

## CANADIAN HEALTHCARE IS UNDER PRESSURE

Healthcare organizations across the country struggle to control costs, keep hospital beds available for acute patients and deliver the highest possible quality of care. Administrators are squeezed to stretch the value of every dollar. Clinicians are pressured to make evidence-based, cost-effective care decisions.

Wound, ostomy and continence cases are some of the most common—and costly—conditions healthcare providers have to treat. The costs are expected to skyrocket as Canada's population ages. **That's why Nurses Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence (NSWOCs) are needed now more than ever.**

Wound care costs Canada **\$3.9 billion a year**. That's 3% of the country's total annual healthcare spending.

– 2012 Wound Care Alliance

There are more than **70,000 people** in Canada living with an ostomy. Thousands undergo an ostomy surgery each year.

– 2019 Ostomy Canada Society

An estimated **3.5 million people** in Canada live with continence issues, which can result in dermatitis and other skin problems.

– 2019 Taylor & Cahill

(The exact number of patients with acute and chronic wounds in Canada is unknown, as there is no accurate national database, but based on prevalence, the number is high and growing with the aging population.)



## LEARN MORE

For more information about the benefits an NSWOC can bring to your organization, visit [nswoc.ca](http://nswoc.ca), call Nurses Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence Canada toll-free at **1-888-739-5072** or email [office@nswoc.ca](mailto:office@nswoc.ca).

## ABOUT NSWOCC

Since 1981, Nurses Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence Canada (NSWOCC) has united NSWOCs across the country and worked to advance the tri-specialty of wound, ostomy and continence. NSWOCC promotes high-quality care for patients with wound, ostomy and continence issues through advocacy, education and research. NSWOCC believes every patient deserves a Nurse Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence.

The  
**POWER**  
of  
**3**

**Nurses Specialized**  
in Wound, Ostomy and Continence  
deliver exponential benefits  
for Canadian healthcare



NURSES SPECIALIZED IN  
WOUND, OSTOMY AND CONTINENCE  
CANADA  
INFIRMIÈRES SPÉCIALISÉES EN  
PLÂES, STOMIES ET CONTINENCE  
CANADA

## A REMEDY FOR SYSTEM STRAIN

NSWOCs are trained to deliver specialized care to patients with wound, ostomy<sup>1</sup> and continence challenges. Working in acute care settings, long-term care facilities, communities and private settings, NSWOCs reduce costs, get better outcomes for patients and contribute to higher quality care.

**Every patient deserves a Nurse Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence care.**

## THREE SPECIALTIES

As registered nurses trained in three specialties, NSWOCs bring skills and knowledge that are valuable to a significant portion of healthcare cases in Canada. The competency-based education NSWOCs get through the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Institute equips them to achieve favourable clinical and cost

<sup>1</sup> An ostomy is an abdominal opening that allows the collection of human waste into a pouch or other device.

“My NSWOC was my support line. She gave me her knowledge, friendliness and respect. To this day I think about how lucky I was that she was available and that she offered her phone number to reach her at any time, day or night. Sixteen years later, I live without a large bowel, I have a stoma—and I have never looked back. With the help of this nurse, today I am healthy both physically and mentally.”

– **Ann Durkee**  
Ostomy patient, Nova Scotia

outcomes across the three specialties. In addition to focusing on prevention in all three domains, NSWOCs deliver further benefits:

### 1. Wounds

NSWOCs assess, treat and manage acute and chronic wounds resulting from an accident, disease or complication.

### 2. Ostomies

Through preoperative consultation, stoma marking and postoperative education, NSWOCs improve outcomes for patients who require a colostomy, ileostomy or urostomy.

### 3. Continence issues

NSWOCs assess and treat patients with urinary or fecal incontinence and manage their symptoms.

## THREE TIMES THE BENEFITS

NSWOCs’ unique tri-specialization benefits patients, care providers and Canada’s healthcare system as a whole:

### 1. Wound, ostomy and continence patients

An NSWOC at the point of care inspires confidence and hope. By applying in-depth knowledge of best practices, NSWOCs help minimize patients’ pain

“My care experience was absolutely amazing. I received the highest levels of care and support. I can’t imagine what my recovery would have been like without my two NSWOCs. When I had complications in hospital post-surgery, they were there to help me and my family and coordinate with the nurses and doctors on my ward to make sure I was properly looked after.”

– **Shminder Samra**  
Wound and ostomy patient, British Columbia

and risk of complications—and speed up their recoveries. They also support patients by providing information and resources that promote comfort, self-care and preventative strategies.

### 2. Other health professionals and interdisciplinary health teams

NSWOCs are valuable sources of information for interdisciplinary care team members and other health professionals. Passionate and determined, they make ready patient advocates who ensure those under their care get the best possible treatment based on expert understanding of their medical needs.

### 3. Healthcare administrators and government stakeholders

NSWOCs represent a triple value for healthcare leaders. Having NSWOCs on staff reduces the number of specialists required to optimally treat patients with wound, ostomy or continence issues from three to just one. Their care reduces the likelihood of complications and improves patient access by shortening hospital stays and lowering readmission rates.



“I was very fortunate to receive wonderful care from two NSWOCs prior to and after my bladder surgery. They were both very positive and assured me that what I was about to experience would not, in the end, have a huge impact on my daily life. They were right.”

– **Robert Milburn-Brown**  
Continence patient, British Columbia