

## Wellbeing and wound healing Information for the caregiver

This leaflet is for all caregivers, whether you are a relative, friend or a healthcare professional

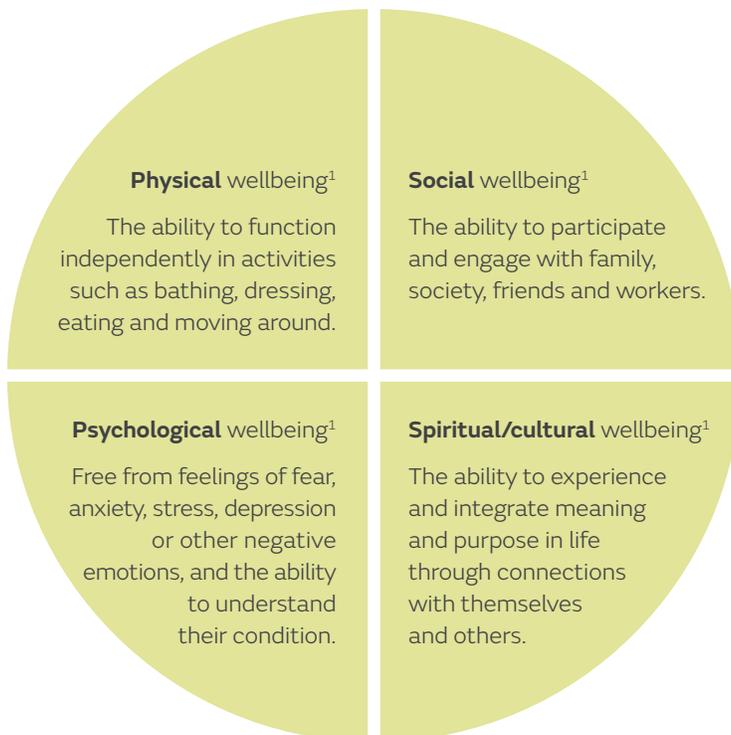
### The role of the caregiver

As a caregiver of a person with a wound, you are more than likely involved in many aspects of their day to day life. You should work closely with their healthcare professional to ensure their care is provided as effectively as possible.

Most wounds will heal successfully and as expected, but others can take longer and affect wellbeing for a variety of reasons.

### Why is wellbeing important?

Wellbeing is important because research has shown that poor wellbeing may affect a person's ability to heal and cope with their situation.<sup>1,3-5</sup> Wellbeing encompasses all areas of life and can be loosely divided into four domains:



### What is wellbeing?

#### Definition –

Wellbeing is a state of being characterized by happiness, health and peace of mind<sup>1</sup>

Wellbeing is unique for everyone but there are normally several factors that people will have in common, for example a need for independence or social interaction.<sup>1</sup> For the person in your care, achieving a good state of wellbeing can mean anything from following their passions to simply being able to live independently in their own home.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to identify factors affecting wellbeing across these domains as they can affect many aspects of life of the person in your care, including their:<sup>1</sup>

- Ability to cope and look after themselves
- Wound healing progress
- Happiness and contentedness with life
- Financial and family stability



# Helping to improve the wellbeing of others

The wellbeing of people with wounds often improves as they begin to self-manage and become involved in decisions about their care; this helps them to feel more in control of their wound healing and as a result, their situation may improve.

- **Remember to ask for help<sup>1</sup>** – if you feel you are struggling to provide the care required, or you feel that the wound and situation has altered, you should seek help and advice from their healthcare professional
- **Sit down and discuss wellbeing<sup>1</sup>** – sitting down each day to fill in the Wellbeing with a wound journal. These will help you both identify how you can improve wellbeing together.
- **Prioritize problems to deal with<sup>1</sup>** – try to identify together the factor most affecting wellbeing and then try to find ways to improve it. You should speak to a healthcare professional for advice or even ask for a referral if it is not something that can be dealt with at home.
- **Set goals and targets<sup>2</sup>** – discuss targets for the day with the person you care for or goals for the week because, regardless of how small it is, achieving something can really help
- **Try to encourage a little more each day<sup>1</sup>** – increasing things like movement or involvement a little bit each day will help the person in your care progress even more than they realize
- **Discuss hobbies or activities<sup>2</sup>** – keeping the mind active, and the body where possible, is essential for good wellbeing. Discuss with the person in your care any activities or hobbies they could take up that would be of interest to them. For example: Sudoku and word puzzles, gentle walks or coffee with friends.

## Self-management and decision making

### Actively involve the person in your care<sup>1</sup>

Talk them through exactly what you're doing and explain why to help reduce anxiety and fear.

### Ensure that they understand their treatment<sup>1</sup>

Knowledge and information will help them feel more in control and less anxious about their condition. If anything changes, explain why.

### Discuss decisions about care together<sup>1</sup>

Active involvement in decision making may help the person in your care feel more comfortable with their treatment.

### Try to remain neutral

Understand that anxiety, pain and fear may cause negative reactions. Remain neutral towards any unpleasant aspects of their wound so they don't feel judged.

### Encourage independence<sup>1</sup>

The more involved a person is in their own care, the more they will feel greater empowerment and control over their situation.

### Provide the required information<sup>1</sup>

Sufficient information will make them more capable to make a decision based on good judgement.

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#### References

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