



## THE ESSENTIAL CONNECTION BETWEEN WOUND NURSING AND BUSINESS CONCEPTS



### Key Points

- Good documentation helps with reimbursement.
- Keeping accurate records makes sure billing is correct, and patients get the care they need.
- Wound nurses assume a key role in outcomes that affect funding and staffing decisions.
- Wound care choices determine costs. Nurses need to use supplies wisely and still provide good care.

### Objectives:

- Understanding business concepts is vital in wound care today.
- Understanding costs and managing resources to guide clinical decisions
- Linking documentation, reimbursement, and quality outcome
- Helping organizations meet goals and maintain financial health
- Applying business concepts to improve patient care and program effectiveness



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Healthcare is always evolving in the US and worldwide, and wound care nurses do much more than provide bedside care. While clinical skills are essential, nurses must also think about patient needs, facility goals, and rising costs. As expenses rise and budgets tighten, hospitals and clinics face pressure to deliver good clinical outcomes while managing resources. Wound care frequently involves using specialty products, new technology, and long-term planning to meet these problems.

Understanding business concepts helps WOC nurses provide high-quality, evidence-based care that is efficient plus cost-effective. Around 50 to 70% of a nurse's time, and often more than 60%, is spent changing dressings at the bedside. Established or unexpected wounds, such as hospital-acquired pressure injuries, consume significant hospital resources. This highlights why controlling costs is important while also fostering medical outcomes (Mohammed et al., 2025).

In wound care, nurses must make important decisions that will impact patients and the facility's budget. Choosing certain dressings can affect spending, and without a budget, even skilled clinicians can tax finances. By learning how to control costs wisely, nurses can support both patients and the organization. This knowledge also helps explain why certain supplies are needed and makes sure you ask for the right resources.

Good documentation aids patient care and accurate billing. It helps track quality measures like pressure injuries, patient readmissions, and hospital length of stay. These factors affect funding and the organization's reputation. When nurses understand how this information is collected and used, they can more effectively align their care with the facility's goals. Some hospitals do not have enough resources, such as podiatry, special beds, 24-hour wound consults, or the right equipment for obese patients.

Improving education and lowering costs can help improve outcomes (Walker et al., 2019).

When nurses use business knowledge and watch costs, they help meet the needs of the healthcare system. This leads to better results and continued support for the important work of wound care nurses.

## WHY DO WOC NURSES NEED BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE?

- Preventing pressure injuries, ostomy complications, and readmissions, WOC practice helps lower costs and avoid penalties.
- WOC practice has a direct impact on expenses, reimbursement, and how resources are used.
- Knowledge of costs, reimbursement, and break-even analysis helps create wound and ostomy programs that can last.
- WOC nurses often provide workload data, benchmarks, and budget forecasts to support staffing and program growth.
- Business skills help link quality initiatives with budgets and the organization's main goals.
- Being comfortable with financial information makes leaders more credible when planning and making decisions at the system level.



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This presentation explains why wound care nurses need to understand basic business concepts. You will learn how cost awareness, good record-keeping, and quality metrics can impact patient care, resource use, and the comprehensive success of your organization. Staffing WOC nurses is associated with lower rates of hospital-acquired pressure injuries, major cost avoidance, and measurable financial gains, showing how WOC nurses directly influence expenses, penalty reductions, and overall institutional performance. (Gallagher et. al., 2022).

WOC nurses who understand basic business concepts can see how their work affects costs, revenue, and resource use. Health care administrators and payers diligently observe these areas. With business skills, WOC nurses can demonstrate the value of their work by explaining how preventing pressure injuries, ostomy problems, and avoidable readmissions helps patients, lowers costs, reduces penalties, and saves resources. Learning about cost structures, reimbursement, and break-even analysis also helps WOC nurses create sustainable services, such as outpatient ostomy or wound care programs, that can generate income for their organization.

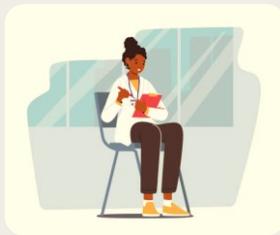
Many WOC nurses are asked to help build business cases for staffing and program development. This regularly requires reviewing workload data, comparing performance, and making financial projections to support requests for more staff or new services. As health care increasingly focuses on business and finances, WOC nurses with business knowledge can more closely align quality initiatives with corporate targets and budgets. This increases their credibility, gives them greater influence in leadership meetings, and helps them participate in key decisions.



use its resources wisely.

## WOC NURSING OPERATING BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

- Different wound dressings, ostomy products, skin barriers, and continence devices that need regular restocking.
- Continued education, such as conferences, workshops, and ongoing courses, supports maintaining competency.
- Educational books, manuals, and journal subscriptions to support evidence-based practice.



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Since WOC nursing relies on specialized supplies and ongoing education, knowing these costs helps us use resources wisely and meet patient needs. The main budget areas are clinical supplies, professional education, and reference materials. A WOC nurse's operating budget covers the daily costs of providing quality wound, ostomy, and continence care. These expenses support clinical work, learning, and outcomes.

Clinical supplies are among the highest ongoing costs. WOC nurses use products such as advanced dressings, ostomy barriers, skin protectants, and continence devices to provide evidence-based care. These must be restocked often, and costs vary by patient volume and product used. Tracking supply use helps prevent waste and ensures patients get the right products. Wound, ostomy, and continence nurses add measurable value by improving outcomes that impact patient experience, costs, and organizational performance (Gallagher et. al., 2022).

Professional education is another key ongoing cost. WOC nurses must stay current on best practices, technologies, and clinical guidelines. Annual budgets should include national conferences, workshops, and continuing education. These activities strengthen skills and improve outcomes.

## BENEFITS OF A WOC NURSE TO AN ORGANIZATION

- Helps patients get better results by using expert assessments, prevention strategies, and proven treatments.
- Lowers healthcare costs by preventing complications, making better use of products, and helping patients heal faster.
- Builds staff skills through training, mentoring, and hands-on support.
- Improves key quality measures like pressure injury rates, readmissions, and patient satisfaction.
- Helps the organization meet its goals by shaping policies, reviewing products, and working with different teams.



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Certified wound, ostomy, and continence (WOC) nurses bring important medical, financial, and organizational benefits to healthcare facilities. Because wound, ostomy, and continence problems are often common, expensive, and difficult to treat, WOC nurses use their skills to help patients get better and lower unnecessary costs.

A big part of their job is to prevent serious problems in the hospital, such as pressure sores, skin damage around a stoma, and skin problems caused by excess moisture. These issues can make patients uncomfortable, keep them in the hospital longer, increase supply costs, and lead to possible prolonging financial issues. WOC nurses use proven ways to prevent these problems and act quickly to help organizations avoid these extra costs.

Specialty-certified WOC nurses are experts in continence care and have additional training in bladder, bowel, and pelvic floor conditions. They play an important role in early checks and in giving care to prevent and manage bladder and bowel control problems in all types of health care settings. Their training helps nurses quickly determine the cause of a wound, select the most appropriate treatment, and provide prompt care. This improved process removes unnecessary steps, speeds wound healing, and ensures resources are used effectively, so patients receive the right care at the right time for better outcomes (Pittman et al., 2025).

WOC nurses can help the nursing staff improve by giving ongoing education and guidance. This builds confidence in daily wound, ostomy, and continence care, and encourages regular, research-based use of continence products and skin protection. As a result, care is more consistent, and there are fewer risky differences in how things are done across the organization. WOC nurses support organizations by

providing expert checks and care planning.

In addition to their medical work, WOC nurses lead efforts to improve quality and organizational performance. Their leadership in preventing pressure injuries, supporting people with ostomies, and providing continence care directly affects public quality ratings and official approval outcomes. Research shows that WOC nurses help lower pressure injury rates, make them less severe, and reduce the number of patients who need to return to the hospital. Focusing on continence care also yields better outcomes and saves health systems money. These improvements make patients happier, enhance the organization's reputation, and improve financial results by avoiding unnecessary costs and meeting payment goals based on value.

## MARKETING IDEAS FOR A WOC PRACTICE



- Contact physicians, home health teams, and long-term care facilities to strengthen our referral relationships.
- Make brochures, posters, or digital materials that explain what we offer and invite patients to refer themselves.
- Offer in-service education, join health events, and stay involved in our organization to help more people learn about us.
- Create a simple webpage or update the patient portal to show our services and share helpful resources.
- Partner with trusted product suppliers to give demonstrations or educational sessions that help more people learn about us.

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A good marketing plan helps WOC nurses get noticed, build a strong web of connections, and ensure patients and providers are aware of their services. Whether you are just starting out or expanding your practice, it's important to share your knowledge clearly and practically. By building relationships, teaching others, and connecting with purpose, you can become known as a trusted clinical expert in your organization and community.

Reaching out to people who can refer patients is important. Doctors, surgeons, home health agencies, and long-term care homes often provide WOC services to people who need them. You can introduce yourself, share a brief list of what you do, or provide easy-to-read guides that explain your services and when to get in touch. This helps build trust with other providers and makes them more likely to contact you sooner.

Teaching patients is important, too. Many people do not know that WOC nurses exist, that this type of nurse exists, or that they can ask for special help. If you are a patient with a new wound, you probably do not know what help is available. One way to let people know about your services is to create a simple brochure, posters, or online materials that explain what you do, such as teaching about ostomies, checking wounds, or helping with bladder and bowel problems. You could also use social media. These materials help patients know when to reach out to you and show that you are ready to help.

Staying well-known in your field of WOC nursing is possible with teaching nursing teams, joining community health programs, or giving short updates at staff meetings at your place of employment. These actions show your skills, help everyone work together, and let you help sooner in tough cases. (Meintjies et al., 2025).

## WOC NURSE BASIC PURCHASE PLAN

- Identifying the clinical need, gather details about the product. Make sure to explain its purpose, benefits, and the evidence supporting its use.
- Ask your department for approval. Nurse managers or directors will determine whether your request aligns with clinical and budget needs.
- Work with the supply chain, vendor, or materials management team. They will check contracts, handle pricing, and talk with vendors.
- Submit a formal request by filling out the purchase forms, attaching quotes, and explaining why you need the equipment.
- Get final approval from the finance team. The budget team will make sure funding is available before placing the order.



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An organized purchasing plan helps a WOC nurse obtain the equipment they need while keeping within their facility's budget. When a nurse identifies a clinical need, such as a negative-pressure wound therapy pump or specialized teaching supplies, the next step is to collect details, including specifications, pricing, added benefits, and any other considerations that would help your case for purchasing this big-ticket item.

If you feel there is a need, it's important to support this item, complete a purchase request, and include quotes (maybe multiple) and explain why this would improve patient care. But be brief and succinct, and explain how this will improve patient care. The request would then be sent to the facility or hospital for those in management to review.

Depending upon the facility, for instance, in my case, being in a smaller community hospital, many may review the approval process, or at least get you through the first round of approval. assuring the request is consistent with clinical priorities and the budget. Materials management or supply chain staff review vendor contracts, manage pricing, and ensure products can be supplied reliably. With help from the finance department and the clinical team, they will check whether the request fits with the organization's goals.

By working together, these groups help ensure that purchasing decisions are patient-centered, cost-effective, and in line with the facility's policies. This process follows guidance that medical device purchasing should weigh user needs, maintenance, training, supplies, and technical, financial, safety, and clinical factors, and should be done through teamwork. (Hinrichs-Krapels et al., 2022)

## PRODUCT PURCHASE BUSINESS PLAN - HAND-HELD DOPPLER DEVICE (USED FOR ASSESSING THE ANKLE-BRACHIAL INDEX)

- Using Doppler for bedside ABI assessment gives an accurate way to screen for peripheral arterial disease in high-risk patients.
- Finding poor limb blood flow early can help prevent slow healing, amputations, and heart-related problems.
- This portable, affordable device is easy for nurses and providers to learn, so they can assess blood flow quickly without waiting for lab tests.
- ABI screening for patients with diabetes, a history of smoking, or leg ulcers supports evidence-based care and helps lower complications, hospital stays, and readmissions.
- This approach assists Phoenixville Hospital in providing high-quality, affordable, and community-based heart and vascular care.



A hand-held Doppler for ankle-brachial index (ABI) measurement is essential for safely caring for Phoenixville Hospital's high-risk cardiovascular and vascular patients. ABI testing is a simple, affordable bedside tool that helps detect peripheral artery disease (PAD), which is often associated with slow wound healing, limb loss, and other heart and blood vessel problems.

Finding poor blood flow early helps prevent problems that can be avoided. Phoenixville Hospital's respected cardiovascular program and active vascular service care for many patients with major PAD risk factors, such as older age, diabetes, smoking, and chronic kidney disease. Many patients in the hospital or emergency room have weak or absent pulses or leg wounds, so quick, accurate checks are important for their safety. A hand-held Doppler lets us measure ABI and accurately assess pedal pulses, which helps us make safe decisions about compression therapy, offloading, and when to refer patients to vascular surgery or podiatry. This reduces the risk of tissue damage, loss, and preventable amputation. ABI measurement is a proven, noninvasive way to diagnose PAD when done with Doppler technology and the right technique.

Having a dedicated device enables us to perform evidence-based vascular checks for patients with leg ulcers, claudication, critical limb ischemia, or heart failure. It also helps clinicians make better decisions, improves triage, and supports patient education upon leaving the hospital. Many studies show this test is valuable for diagnosing PAD because it is easy to use, reliable, affordable, and very cost-effective. Its results are closely linked to heart and blood vessel problems. In fact, a low ABI is a well-known sign of major cardiovascular events and is often seen in people with diabetes, chronic coronary disease, and stroke (Cáceres-Farfán et al., 2021).

## PRODUCT PURCHASE BUSINESS PLAN - HAND-HELD DOPPLER DEVICE (USED FOR ASSESSING THE ANKLE-BRACHIAL INDEX)

- Nurses and the unit manager identify a need after reviewing data on high-risk vascular patients, delayed consults, and how these issues affect wound and limb outcomes.
- The nurse manager collaborates with wound care, vascular services, and the medical director to create an equipment request. The request outlines the need for the device, its intended use, benefits, and estimated costs.
- Submitted through the electronic budgeting system. It includes vendor quotes, product details, and a short business case highlighting quality, safety, and cost savings.
- Leaders, materials management, and the capital review committee review and approve the request. They focus on it based on the budget, in accordance with goals, and expected return on investment.
- After funding is approved, the supply chain places an order for the device. Biomedical assesses safety, and staff receive training on performing ABI measurements at the bedside.



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Obtaining a handheld Doppler at Phoenixville Hospital begins when nurses and the unit nurse manager identify a clinical need. Phoenixville Hospital gets many patients with vascular disease. So I believe it would be a major benefit. They examine data on high-risk vascular patients, delays in specialty consults, and how these factors might affect pressure injuries, wound healing, and limb outcomes.

A team would have to be assembled that included the nurse manager, the wound and ostomy nurse, the vascular service, and the medical director to prepare a request for the equipment. This request explains why the Doppler is needed, how often it will be used, the benefits supported by evidence, and the estimated cost.

The request can be submitted through the hospital's budgeting system, with a plan in place as to why this would be a useful item to Phoenixville Hospital, along with quotes from different vendors, product details, and a short case that covers quality, safety, and cost savings, such as preventing serious wounds or avoidable amputations.

As hospitals are closing left and right in the US, there is a need to balance technical, financial, and clinical considerations when selecting medical devices, highlighting the value of decision-making—particularly the involvement of clinical engineers and clinicians—and the opportunity to strengthen evidence-based purchasing practices. (Hinrichs-Krapels et al., 2022).

Based on the budget, its conformity with the hospital's goals, and the expected return on investment. If approved and funded by Tower Health's supply chain and finance teams, materials management issues the purchase order and handles vendor selection, contracts, and delivery.

Finally, when the Doppler arrives, the biomedical team will check that it meets safety standards. Education of staff so nurses and providers can use the Doppler for ABI measurements at the bedside, helping secure timely, evidence-based vascular assessments.

## Summary - Clinical Excellence Meets Business



- WOC nurses need business literacy to link clinical decisions, documentation, and outcomes with reimbursement and financial sustainability.
- Understanding capital vs. operating expenses helps nurses request appropriate equipment and manage daily supply costs wisely.
- WOC nurses improve outcomes and reduce costs by stopping complications, streamlining product use, and strengthening quality metrics.
- A structured purchasing plan guides nurses in justifying and obtaining the equipment they need, such as a handheld Doppler.
- Marketing strategies (referral outreach, education, visibility) help build referral streams and showcase the value of WOC services.

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WOC nurses are critical participants in both clinical care and business processes. Delivering exceptional, cost-effective care is very valuable to our facilities and patients. This presentation shows that professional success goes beyond clinical skills. Success involves accurate documentation, smart budgeting, and a clear grasp of financial basics, such as capital and operating expenses. These skills help ensure accurate reimbursement, responsible resource use, and lasting program success.

Thanks to their specialized training, WOC nurses can review products, technologies, and clinical practices using a careful, evidence-based approach. This helps them find ways to save costs while still maintaining good patient outcomes. Their decisions have a big impact on the organization, influencing funding choices and supporting the department's success.

This presentation encourages WOC nurses to take on leadership roles, support interdisciplinary decision-making, demonstrate the value of their programs, and explain both the financial and clinical benefits of their work. When you combine strong clinical skills with business know-how, WOC nurses strengthen their important place in healthcare, becoming partners who help organizations succeed, improve patient care, and keep WOC programs going strong.

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