



**Suzie Calne** discusses the impact and importance of events that bring people together.

## The importance of international engagement

I attended the London Olympic Games opening ceremony and surprising though it may seem, I had been quite negative about the prospect. I was dreading the crowds and imagining that it might be tedious to watch all the athletes parading nation by nation around the Olympic stadium.

However, as 27 July grew nearer, my family and I became caught up in the excitement and proudly arrived in London with our golden tickets to witness the most spectacular and impressive live entertainment I have ever seen. The vibrant and electric atmosphere exuded positivity from start to finish and it was a truly unique occasion.

As the Olympic stadium throbbed with the frenzied interpretation of British history, we found ourselves wondering what other countries would make of it all. The celebration of the National Health Service (NHS), for me, was a triumph as thousands of volunteer NHS nurses and doctors represented the extraordinary achievement of a service that has always been free at the point of delivery.

Fireworks, dancing and heart-wrenching music found an emotional echo in many who attended. Most importantly, the coming together of athletes from 200 different countries, all with the same goal and determination, was inspiring. As the

young athletes carried their torches around the epic stadium and lit the stunning Olympic torch, I was moved to tears.

Nonetheless, if there was one aspect of history missing from the opening ceremony, it was perhaps the celebration of scientific, world-changing innovations developed on the British shores, such as moist wound healing.

On 2 September, however, the world of wounds celebrated its own achievements. Much like the Olympic games, clinicians from all over the world gathered at the World Union of Wound Healing Societies (WUWHS) meeting in Yokohama, Japan, with the same goals of exchanging new information and examining developments in wound care together.

In support of this meeting, Wounds International has developed a new resource area on the website with translations of key publications available in Japanese. We are delighted that Dr Matsuzaki, a committee member for the WUWHS meeting 2012, has authored a case report, included in this issue, that describes the management of a patient with a gangrenous foot and focuses on reducing the patient's pain.

Dr Matsuzaki draws on the principles set out in a consensus document called *Minimising pain at wound dressing-related procedures* launched at the WUWHS meeting in 2004. This document was written with an international consensus and has certainly endured the test of time, illustrating that when clinicians from different disciplines and countries come together, interesting

and lasting guidelines can be developed.

The Olympics already seem like a long time ago, and we now look forward to the games that will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2016, where those involved are already working hard to create a successful event. In four years time, we are also expecting another WUWHS meeting, with the host city being selected as this editorial goes to press.

After my own recent experiences, no one should make the mistake of underestimating the potential impact and importance of events that bring people together, specifically clinicians from around the world with common interests, whatever their expertise.

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