

Patient SUCCESS STORIES

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Foot Care Program



Patient success stories

Name: Richard Shewchuck

Program: Foot Care Program

Age: 60

Referred by: Dr. Donald Chan

Clinician: Chris Rawlins, LPN

Richard lives in Edmonton, and retired two years ago from Telus after 33 years. At age nine, Richard lost part of his foot in a railroad accident. He played sports through school and was productive in a construction job; however, over years, the skin graft on his heel and three remaining toes wore down. He suffered painful blisters, calluses, and ulcers that changed Richard's gait, limiting the time he could spend standing and walking. Dr. Chan referred him to the PCN in February 2012.

Why did you decide to try the Foot Care program at Edmonton North PCN?

As well as calluses and blisters, I had an ulcer on one of my toes for two years. I tried creams, bandages and different shoes. Nothing worked. I couldn't walk far without my leg aching, and the things I love to do, like tend to my garden and yard, were gradually becoming more painful.

How did the Foot Care Program help you come up with a solution?

We talked about getting a permanent insole made. Chris made me an appointment at a local clinic, but I found out later the cost would not be covered by my insurance. I am on a fixed income now, so the permanent insole was not an option.

Chris designed an insole with padding to cushion calluses, and used pads with the centre cut out to relieve pressure on ulcers and blisters. Over the next two months, I saw the ulcer on my toe finally start to heal. With some trial and error, the unique design of the insole now relieves pressure points and formation of calluses and blisters.

In mid-August, I had an appointment with Chris so I can learn how to make the insole that she makes, using materials she finds in, of all places, the dollar store! With design input from Chris, it feels like we really worked together to come up with my shoe insert solution.

I also learned a lot from the foot care program. I learned about the right creams to use, and have been introduced to benefits of using compression stockings that help with maintaining foot health.

What has the Foot Care Program helped you accomplish?

I have a corner lot with a lot of grass and a garden. I used to have to cut my grass in three stages because my leg would ache. Now I can work longer hours in the yard. Also, my gait has changed. Now I am able to walk properly and not worry about experiencing discomfort.

What has made the most impact on you in this program?

It helped me to come up with a solution for better foot health when there was seemingly none.

Also, it is nice that the client-clinician relationship is not business-like and regimented. Sharing stories about family, school and the jobs we've worked is part of Chris' foot care program, too.

What advice would you share with others about your experience at Edmonton North PCN?

I was skeptical about the outcome of my foot care possibilities, and feared it would be a waste of time. But, I approached the situation like starting a new job. I asked lots of questions, and gave the clinician a chance to help me. My experience didn't have any downs because if I was ever having trouble, Chris would see me right away and we'd keep moving towards making my foot better.

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