

Editorials

Change may not be to everybody's taste, but it is inevitable.

Although I have been part of the ACPWH Journal Committee for 3 years now, I felt that I could not accept the position of editor on my own so, when the opportunity arose, I chose to share the role with Linda Boston (see below and p. 41).

My first task must be to thank Ros Thomas for the great work she did, not only as editor, but also by providing us with a most comprehensive handover, for which we were very grateful. This meant that, instead of ending up certifiable, we managed to produce this edition of the *Journal* in a timely fashion. The other largely unsung hero is Andrew Wilson, the *JACPWH* production editor. Without his help, this issue would not be as professionally produced as it is. Our heartfelt thanks go to them both.

The *Journal* is changing: the content has been condensed and the website now publishes some of the material that used to appear in print. The website will be upgraded over time so that it is more user-friendly, and I hope, we will introduce a method by which you can print off content if you prefer a hard copy to the electronic version. I realize that this will not be a universally popular decision, but then, change never is. Nevertheless, it is an essential progression if we are to continue to have such a professional publication and keep membership costs down: producing a periodical of this calibre is not cheap. We will concentrate on clinical papers, so if you want *JACPWH* to continue, please think about any work that you do that could be written up for publication. Even if you do not have anything suitable to offer yourself, maybe someone in your medical team or a student who has recently completed one of our Association's courses may have something that they would like to publish in a peer-reviewed, MEDLINE-listed journal. As editors, we can only print what we are given, and whilst we do spend time chasing new papers, we rely heavily on members submitting their work to us. Please do not feel daunted in any way because we will help out if we can.

As a result of circumstances beyond our control, Ruth Lovegrove's Margie Polden Memorial Lecture from Conference 2009 is not included in

this edition of the *Journal*, but it will be printed in the next issue. The Autumn 2010 edition will also be accompanied by a booklet collecting all of the previous Margie Polden Memorial Lectures, which will be an exciting bonus.

What about me? You can find a short biographical note at the end of my article in this issue (see pp. 25–29). Since I completed my Master's degree in Research Methodology in Health, my passions have been research and evidence-based treatments. This does not mean that it does not work if it has not been proved, but rather, that our responsibility is to produce the evidence if we know it works. However, beware: sometimes the results can be surprising when you apply scientific rigour!

Linda and I look forward to the challenge of taking the *Journal* forward, and hope to receive your ideas, offers of help, fantastic papers for publication and any constructive criticism that you may have. Just remember, as the jargon gurus would say, 'Don't bring us only problems, bring us some solutions too!'

Kathleen Vits

As I write this, my first editorial, I am periodically glancing out over the frozen water in the marina and admiring the formation of the snow on the rooftops. I hope the snow will have disappeared and spring flowers will be in bloom by the time you read this.

Taking up the position of joint editor has been quite daunting. Neither Kathleen nor I have had any previous experience of preparing anything more than a small newsletter for publication, and this experience is proving to be a huge learning curve. Nevertheless, between us, we have worked in the field of women's health for more than 40 years.

Kathleen and I met when we both lived in County Durham and were studying hard to pass the exam to gain membership of ACPWH. We had six children between us, all under the age of 9. Our tutor was Betty Barlow, a wonderful warm lady who some of you will remember. Even though she had been retired for several years, she kept us both on track and gave us the encouragement we needed to complete the qualification. At that time, our Association was

ahead of the game in comparison to the other physiotherapy special interest groups in that it gave rigorous training to students who wanted to gain full membership of the organization.

We both went on to complete the postgraduate continence course, and I was astonished at the changes in teaching methods and the need to reference every statement made. It has been heartening to watch how the profile of academic achievement has been raised within our specialty over the years, and we believe that this has been duly reflected in the increasing quality of the *ACPWH Journal*.

In order to raise the publication to an even higher level, all clinical papers will be peer-reviewed before appearing in print from now on, which will allow us to be referenced in MEDLINE and CINAHL. To allow the peer-review process to take place, we will need more time between a paper being submitted to the editors and being published. We are aware that some members are unhappy with a journal that only contains contributions that have been delivered at Conference, but unfortunately, time constraints have meant that only one paper in this edition is not derived from the 2009 meeting.

I have worked in both the National Health Service (NHS) and private practice, and recently set up a business that mainly runs Pilates-style exercise classes. I passionately believe that physiotherapists should be experts in teaching

exercise. This is not an achievement that comes automatically with the award of a physiotherapy degree, it is something that evolves over many years, embracing both the science behind exercise, and the practical issues involved in teaching groups and individuals. National Health Service funding for classes has all but dried up, so we should consider running private classes in our spare time: if we don't hone our skills and sell ourselves to the general public, then fitness trainers, who generally lack the depth of knowledge that physiotherapists possess, will happily assume that role. Having run classes outside the NHS for several years now, I have the luxury of teaching exercise to the non-clinical population, which helps me to understand the vast range of 'normal', and guide clients through the rehabilitation of day-to-day strains and sprains that would not usually come to the attention of a physiotherapist.

I am also the ACPWH Move for Health champion and would like to hear what is happening around the UK to promote this venture. Exercise is one of our core skills as physiotherapists and we are in danger of losing our expertise. We should know more about pelvic floor function related to general exercise than any other professional group in the world, so let's consider our situation and begin to market our skills!

Linda Boston

Cover image: (Left to right) International Organization of Physical Therapists in Women's Health (IOPTWH) Executive Committee members Ros Thomas (Treasurer), Gill Brook (Secretary), Rebecca Stephenson (President), and delegates Deirdre McFadden (Ireland) and Ruth Broom (New Zealand) at the IOPTWH conference in Oeiras, Portugal, in October 2009 (see pp. 36–37).

Copy deadline

Copy (including disks) for the Autumn 2010 issue of the *Journal* (No. 107) must be submitted to the editors by **18 March 2010**. Please note that academic and clinical articles must be received well before the deadline since time must be allowed so that these can be peer reviewed. Manuscripts should be printed on one side of A4 paper, **double-spaced** with a wide margin, and adhere to the author's guidelines found on pp. 42–44 and on the ACPWH website (www.acpwh.org.uk). Articles for consideration should be sent to Mrs Kathleen Vits, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Princess Anne Hospital, Tremona Road, Southampton SO16 6YA, UK.