



by  
Healthy.io

SURVEY REPORT

# The State of Wound Care Nursing:

Tools, documentation processes and patient care



## Table of contents

<b>Summary</b> .....	02
<b>Survey overview</b> .....	03
<b>Key insights</b> .....	04
Tools used for measuring wounds .....	05
Time spent documenting wounds .....	07
Workflow and well-being .....	08
Nurses' top priorities .....	09
<b>Main takeaways</b> .....	10
<b>Minuteful for Wound</b> .....	11
<b>About Healthy.io</b> .....	12

## Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

About Healthy.io

## Summary

Burnout, understaffed, overworked—these are some of the terms that describe the state of nursing, even before the pandemic. And year after year, nurses continue to rate the highest as the most honest and ethical professionals<sup>1</sup>. How are nurses managing to provide quality care despite their seemingly impossible schedules? What are top challenges in their day to day, and what are their attitudes towards them?

We surveyed more than 200 wound care nurses in hospital settings across 40 states to evaluate their current workflows, wound documentation processes, and the tools at their disposal to support care processes and clinical decision making.

We found out that the majority of nurses felt that the lack of adequate tools, documentation processes, and inefficient workflows were a major barrier to delivering quality patient care—their number one priority.

Nurse workforce planning measures—investment in resources, technological adaptations, and retention strategies—are paramount for fully adapting health systems to value-based and patient-centered models. The effective implementation of these measures gives nurses the power to allocate their time and effort to what they care about most—their patients.



<sup>1</sup> [Nurses Continue to Rate Highest in Honesty, Ethics, Gallup, 2021](#)

Summary

**Survey overview**

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

About Healthy.io

## Who we surveyed

### Respondents

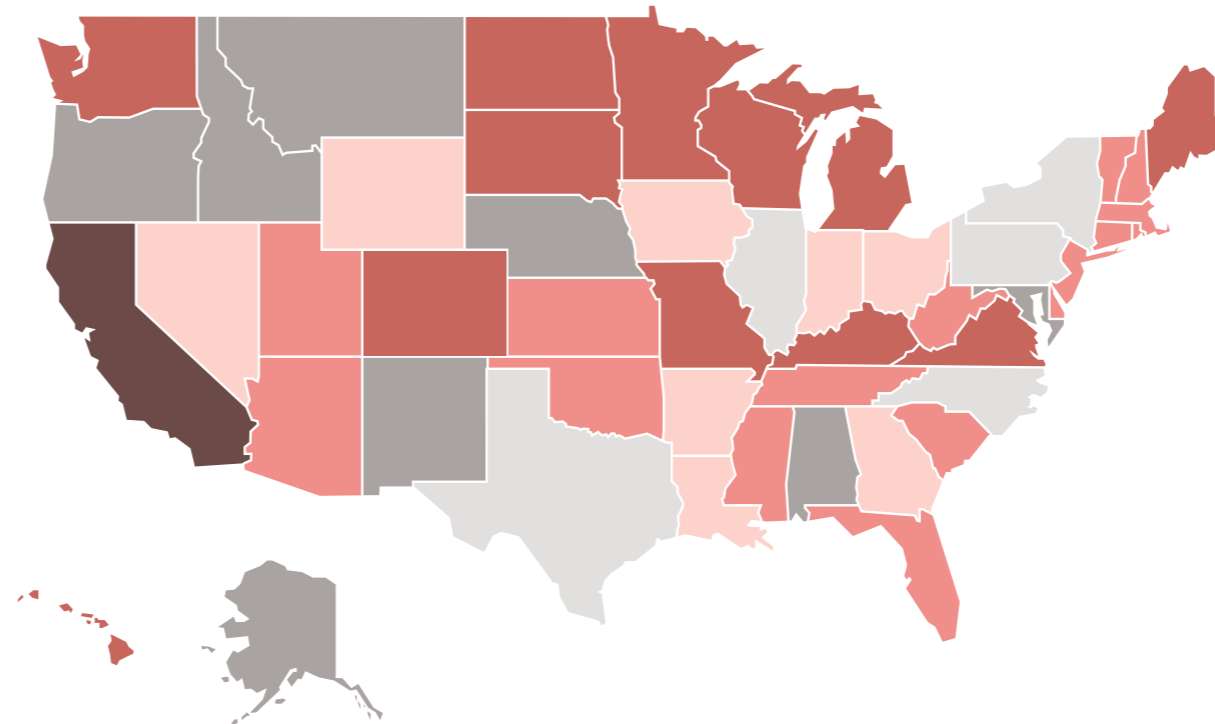
209 inpatient  
wound care nurses

### Specialists

Wound care nurses  
specialists, managers,  
general patient care nurses

### Location

40 states



01  22

Summary

Survey overview

**Key insights**

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

About Healthy.io

## Here are some key insights

1

2 in 3 wound care nurses believe that their current **tools and documentation methods aren't good enough**

2

Half of wound care nurses spend at least 25% of their time on **documentation and administrative work**

3

Half of wound care nurses claimed that their **workflows are not efficient enough**, with 63% describing it as stressful to highly stressful

4

Patient experience, documenting wounds consistently and identifying HAPIs are the **top priorities** of wound care nurses

Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

About Healthy.io

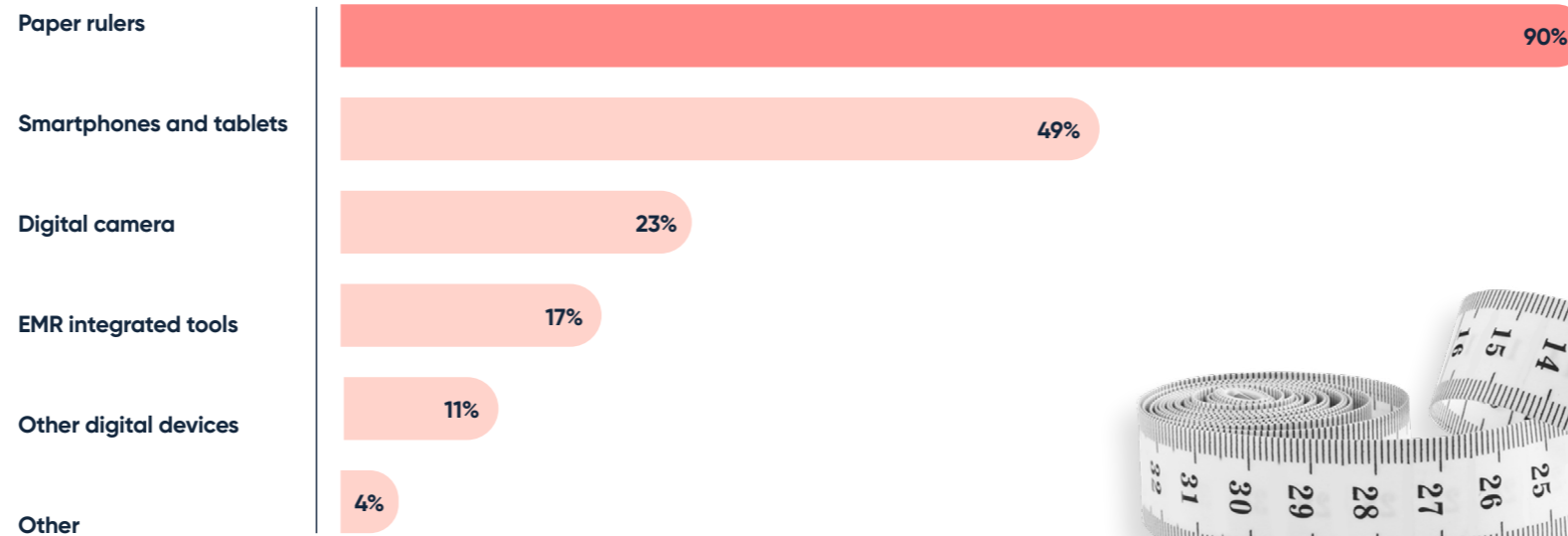
## 2 in 3 wound care nurses believe that their current tools and documentation methods aren't good enough

The majority of nurses surveyed stated that their current tools and methods aren't good enough, illustrated by the staggering rate of **90% of respondents who still use old-fashioned paper rulers** to document their patients' wounds.

Other tools used by wound care nurses to document their patients' wounds are digital cameras, tablets and smartphones, digital devices, and EMR integrated tools.

*I use a ruler and sometimes a sterile [dressing] when I want to outline a wound. I battle to measure the depth of a wound accurately."*

### Which tools do you use to document wounds?



Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

**Key Insight 1**

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

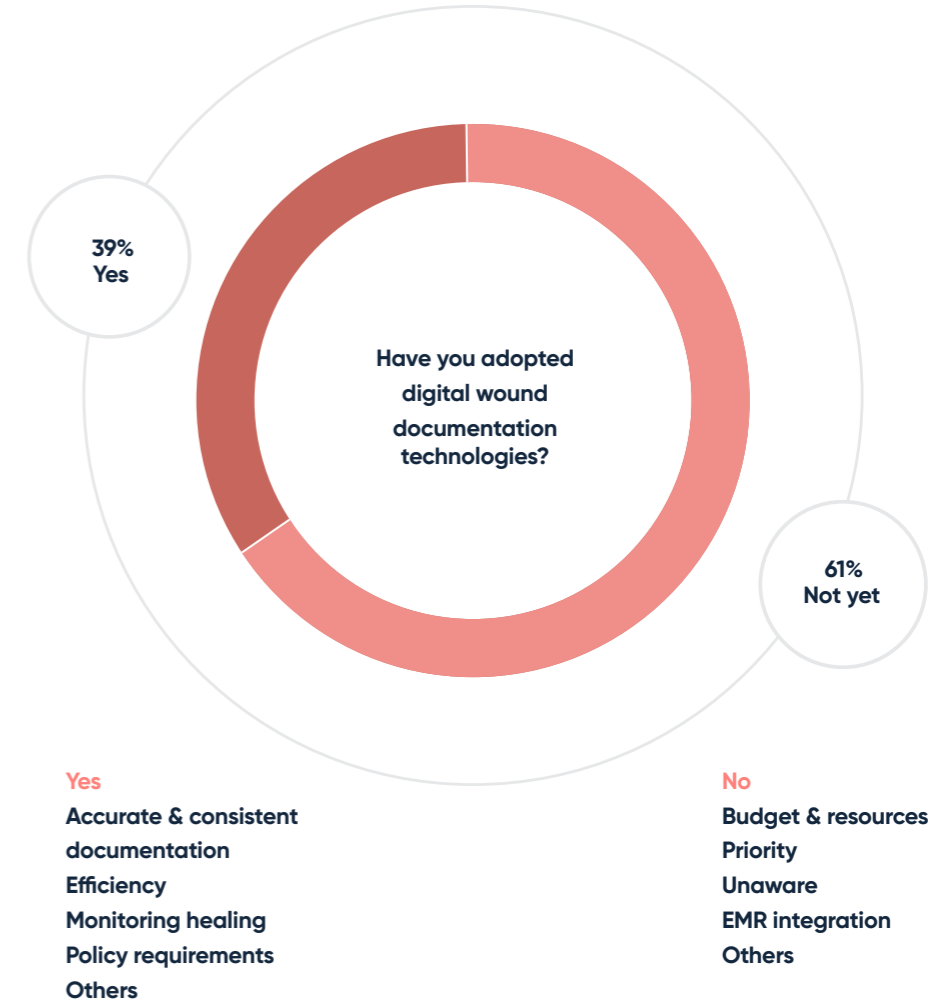
Minuteful for Wound

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The efficiency and quality of documentation come as a direct result of the tools being used. Consistent and efficient wound documentation processes allow nurses and healthcare professionals to improve care coordination and better support clinical decision-making. While the vast majority (98%) of respondents emphasized the importance of consistent documentation, **inefficient documentation was among the top challenges experienced by nurses.**

Concerning the adoption of digital wound documentation technology, 39% of the respondents claimed to have at some point adopted it, the main reason being the accuracy and consistency of documentation provided by specific technologies.

On the other hand, of those who have not yet adopted assessment technologies (61%), budget and resource priority were the main reasons for not doing so.



Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

**Key Insight 2**

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

About Healthy.io

## Half of wound care nurses spend at least 25% of their time on documentation and administrative work

Half of the nurses surveyed indicated that they spend at least 25% of their time doing administrative work, with a third of the respondents saying that **50% of their work time goes to documentation and administrative tasks.**

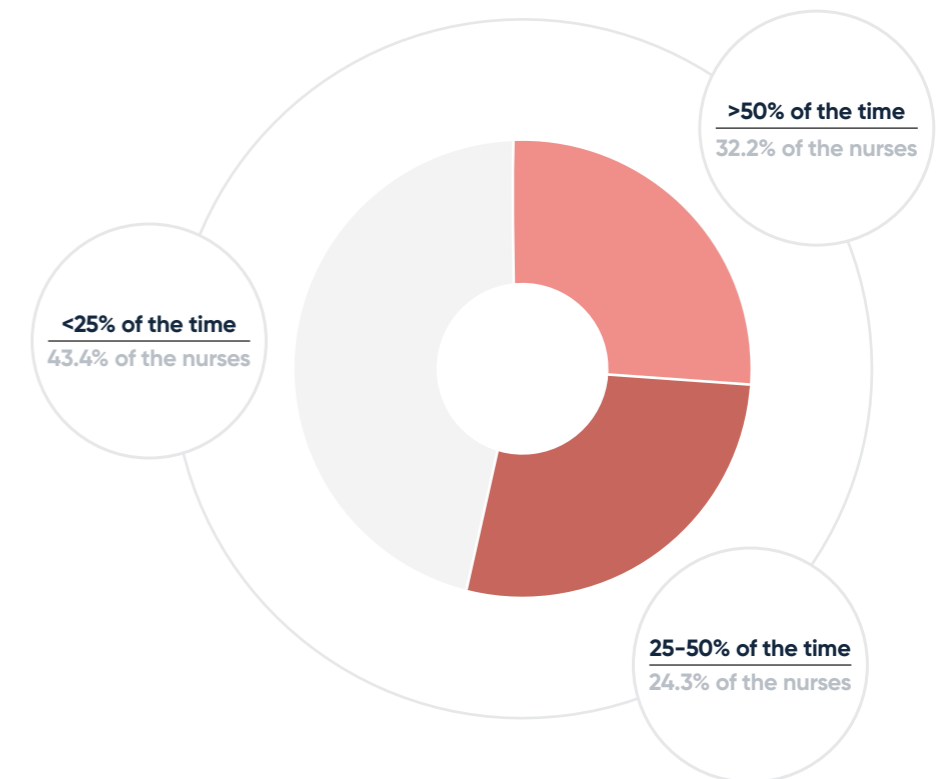
If nurses are dedicating half of their time to administrative tasks, this poses an issue for healthcare organizations and hospitals, given the shortages of nurses and overall front-line healthcare professionals. Even though a 9% growth is expected for the US nurse workforce in the coming decade, estimates claim that 29 states will not fill the demand for nurses, with large gaps projected for Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Colorado, Illinois, and Massachusetts by 2026<sup>2</sup>.

Some voices say that the US does not suffer from a nurse shortage but rather ineffective workflow management. Nurses themselves are demanding more investment in their training and the deployment of technological innovations to better care for their patients<sup>3</sup>.

Being a critical component of the wound care processes, consistent documentation attests to the quality of care and assists the nursing staff in streamlining care safely and appropriately while maintaining an efficient workflow.

Easing the workflow burden and enabling nurses to focus their time and energy on what they care about most—their patients—is a critical step towards retaining nurses.

Time dedicated to administrative work



<sup>2</sup> 2021 External Healthcare Labor Market Analysis, Mercer, 2021

<sup>3</sup> Seegert, Liz [The Current State of Nursing](#), American Journal of Nursing, 122:2 (2022), 18-20

Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

**Key Insight 3**

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

About Healthy.io

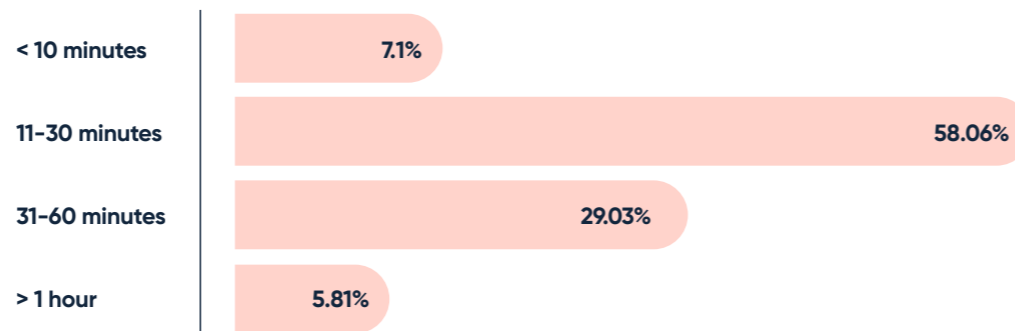
## 50% of nurses claimed that their workflows are not efficient enough, with 63% describing it as stressful to highly stressful

Not only have nurses reported frustration concerning the amount of time dedicated to administrative work, but workload and inefficiency seem to plague their workflow. Half of the respondents claimed that their workflows are not efficient enough, a difficulty reflected on the stress level suffered by nurses, with **63% of the respondents describing their workflow as stressful or highly stressful.**

Almost half of the respondents see more than ten patients a day, with **15% of the nurses caring for over 21 patients daily.** "The patient often feels rushed and doesn't get their questions and concerns addressed," a respondent said.

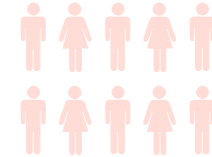
The responsiveness of hospital staff to patients' needs and how nurses and doctors communicate are key factors for patients when rating their experience through HCAHPS surveys. Patient survey rating has become an essential tool for comparing hospital quality and an indicator of other important performance indicators, such as profitability<sup>4</sup>.

### How long do nurses spend in patient visits?



<sup>4</sup> [The value of Patient Experience](#), Deloitte, 2016

**53.4%** of wound care nurses see 1-10 patients a day



**31.9%** of wound care nurses see 11-20 patients a day



**14.6%** of wound care nurses see more than 21 patients a day



Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

**Key Insight 4**

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

About Healthy.io

## Patient experience, documenting wounds consistently and identifying HAPIs are the top priorities of wound care nurses

The vast majority of respondents (92%) stated that driving patient satisfaction is important or extremely important. Patient experience can be translated into the time nurses spend treating and caring for their patients and the solutions they could bring to their patient's treatment. In addition, studies<sup>5</sup> suggest that organizations that have involved nurses in decision-making and supported their initiatives see improvement in overall patient experience.

Documenting wounds and identifying HAPIs are also among the top priorities of wound care nurses, and some of the most time-consuming and problematic tasks undertaken by the nursing staff. "I would love a program where I could note wound care progress quickly, without having to write reports for every visit" a respondent claimed.

***"I would love a program where I could note wound care progress quickly, without having to write reports for every visit"***

Others have expressed the need for technological solutions that could assist them in identifying HAPIs. "A tool that once you have taken a photograph of the wound, measures it and determines the degree of sloughing," was one of the solutions one of the respondents proposed.

<sup>5</sup> Brook, Judy et al. [Characteristics of successful interventions to reduce turnover and increase retention of early career nurses: A systematic review](#), International Journal of Nursing Studies, 91 (2019), 47-59



Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

**0 Main takeaways**

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## Main takeaways

Already overworked and understaffed, the majority of wound care nurses are not equipped with tools and technology that can optimize their workflows and ease the burden. Such challenges prevent them from providing the best possible care for their patients and effectively manage workflows.

The use of appropriate tools directly reflects on the consistency and quality of documentation. Findings show that complete documentation has become more critical than ever for wound care nurses to ensure that patients get the most appropriate treatment and that HAPIs are being adequately identified and recorded. It is also essential for enabling effective communication across interdisciplinary teams and adapting healthy systems to value-based models.

A study by Wolters Kluwer<sup>5</sup> on the next generation nurses—those in practice for a decade or less—shows that 63% of the respondents report optimism in AI assisting care providers in making better decisions.

Together with their more-experienced counterparts, over 80% of nurses agree that specialized systems that provide treatment recommendations improve not only care delivery but assist them in speeding up processes and ease their workflows.

<sup>5</sup> [Next-Generation Nurses: Empowered + Engaged](#), Wolters Kluwer Survey, 2020



Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

**Minuteful for Wound**

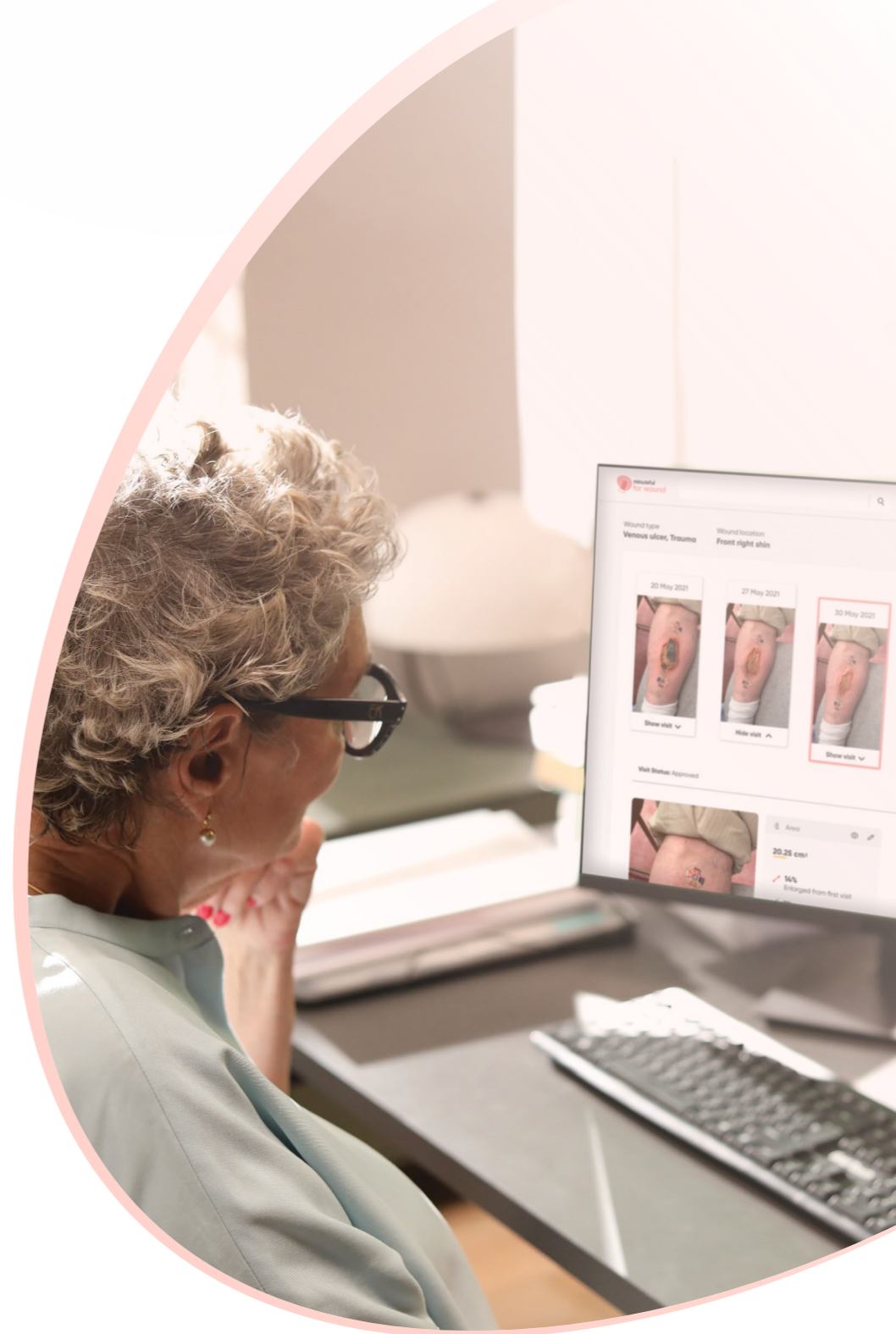
About Healthy.io

## Minuteful for Wound

Minuteful for Wound, Healthy.io's digital wound management solution, simplifies both the capturing and measuring of wounds to create consistent wound records. The app combines 3D imaging and color calibration technology to enable automatic wound measurements, tissue distribution, and wound depth using a smartphone. In addition, wound data can be viewed from a secure, centralized portal, effectively breaking down care silos and propelling coordinated care. Minuteful for Wound assists nurses in tackling their main documentation and assessment challenges, easing their workflows to focus on patient care.

**Transform your wound care program**

**Contact us to find out how you can transform your wound care practices and improve your clinical workflows.**



Summary

Survey overview

Key insights

Key Insight 1

Key Insight 2

Key Insight 3

Key Insight 4

Main takeaways

Minuteful for Wound

**About Healthy.io**

## About Healthy.io

Healthy.io delivers healthcare at the speed of life. Using image and color recognition technology, we transform the smartphone camera into a medical device to provide clinical results at moments when it matters most. Our at-home urinalysis and digital wound management services create new clinical pathways and streamline existing ones to benefit patients and providers alike. We were recently recognized on Fast Company's Top 50 Most Innovative Companies for 2020, CNBC's Disruptor 50, CB Insights AI 100, and won the Financial Times Boldness in Business Award.

