

Nurse wins praise for poster presentation

Cover
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A FIFE NURSE has received international recognition for her work after a presentation on a major health issue was awarded second place at a conference in Germany.

Anne Wilson, a tissue viability nurse at Queen Margaret Hospital, Dunfermline, was commended for her poster presentation on pressure ulcer prevalence studies over the past five years at the European Pressure Ulcer Pressure Panel's annual conference in Berlin.

The treatment and prevention of pressure ulcers, also known as bed sores, costs the NHS between £1.4 and £2.1

billion annually and health staff throughout Scotland have been encouraged to develop strategies to help reduce the problem.

As part of the work carried out by Ms Wilson, staff conducted an audit of Fife's four main hospitals to find out the difference that new equipment introduced in 2001 had made in dealing with incidences of pressure ulcers.

Her findings—which were contained in the award-winning poster presented to delegates in Berlin—showed that the overall prevalence figure had decreased from 17% of the 566 patients studied in 2001 to 15% in 2006.

On winning second place out of over 60 entrants, Ms Wilson said, "It was very exciting ... to get second place was just great—it was a real thrill.

"It was a real boost for all of us and it was one of those fantastic moments that you will never forget.

"Patients are everything and we have to continue to maintain and improve standards."

Much of the 2% reduction was put down to a new kind of static overlay mattress, called Repose, which allowed patients to be cared for more quickly.

In the past, Ms Wilson said nursing staff may have

waited several days to obtain high-tech equipment which meant that pressure areas on patients were given time to deteriorate.

"We used high-tech equipment, often too late, but with this equipment we were able to flood the system to greater effect," she explained.

"We've gradually changed the culture to shift away from high-tech and the key to this equipment is that staff get it really early, which can make all the difference."

The improvements have also been seen financially, as the NHS Fife Trust now spends £62,000 each year on

pressure relieving equipment as opposed to £300,000 in 2001.

Members of NHS Fife's operational divisional committee yesterday congratulated Ms Wilson.

Meanwhile, staff nurse Laura Graham, who is based in ward five at Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy, has reached the last five of the Evidence Into Practice Awards, which will be held in the Park Lane Hotel, London, on November 16.

She developed a comic strip-like package which is designed to teach children, families and visitors the basics of infection control.