

## Round the regions

### London

Since taking up our post in July 2007, we have been meeting regularly to plan evening lectures and study days. We recently sent out a questionnaire to all London and South ACPWH members asking what topics they would like to see covered in future evening lectures, and their preferences regarding venues and times. Based on the responses (response rate=80%), we organized three events that will have taken place by the time you read this:

- (1) a lecture on 'Psychosexual Dysfunction' at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in October 2007;
- (2) pelvic floor dysfunction clinics at St Thomas' Hospital in January 2008; and
- (3) a lecture on 'Acupuncture in Urinary Incontinence' by Jennie Longbottom at Chelsea and Westminster in February 2008.

We held an ACPWH workshop, 'Pelvic Floor Examination and Assessment for Urinary Incontinence', on 20 and 21 October 2007 at Chelsea and Westminster (the full course), and we planned to organize an ACPWH anorectal dysfunction course in February 2008 to be held at St Thomas'.

We plan to continue with the organization of evening lectures and ACPWH workshops, as well as supporting our London members.

**Charlotte Lion & Paula Igalada-Martinez**

*Area representatives*

*E-mail: paulandrea76@hotmail.com or charlotte.lion@chelwest.nhs.uk*

### North East

In March 2007, the North East group had its first afternoon meeting at the University Hospital of North Durham (UHND). The group covers a wide geographical area from Northumberland to Teesside, so it was great to see so many attend.

There was a lively debate following three talks by physiotherapy colleagues: Chris Taberham discussed acupuncture in pregnancy, Cathryn Clark spoke about sacroiliac joint assessment, and Shirley Bustard gave an overview of back and pelvic joint pain in pregnancy. The day was a

success and it was agreed that UHND would be the new venue for meetings because it is central.

In July 2007, the group met to listen to two well presented and very informative talks on third-degree tears by Julie Ellis and Ann Armitage. The informal style of our group promoted lots of questions and debate, and everyone felt updated regarding current best practice.

Thank you to all who have presented a talk.

Emilie Nesbit has been our area representative since August 2000 and has done a wonderful job. I would like to thank her on behalf of all the group members for her hard work, enthusiasm and friendship. I have now volunteered for the post, and would like to ask all members to contribute ideas for further meetings, such as topics, speakers and case discussions.

**Shirley Bustard**

*Area representative*

*E-mail: shirleybustard@cddft.nhs.uk*

### Northern Ireland

After an active schedule over the past 18 months, we have had a quiet summer season. Here's hoping everyone is well rested and full of new ideas for the year ahead!

The Annual General Meeting was held on 15 October 2007, and plans were made for the year ahead. Dr Lorraine Anderson, consultant gynaecologist at Mater Hospital, spoke to us on urodynamics and vaginal lesions. An ACPWH workshop, 'The Unique Role of the Women's Health Physiotherapist in Antenatal Care', will have been held on 6–7 April 2008 in Belfast.

**Thamra Ayton**

*Area representative*

*E-mail: mayton@ukonline.co.uk*

### Solent

At the March 2007 meeting, our Bournemouth urogynaecology consultant, James Balmforth, gave us an entertaining and informative talk on 'Designer Vaginas'.

We were delighted to welcome several new members at the October 2007 meeting. TensCare brought lots of their machines for us to play with – Mama Tens, Mama Sure and

others – and were very generous about free long-term loans. We also reviewed *Evidence-Based Physical Therapy for the Pelvic Floor* (Bø *et al.* 2007; see review on pp. 94–95). This textbook has lots of useful information, but some rather odd photos of examinations and anal stimulation! As usual, the meeting featured lively discussions on a range of topics, including Conference 2009, which we will host, either in Bournemouth or Poole.

Our next meeting was scheduled for April 2008.

**Ann Dennis**

*Area representative*

*E-mail: annpam@btinternet.com*

## Reference

Bø K., Berghmans B., Mørkved S. & Van Kampen M. (eds) (2007) *Evidence-Based Physical Therapy for the Pelvic Floor: Bridging Science and Clinical Practice*. Churchill Livingstone, London.

## South East

At our last meeting in November 2006, the general consensus was to hold two evening meetings per year since most members find it difficult to attend during the day. At the end of April 2007, we met at Crawley Hospital, where Mandy Gough gave a very informative talk on ‘Bowel Dysfunction and Defecatory Difficulties’. This meeting was very well attended. Our next meeting was held at Pembury Hospital in Kent in September 2007, and featured three speakers, all of whom talked on various obstetric topics.

After discussion at the area representatives meeting, our team will continue being the South East representatives for a further year until the end of 2008. Over the next 12 months, we will be looking for a volunteer or volunteers to take over. This job has become much easier because all members are now contacted by e-mail.

We are considering running a ‘Pelvic Pain in Pregnancy’ course, and will be discussing this and other ideas at our next meeting.

**Susannah Staples, Romy Tudor,  
Nadine Ranger & Debbie Joice**

*Area representatives*

*E-mail: Susannah.staples@wash.nhs.uk*

## South Midlands

In March 2007, we hosted the ‘Pelvic Floor Assessment and Examination for Urinary Incon-

tinence’ workshop, which was attended by 23 keen delegates. Reading through the handouts made me realize just how much information is given out over the weekend, and I am sure that all the physiotherapists who attended must have left with their minds swimming with facts and ideas. It was the final weekend that Jeanette Haslam and Julia Herbert were sharing as tutors; it will prove very difficult to find two speakers who work and socialize so well together. We scheduled both the ‘Anorectal Assessment and Examination’ and the ‘Pilates for Women’s Health Physiotherapists’ courses early in 2008.

Our Spring workshop in May 2007 started with an overview of the anatomy and function of the lower bowel, which turned out to be new information for half the audience. Jane Newman then gave us her views on optimizing bowel function by dietary manipulation, which included rest after eating, followed by active exercise to stimulate the smooth muscle of the gut. To aid digestion of the cakes and biscuits at coffee time, we all joined in a Pilates-style warm up lead by Linda Boston, then broke into small groups to try out Pilates-style exercises suitable for the clinical and general population. Elizabeth Moon and Aileen Curtis had attended the aforementioned weekend course and rounded the morning off by giving us a summary of what they had learned.

My time as area representative is coming to an end and I will be handing over to Rosi Haunton-Barron shortly. I would urge other women’s health physiotherapists to consider taking on the role, especially to fill vacant posts – it helps to get continuing professional development hours, as well as keeping up good communication between the ACPWH executive committee and your local area. As a full member of the ACPWH for more than 20 years, one of my concerns in the early years was the apparent gap between the executive committee and the many lone working women’s health physiotherapists. We now have an excellent way to pass information both to and from the executive committee, but rely on area representatives to lead their small groups. The 3 years fly past, it looks good on your curriculum vitae and you can get quality courses run locally.

**Linda Boston**

*Area representative*

*E-mail: linda2004@btinternet.com*