

ACPWH Annual Report 2013

Annual Report 2013

The 2012 ACPWH Annual Conference was held on 21–22 September at the Crown Moran Hotel, Cricklewood, London. Featuring an interesting and varied programme of speakers, the overall theme of the event reflected the London 2012 Summer Olympics. It was coordinated by a London-based team led by Becky Aston. It was well supported and the organizing committee delivered an excellent programme of events.

Professor Wendy Reid gave the 2012 Margie Polden Memorial Lecture, “A different view of the pelvic floor: who can help and how do we train them?” The thirteenth recipient of the Margie Polden Bursary was Toni Talbot, a third-year physiotherapy student at the University of Coventry, Coventry.

The 2013 ACPWH Annual Conference on 20–21 September at The Bristol Hotel, Bristol, was organized by the newly formed National Conference Organizing Committee (NCOC). The chairman of this group is Jane Lofts, and she and her team also receive strong administrative support from Fitwise Management Ltd. The NCOC have been working closely with Fitwise to organize both this year's event in Bristol and future annual conferences. In order to have a seamlessly continuing committee, NCOC vacancies are advertised yearly. There has recently been a call for applications and there has been some interest in the two vacant positions. The Association will continue to encourage its members to submit applications in the future. The Autumn 2013 edition of the *Journal* featured an article focusing on the NCOC (Rarity 2013).

This year has been another busy one for the Association so far. At the beginning of 2013, ACPWH spent time re-evaluating and reviewing its working relationship with all those outside parties who support the Association. These include Fitwise, Henry Ling Ltd and Ralph Allen Press Ltd, and individual experts such as the Managing Editor of the *Journal*, Andrew J. Wilson. The benefit of such support for ACPWH means that it frees up committee members so that they can concentrate on the professional and clinical aspects of the women's health physiotherapist's work.

All three ACPWH subcommittees attract a high calibre of volunteer, all of whom bring something unique to the group, as well as a wealth of experience and knowledge, which members can only benefit from, of course. The role of the subcommittees should not be underestimated. Without them, the gold standard that ACPWH sets in its commitment to educate, support and inform the specialist physiotherapist would be far from achievable.

Under the strong leadership of Dr Doreen McClurg, the Education Subcommittee (ESC) has continued to thrive, successfully achieving a considerable amount on behalf of the Executive Committee. The ESC is responsible for the educational programme offered to both members and other chartered physiotherapists. It looks at the development and review of the ACPWH-approved workshops and publications, and at ways in which to educate the general public about the work of the specialist physiotherapist.

Between the 2012 and 2013 annual general meetings (AGMs), the Association has delivered 15 workshops plus one study day. Participation during that time has averaged out at 93% of our maximum capacity. Each of these intensive courses has been delivered at least once, with the pregnancy-related musculoskeletal (MSK) and the urinary dysfunction workshops being the most popular. The aim is to move these events around the UK, and to deliver at least one in each of the four countries of the UK. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) information paper PD092 (White 2012), which was updated with the help of ACPWH, represents the standards to which the workshops adhere. The continual review process that is in place means that these intensive courses are regularly updated and new options considered, including the development of online training and study days. There are two new tutors for the MSK workshop, Nikki King and Michelle Lyons.

The ESC is also responsible for seeking ways in which to access funding and encouraging opportunities for research, as well as identifying approaches that might link women's health physiotherapy to the CSP's list of research priorities for physiotherapy (CSP 2013). Shirley

Bustard has now completed her first year in the honorary post of Research Officer. Likewise, Sally Hooper and Irene Pullar have also finished their first years in the honorary positions of Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. In addition, Irene has also continued to update and oversee the ACPWH website, which is one of the most frequently visited CSP microsites.

The Association's publications continue to be reviewed under the guidance of Leaflet Secretary Kate Lough, and ACPWH continues to have a good relationship with Ralph Allen Press. Members have volunteered as reviewers to help to update the leaflets. This year, *Fit for Pregnancy*, *Fit for Birth*, *Fit for the Future*, and the two versions of *Fit and Safe* for health professionals and patients have been reviewed. The *Fit for Life* leaflet has also been updated and renamed *Fit Following Surgery*. The review of the aquanatal guidelines is ongoing, and finally, the rotational handbook (ACPWH 2013a) is now available to view on and download from our website (<http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/publications/rotational-physiotherapists-handbook-womens-health-2013>). Any booklets that sit better as downloads on the website rather than in print are in the process of being transferred. References will be held on the website to ease updating and review.

The extended joint project between the CSP and ACPWH evaluating self-referral services in women's health physiotherapy has now been completed and the findings published (Cook & ten Hove 2013). The Association is grateful to all those of its members who were involved with the project. Ruth ten Hove, Professional Adviser at the CSP, worked with ACPWH members and Teresa Cook, and she attended the Annual Conference dinner as a guest.

The Association continues to reply to government directives via the CSP, and it also responds to bulletins and requests from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. We have also recently endorsed the standards of care for women with vulval conditions produced by British Society for the Study of Vulval Disease (BSSVD 2013).

Paula Igualada-Martinez, ACPWH Public Relations Officer, stood down at Conference 2013 after holding this post as a co-opted member over the previous year. The Association asks that its members remain vigilant: please report any interesting press features, magazine articles, and radio or television broadcasts that may be relevant or of interest, whether this is good coverage or not.

Along with Andrew Wilson, the Managing Editor, *Journal* Co-editors Wendy Rarity and Amanda Savage and their team work hard to meet tight deadlines in order to produce this publication twice a year. The *Journal* continues to be the highly regarded domain of peer-reviewed academic papers. However, the Journal Subcommittee (JSC) felt that the web version of *JACPWH* was in need of improvement, and in fact, was more a form of extended online content (EOC). This EOC keeps the membership abreast of current academic achievements and other recent developments, as well as picking up threads from interactiveCSP and acting as a link to the paper version of the *Journal*. Therefore, the EOC has been updated, and it is hoped that this has made it more attractive and more easily navigated. It is most encouraging that the papers submitted for peer review tend to be of a very high standard, and it is also most heartening to receive contributions from abroad. The JSC is looking to recruit another member, and would also welcome offers from anyone willing to be a peer reviewer. Comments from the membership on *JACPWH* are always welcome, and are helpful for its continuing development.

Congratulations to Pauline Walsh, a past executive ESC member and former Editor of the *Journal*, and more recently, Chairman of ACPWH, who will be awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the CSP in recognition of her services to this professional network (PN) (see pp. 89–90).

In total, five members applied successfully for the Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary this year: Deborah Dillon, Michelle Neal, Teresa Cook and Gillian MacCabe. This bursary is awarded to enable members to further their education or experience in women's health; for example, by completing postgraduate study or participating in research. Information on how to apply for funding is available on the website (ACPWH 2013b).

The CSP and the Royal College of Midwives (RCM) have launched a joint project to reduce the incidence of incontinence among women following pregnancy and birth, and ACPWH has played a large part in assisting the CSP in this project. A position statement has been drawn up by the CSP and RCM to outline their joint commitment to improving women's health, and to set out plans for the project (Gerrard & ten Hove 2013). In the statement, the CSP and RCM recommend that:

- All childbearing women should be given evidence-based information and advice about pelvic floor muscle (PFM) exercises and an opportunity to discuss pelvic care with a qualified healthcare professional.
- In cases where women experience a problem with incontinence and PFMs, there should be a clear referral pathway to a specialist physiotherapist.

Midwives can access a new set of learning resources that are being developed through the project. These will allow them to improve their knowledge and skills in this area. The full Portable Document Format version of the position statement can be downloaded from the CSP website (<http://www.csp.org.uk/publications/improving-health-outcomes-women-following-pregnancy-birth>).

The ESC is working closely with the CSP to develop an e-learning platform for the RCM.

Following advice from the CSP, and in order to facilitate the overall development of our PN, the ACPWH Executive Committee decided to revisit the idea of a change of title for the Association. The following names were presented to the 2012 AGM:

- the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Continence (ACPOGC); and
- Physiotherapists in Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Continence (POGC)

The plan was that, once these options had been debated, the Executive Committee would officially inform the CSP of the preferred choice of name in order to seek its approval before the new title was formally adopted at the 2013 AGM. However, the adoption process was halted when the CSP proposed that the Association should consider the merger of ACPWH with another PN, Chartered Physiotherapists Promoting Continence (CPPC). The objectives of both groups were deemed to be almost identical, and 67% of CPPC members are also part of ACPWH, making up 16% of the total membership of the Association.

In January 2013, the CSP facilitated a meeting between ACPWH and CPPC to discuss the possibility of the two groups amalgamating as a united PN that would have a new title. The members of each PN were also consulted, and there was an overwhelmingly positive response for a merger from both groups. Further talks took place to agree a constitution for the proposed new PN. An agreement was reached

regarding the objectives, membership categories and the format of the Executive Committee, all of which would be accepted as part of the new constitution, along with the mandatory CSP requirements and the common clauses required in any constitution. Regrettably, there was a failure to agree on the framework of an interim executive and subcommittees, and thus, further negotiations have been stopped, although ACPWH will be willing to reconvene negotiations should CPPC wish to reconsider at a future date.

Therefore, the Executive Committee have recommenced the process of changing the title of the Association, and have submitted a new name to the CSP. At time of writing this report, the Executive are waiting to see if the choice of name is acceptable to the CSP. Once a decision has been made and CSP approval given, the membership will be informed. It was hoped that the new title could be approved at the 2013 AGM (see below). There will also be a motion at the AGM proposing that the membership adopt the updated objectives for the PN's constitution; 2014 will be devoted to the launch of the new title and the rebranding of the Association's corporate image (see p. 86).

Chairman's Report 2013

The Chairman's Report was delivered at the AGM in Bristol on 20 September 2013, and this enabled the Executive Committee to explain in more detail why the proposed merger with the CPPC had been halted. Members were also given further details of the Executive's choice of new title for the Association, as well as the process by which the name was chosen. The membership were to vote on whether to adopt the proposed new name at the AGM.

A précis of the presentation follows below.

Proposed merger of ACPWH and CPPC

In February 2013, 577 ACPWH and 145 CPPC members were balloted in order to find out whether they would like to see the merger of the two groups into one united PN. Some 16% and 67% of ACPWH and CPPC members, respectively, were found to have memberships of both PNs.

The result of the ballot was that 257 voted positively for the merger, while 21 voted against. Of the 257 positive votes, 181 were cast by members of ACPWH, 15 by members of CPPC and 60 were cast by individuals who were

members of both PNs. Of the 21 people who voted against the merger, four were members of CPPC, 11 of ACPWH and six had memberships of both PNs.

Following the ballot, the two groups met and agreed a constitution for the proposed new PN. This had clearly defined objectives that easily incorporated those of the two groups. It was agreed that the ACPWH membership categories based on academic achievement/merit would remain. In order to continue with a managerial system that was working well with its established infrastructure, the format of the new Executive Committee would also remain unchanged, and therefore, this was incorporated into the constitution. Both PNs were seen as being financially sound, and it was agreed that CPPC should decide independently how to use any of its funds remaining once the group ceased.

Negotiations began on how the two groups might be represented on the new PN Executive Committee. Based on the membership of ACPWH, which fluctuates between 560 and 580 members, and that of CPPC, which has approximately 145 members, and with the acknowledgment that the Association has greater financial security and an already successful infrastructure in place, ACPWH initially offered a 25% representation on the interim committee for a period of one year. The proviso was that CPPC representatives must either be “full” members of ACPWH or eligible to be a full member. This offer was rejected by CPPC. The third and final offer was that CPPC would be given three unelected places on the interim executive, and all other members of the CPPC Executive would be offered places on the ESC and JSC. This third proposal was rejected and the CSP advised that any further negotiations should cease. The members of ACPWH and CPPC were informed of this disappointing outcome (Wilson 2013).

New title for ACPWH

The plans to change the name of the Association were halted at the request of the CSP while the possible merger of ACPWH and CPPC was explored. On professional advice, the Executive Committee resumed discussions, and reached a decision over a new title. When choosing a name, the Executive was given the following guidance:

“A name is a signature and not a full biography. It acts as a shorthand introduction and reminder of what an organization does. No

name, no matter how descriptive, covers everything. It should capture the spirit of an organization. If a name does not cover a specific area, then using a strapline can reinforce it.”

The Executive Committee concluded that the new name had to reflect what ACPWH as an association does for its members and the subsequent benefits.

The new title proposed for acceptance at the AGM was Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy (POGP), which has the strapline “educates, supports and promotes the specialist physiotherapist” (see p. 86).

The membership were advised that there would be flexibility with regard to the logo, abbreviation and strapline, and how it would be utilized in the literature, and the Chairman thanked them on behalf of the Executive for their support as the Association moves into a new and exciting era for ACPWH.

The motion to accept the new name was carried at the AGM and adopted constitutionally. The Executive Committee will seek professional help with the rebranding of the Association when it adopts its new title in 2014. In the meantime, the Association will continue to work under the name of ACPWH until the rebranding process has been completed.

Ruth Hawkes finished the report by announcing that, having completed her term of office, there would be a new Chairman following the AGM.

She thanked all the members who give their time freely to support the Association and listed the various supporting committees.

Ruth Hawkes FCSP
ACPWH Retiring Chairman
September 2013

References

- Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health (ACPWH) (2013a) *Rotational Physiotherapist's Handbook of Women's Health 2013*. Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health, London.
- Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health (ACPWH) (2013b) *ACPWH Bursaries and Awards*. [WWW document.] URL <http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/bursaries-awards>
- British Society for the Study of Vulval Disease (BSSVD) (2013) *Standards of Care for Women with Vulval Conditions*. [WWW document.] URL http://www.pcc-cic.org.uk/sites/default/files/articles/attachments/standards_of_care_vulval_conditions_report.pdf
- Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) (2013) *CSP Research Priorities*. [WWW document.] URL <http://>

- www.csp.org.uk/professional-union/research/priorities/csp-research-priorities-project-2010
- Cook T. & ten Hove R. (2013) *Project to Evaluate Patient Self-referral to Women's Health Physiotherapy Pilot Sites*. Information Paper PD105. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, London.
- Gerrard J. & ten Hove R. (2013) *RCM/CSP Joint Statement on Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercise: Improving Health Outcomes for Women Following Pregnancy and Birth*. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy and Royal College of Midwives, London.
- Rarity W. (2013) Focus on the ACPWH committees: the National Conference Organizing Committee. *Journal of the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health* **113** (Autumn), 68–70.
- White P. (2012) *CSP Expectations of Educational Programmes in Vaginal and/or Ano-rectal Examination and/or Interventional Procedures for Physiotherapists*. Information Paper PD092. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, London.
- Wilson A. J. (2013) Update on the proposed united professional network. *Journal of the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health* **113** (Autumn), 76.