



## International Organization of Physical Therapists in Women's Health



### IOPTWH conference

The International Organization of Physical Therapists in Women's Health (IOPTWH) hosted a very successful conference in Oeiras, Portugal, in October 2009 (Fig. 1). Attended by over 150 delegates from 21 different countries, it focused on 'the core' in various aspects of women's health physiotherapy.

The speakers included Kari Bø, who discussed the role of pelvic floor muscle (PFM) exercises in low back pain and the evidence to support PFM training for the management of prolapse. Fellow Norwegian Britt Stuge also spoke, leading a workshop on stabilizing exercises for the management of pregnancy-related pelvic girdle pain (PGP) and giving a presentation on her involvement in the European guidelines on PGP. Further topics covered included the role of the core in sexual dysfunction (Talli Rosenbaum, Israel), the anatomical evidence of the role of the PFM and transversus abdominis as core stabilizers (Susan Mercer, Australia), and a look at abdominal training for diastasis abdominis (Gil Pascoal, Portugal). The other workshops included one from ACPWH Pilates tutor Tamsin Brooks, whose simple, logical approach



**Figure 1.** (Left to right) Gill Brook, Dianne Naylor, Pauline Bibby, Sue Brook, Ros Thomas, Tamsin Brooks (all from the UK) and conference organizer Fatima Sancho.

equipped even those new to the topic with basic skills that they could translate into practice.

In addition to the lectures and workshops, the organizers took the opportunity to hold an open-floor discussion on women's health physiotherapy practice around the world and the findings of a survey of the IOPTWH membership that was carried out in 2008, which can be accessed at the Organization's website (Brook 2009).

### New member elect

Since my last report in the Autumn edition of the *Journal* (No. 105, p. 70), the Italian Group for Rehabilitation of the Pelvic Floor has applied for membership of IOPTWH. Along with Nigeria, they will remain members elect until the next general meeting in 2011, when their status should be confirmed.

### WCPT congress

The next World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) congress will be held in Amsterdam in June 2011. Further details, which will be updated regularly, can be found on the Confederation's website ([www.wcpt.org](http://www.wcpt.org)). As an official subgroup of WCPT, the IOPTWH plans to host a pre-congress study day, as well as its 4-yearly general business meeting and biennial executive committee meeting.

### Listservs

The Organization's listservs continue to be an excellent means of sharing ideas with women's health physiotherapists around the world. Currently, the vast majority of users are from the USA, so it would be great to see more ACPWH members participating in the discussions. Go to the IOPTWH website ([www.ioptwh.org](http://www.ioptwh.org)) and click on the 'Listservs' link to find out more. Then, if you would like to subscribe, e-mail me directly ([gill.brook@lineone.net](mailto:gill.brook@lineone.net)).

**Gill Brook**

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**Reference**

Brook G. (2009) *The Management of Pelvic Floor Muscle Dysfunction in Different Countries: A Survey of the Members of the International Organization of Physical Thera-*

*pists in Women's Health (IOPTWH) 2008.* [WWW document.] URL [http://www.ioptwh.org/pdfs/IOPTWH\\_member\\_survey\\_2008.pdf](http://www.ioptwh.org/pdfs/IOPTWH_member_survey_2008.pdf)