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I want to hear Steven Tyler, not a cover band

On a February day in the middle of a New England winter, my thoughts drift to months with warmer weather. Making plans to travel to a spring conference alleviates the chill of freezing temperatures. The overwhelming question posed this time of year is which wound care meeting will give me the greatest value for the time and money spent attending.

The recent explosion in conferences dedicated to 'woundology' creates confusion and indecision. I have taken part in hundreds of wound conferences and listened to thousands of lectures—the good, the bad and the ugly. As a result, clinicians frequently ask me, 'Where can I go to get information I can incorporate into my practice without undue commercial influence?' I use several criteria in choosing an educational event. First, I favour conferences in which investigators present their own research as opposed to a summarised and sanitised version of a topic. If I buy a ticket to see Aerosmith, I want to hear Steven Tyler, irrespective of his health or age. I don't want to see a cover band. The same is true with conferences: I want to hear from the original researchers. In addition, I look for an interprofessional approach incorporating multiple disciplines.

In light of reduced continuing education budgets, cost is also a major factor in conference choice. The location, venue and registration fee dictate the budget. I immediately rule out conferences with exorbitant registration fees. In my experience, they are not worth the price of admission and nothing angers me more than paying hundreds of dollars to register for a meeting only to hear recycled lectures from the previous year. In the wound care world, as in real estate, it is all about location. The \$10 cokes in a resort hotel will quickly eat away your budget. I look for second tier cities with reasonable hotel and food costs. Finally, the conference programme must allow adequate time for networking with colleagues. I find the best conference setting is a hotel conference room or centre. Attendees disperse rapidly from events in large convention centres, diminishing the opportunity to share challenging wound cases with friends.

In my opinion the spring meetings listed deliver the best value, join me at:

Association for the Advancement of Wound Care (AAWC): Pressure Ulcer Summit. 26–28 March, 2020. Atlanta Georgia. A perennial favourite, the discussion starts where most general wound care conferences leave off: analysing the evidence and identifying gaps in research. The summit challenges long held dogma in pressure ulcer staging and treatment. Last year, I enjoyed the presentation by former Health and Human Services Director and Congressman, Tom Price. He brought a unique perspective on the government's view of pressure ulcers.

The World Union of Wound Healing Societies (WUWHS), 8–12 March in Abu Dhabi, held every four years, is the Olympics of wound care meetings, bringing together societies from across the globe. Every woundologist must experience at least one WUWHS meeting in their career. Surprisingly affordable, Abu Dhabi is one the best destinations in the Middle East. If you are looking for a world view on wound healing, it is worth the splurge in 2020.

Wound Week Milwaukee WI, 16–19 April, 2020. Held in a fun and inexpensive city, Wound Week brings together the largest US wound care societies in one place for the first time. As the tag line reads, it is a meeting, 'for clinicians by clinicians.' The meeting focuses on the practicing clinician. The keynote lecture features patients sharing their wound care experiences. Do not miss it. It is the best session on the spring calendar.

These, along with the European Wound Management Association (EWMA), London 13–16 May, are my recommendations for spring 2020. I hope to see you at one of these meetings. Stay tuned for my fall 2020 suggestions! **JWC**



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