

Focus on the ACPWH committees: the Education Subcommittee

Introduction

As we all know, continuing professional development (CPD) is one of the most important areas of our working lives nowadays. For this reason, the Association's Education Subcommittee (ESC) is especially valuable because, as well as supporting those involved in research, it helps our members to achieve appropriate CPD.

The ACPWH constitution states that our objectives are to encourage physiotherapists, and provide the means by which they may improve their specialist therapeutic skills and understanding of the speciality. This is done not just by promoting relevant courses and workshops, but by facilitating professional development, and fostering and supporting relevant research.

We are fortunate to have an enthusiastic team to look after the educational needs of our members and also those of our patients through the production of various leaflets (see p. 68). The ESC is also involved with finding a suitable candidate to present the Margie Polden Memorial Lecture at Conference as well as answering our members' queries via interactiveCSP (iCSP).

Here the members of the ESC describe what they do for us and give an insight into what their roles involve.

Wendy Rarity
Co-editor

Doreen McClurg, Chair



My role

I oversee all matters relating to the education, training and CPD of ACPWH members. These can broadly be divided into:

- workshops (i.e. overseeing content, and tutor and workshop evaluation, review and coordination);
- leaflets (i.e. overseeing the review process);
- Conference (i.e. identifying suitable candidates to present the Margie Polden Memorial

Lecture, organizing abstract submission and scoring);

- papers outlining, defining and/or updating practice (e.g. the ACWPH guidance on the safe use of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation; Crothers *et al.* 2012);
- developing further education and research proposals for members; and
- responding to queries on iCSP.

What I enjoy about the post

I enjoy being involved with encouraging more physiotherapists to become interested in the area of woman's health, and find the enthusiasm of the younger members to be inspiring. Continuing professional development and raising the profile of our profession is my passion, and this role allows me to have some input in both areas. I especially enjoy the comradeship of those on the Executive and the ESC.

How much time is involved?

I try to restrict the time involved to one evening and/or a couple of hours at the weekend, although the overall amount of time can be variable. A negative aspect can be that sometimes people do not realize that working on the Executive and the ESC is completely voluntary, and that members have full-time jobs and lives outside of ACPWH! This is not an excuse for failing to respond to queries or accomplishing tasks, but simply a reminder that sometimes other priorities come first.

What skills do you need?

As Chair of the ESC, I often rely on other members taking on and completing much of the work in hand. Therefore, I need to be aware of their abilities and time constraints, but I also have to be confident that all the members of the Committee will contribute to its work. I have to be well organized before our committee meetings, and be able to listen to and communicate with the rest of the team, encouraging their participation while remaining impartial and flexible. I must gain consensus in order to report to the Executive succinctly and to ensure that actions identified are followed through.

Shirley Bustard, Research Officer



My role

I am the Research Officer for ACPWH, but at the time of writing, I have only been in post for a month. So far, I have been answering queries referred through the website.

What I enjoy about the post

I am looking forward to developing the research webpage (<http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/research>), and pointing members in the right direction to help with their research queries.

How much time is involved?

So far, it has just been a few e-mails each week, but I plan to put some time into developing the webpage. We have a telephone conference lasting about 2 h every few months.

What skills do you need?

Computer skills, some diplomacy and a willingness to be involved are all helpful. It is important to understand something of research theory and know how ACPWH works. Although I have recently completed a Master's degree, I am still learning too!

Debbie Dillon



My role

One of my functions is to become familiar with devices that are available in the field of women's health, and I also need to keep up to date with the latest knowledge. I have to work with the others on the ESC

to decide whether or not a specific device or piece of information is useful to our members. Furthermore, I regularly help to create and update courses and leaflets.

What I enjoy about the post

I like being aware of what is available for women's health physiotherapists in the area of education and also linking up with colleagues by being part of a team.

How much time is involved?

This varies depending on whether I am involved with publications, but generally, it is not too onerous. There are also a few teleconferences each year.

What skills do you need?

Organizational skills, a willingness to be involved and basic computer skills are all that are required.

Carolyn Davie



My role

I have been a member of the ESC for 3 years. Over this time, I have made one trip from my North East Scotland location to London for a meeting; the rest of our business has been carried out via teleconferences and e-mail.

Part of my remit is reviewing and commenting on documents and issues relating to the education of ACPWH members (e.g. leaflets, workshops and Conference). This is generally done either at the meetings or, more commonly, via e-mail.

What I enjoy about the post

I enjoy the variety of issues that present themselves to the ESC and networking with other members.

How much time is involved?

The meetings generally last a couple of hours and there are approximately three per year. Other than that, I spend about an hour per month answering e-mails and so on. The work does vary, but it's not a huge time commitment.

What skills do you need?

You need easy and quick access to e-mail, and the ability to discuss and present your views on educational issues. My experience is mainly with continence, but others on the Committee can cover, for example, any musculoskeletal issues that arise, so the specifics of your clinical experience don't really matter.

Gillian Hawkins



My role

My role as a member of the ESC varies depending on the work that needs to be done. It may involve updating leaflets, taking part in Committee meetings to

assist with the planning and development of ACPWH educational needs, and I am currently working on putting together a seminar. The work tends to be shared around the ESC.

What I enjoy about the post

I enjoy the mental stimulation that being a member of the ESC gives me and being able to play a part in our professional network. It is very easy to work hard in your everyday job, of course, but it is also good to have the challenge of doing something different. I also enjoy being part of a group and meeting up via teleconference or face to face, and working on things together. Everyone on the Committee is friendly and supportive, and it is good to have the chance to connect with other women's health physiotherapists around the country.

How much time is involved?

The amount of work involved varies depending on the activity you are involved in, but it is not overwhelming.

What skills do you need?

The skills are the same as those you have as a physiotherapist. You also have the support of the Committee if you are struggling with anything, and you continue to learn new things about the job and yourself as you go along.

Paula Iguialada-Martinez



My role

I only recently joined the ESC, and my main role within ACPWH is as the Public Relations Officer and as a member of the Executive. My responsibility within the ESC is to support the Chair and the rest

of the team by reviewing and updating ACPWH guidelines, leaflets, workshops and so on.

What I enjoy about the post

I enjoy reviewing the guidelines and leaflets because this allows me to be up to date with all the relevant literature. I also see the ESC as the perfect forum to promote the role of the women's health physiotherapist.

How much time is involved?

I usually devote 1–2 h per week, but this varies from month to month.

What skills do you need?

Computer skills, an inquisitive personality, and most importantly, a passion for the field of women's health physiotherapy and a willingness to take it forward are essential!

Reference

Crothers E., Coldron Y., Cook T., Watson T. & Notcutt W. (2012) Safe use of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation for musculoskeletal pain during pregnancy. *Journal of the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health* **111** (Spring), 22–26.