

I was lecturing on the Brighton University MSc course and Alistair was the course lead. His clinical practice was in the Leaf Hospital and on a short tour it became obvious that we both shared a similar vision for foot care and for podiatrists. We wanted podiatrists to be at the forefront of diabetic foot care and to improve education and training for foot care teams. As an educationalist Alistair wants the highest possible academic standards and debates about skills and training with Alistair are always entertaining and usually informative. They certainly make you think.

It was this vision that led ultimately to the birth of PDUK and then to FDUK with the formidable driving force of Louise Stuart, Neil Baker, and others making this work. As Alistair leaves the FDUK committee, FDUK is now in the strongest position it has ever been as a driver for change and a key stakeholder in foot care standards and policy. This is due in no small part to him.

After a brief flirtation with Southampton University, Alistair returned to Brighton and concentrated on teaching, and increasingly on influencing policy and governments. Many of the recent diabetic foot care initiatives from the UK Government have Alistair's stamp on them somewhere.

It is, however, through this journal that Alistair and I have interacted the most. I believe Alistair suggested me for the job, although I am still not sure if I was the first choice! However, as his deputy and later co-editor, I have watched the journal grow

under his stewardship. *The Diabetic Foot Journal* is recognised as the main journal for diabetic foot care across the world. It is read by around 20000 healthcare professionals each quarter. Through editorials and articles over the years Alistair has helped to shape the foot care profession. Campaigns for claiming the title of specialist podiatrist and defining what that means resulted ultimately (if indirectly) in the Podiatry Competency Framework (TRIEPodD-UK, 2012).

Not that going off on a tangent ever worried Alistair and those of you who have heard him speak over the years will realise this. Alistair's talks rarely go directly from A to B but the journey is always interesting and by the end you will have learnt more than you think and been challenged to question your views on a few occasions. Surely this is the sign of a remarkable educator.

Now that Alistair has formally retired from his academic role he is reducing his other commitments. FDUK, the journal, the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists will all be worse off for his absence and I personally will miss his sound counsel.

So, when the Bells ring (which is New Year's Eve to everyone not associated with Scotland) I will raise a glass of single malt to my friend and colleague, Alistair McInnes, possibly the most influential podiatrist in diabetic foot care in the past 25 years. *Slainte mhaith!* ■

TRIEPodD-UK (2012) *Podiatry Competency Framework for Integrated Diabetic Foot Care. A User's Guide*. Available at: <http://bit.ly/1dDOsifB> (accessed 28.11.2013)