

Guest editorials

Introduction

After many years of hard work for POGP, most recently as an outstanding chair and ambassador for our organization, Katie Mann stepped down at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held via Zoom on the 9 October 2020. We are pleased to be able to publish an edited version of her valedictory speech so that all those who could not attend can read her remarks. We are also delighted to give Kate Lough, her successor, an opportunity introduce herself to the membership.

Gillian Campbell
Editor

Chair's report to the Annual General Meeting

Thank you for joining us in this first virtual AGM, which was made possible by your vote in June to change the constitution to allow for remote meetings. This is a method of communication that is becoming commonplace for us all. We now consult with our patients on video or the telephone, hold work discussions remotely, and access learning electronically. Some of our social activities have also moved online. Who would have thought less than 12 months ago that we would find ourselves so *au fait* with the digital world? I am a physiotherapist who believes in the hands-on approach, the importance of touch and the social experiences that come from the face-to-face experience, but we have to take responsibility for the safety of our members, ourselves and other people whom we come into contact with during our daily lives.

In preparation for the end of my time as chair of this organization, I have been going through my archives. This has made me think about the progress that has been made during my stint on the POGP Executive Committee, which is now the Board of Trustees of the charity. It doesn't seem so long ago that we were discussing asking the membership to accept the use of e-mail for all correspondence, and worrying that it was something that would not work effectively. I can't imagine a day without a bulging inbox now, although that might be quite a good thing!

One of the physical items associated with the chair's role is the chain of office (Fig. 1). I am so proud and privileged to have my name

on those chains along with those of my distinguished predecessors, whom I won't mention because I know at least three of them are joining the meeting today, and I don't want to embarrass them! Nevertheless, they were all very much a part of how we got where we are now. It is through embracing innovation and change that those before me shaped the organization, and I hope that part of my personal legacy has been to bring digitization to the organization: improving access to information; helping to improve our commercial and business dealings; and allowing our information booklets to be downloaded and printed for free. We have plans to allow the purchase of a license to embed the booklets in other company's documentation, such as a local hospital's app, but this will take some more work.



Figure 1. Katie Mann, POGP Chair, 2016–2020.

The most exciting new digital project that we have invested in is the development of our own bespoke website (<https://thepogp.co.uk/>). Work began in October 2019, although the right time to move forward with a project of this size had been discussed for some years. POGP became a registered charity in early 2019, and with this change came obligations to make clear information freely available to members of the public. Therefore, 2020 seemed to be the perfect time to launch this project. As we are all aware, this year turned out to be eventful in many other ways, and COVID-19 restrictions affected many of our members and their patients. This awful ongoing situation has driven the website project forward in order to ensure that we make pelvic health information available to the public, support our members and continue to provide them with educational opportunities. This has meant that what started as a relatively simple website upgrade has developed into a much larger project, with some POGP courses moving to online platforms and webinars. Stay tuned for more on these changes and new online courses once the website launches.

I would now like to tell you about what the new website will offer patients, members of the public and other allied health professionals (AHPs) who wish to learn more about pelvic health:

- up-to-date, relevant information on many different topics relating to pelvic health in women, men and children;
- 15 patient information booklets that are free to view and download;
- a glossary;
- a searchable directory to help patients and medical professionals find a pelvic health physiotherapist;
- audio describing how women and men should perform pelvic floor muscle exercises; and
- information about pelvic health physiotherapy and what to expect.

Alongside the new patient information section, which will benefit all users, POGP wanted members to derive more benefits from the website. Key areas of change include:

- editable profiles so that members can change their details quickly and easily;
- editable public profiles so that members can choose to be visible or not on the searchable directory, and select the information that they want to be shown;
- quick links and contacts on bespoke member profile pages;

- an up-to-date area representatives section so that you can easily see what is going on in your local area;
- a new section where individuals can post links to their pelvic-health-related blogs, vlogs and video channels for other POGP members to see;
- a new facility to reserve a place on courses through our online platform, and view your bookings and invoices on your member profile page;
- a new journal section where you can view the latest edition and past issues online, and keep up to date with the @JPOGP journal Twitter feed;
- a live social media wall;
- a timeline of POGP history that members and the public can view; and
- a student and career development section where members can direct students and those interested in pursuing a career in pelvic health, or those wanting to pursue full POGP membership.

The website will also be of benefit to other therapists and AHPs who are not POGP members. They are able to use the searchable directory freely, and there is a new subscription package for AHPs who only want access to our journal and good practice statements. There is also now the option for non-members to purchase individual articles from the journal should they not wish to purchase a membership, or not be eligible to do so.

I would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard on developing the new website. I hope that our members and the public like it, and we encourage everyone to tell us what they think and ask their patients to visit it so we can continue to grow as a charity. We want to create new and exciting training and learning opportunities for our members, and support and inform our patients and the public.

I have had the pleasure to work with many brilliant physiotherapists on the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee before it, and as POGP changes personnel at the end of the current terms of office, I wish to thank the outgoing members. Jo Fordyce has contributed greatly to the many discussions about taking the organization forward during its conversion to charitable status, and I will miss her warmth and humour during some difficult times. Jane Newman added an extra year to her term as treasurer to see us through the minefield that

has been the financial side of dealing with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, and the accountants. She leaves the everyday running of our organization's business in a much more secure place. Although Ruth Hawkes is not leaving the Board of Trustees since she still holds the role of Education Subcommittee chair, I wish to thank her as she steps down from the role of vice-chair. I am grateful for her support, leading me through the ins and outs of constitutional issues, and being a mine of information on the organizational memory that reminds us of how far we have come.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and personnel who have worked with me over the past 4 years on the Executive Committee, and also the Board of Trustees and all our subcommittee members. Without the guidance and support of these amazing people, we would not be in the strong position that we are now, with over 900 members of our community. They are a source of strength for the organization, and we have seen each other through many personal trials, tribulations, challenges and joys. Thank you all! Please keep being there for each other.

And with that, I pass the mantle of chair on to Kate Lough. She will lead us on the next stage of our journey as a charity. I have every confidence that she will take the baton and run with it with all the enthusiasm and drive that she has shown in her previous positions during her time on POGP subcommittees, as a tutor and in other supporting roles. Your organization is in safe hands.

Katie Mann
Vice-chair

The road ahead

I am delighted to be the new chair of POGP (Fig. 2), and look forward to working with the Board of Trustees, all our members and the wider community over the next 3 years. I am very fortunate to be taking over at a time when POGP is settling into its new status as a charitable incorporated organization. This brings certain responsibilities for the Board and the membership as a whole, but aligns well with our objectives for promoting wider education and greater accountability to our members.

I am less fortunate to be joining in the middle of a global pandemic that has created new roles for all; for example, virtually chairing a virtual Board, and as a virtual educator who makes



Figure 2. Kate Lough, POGP Chair, 2020–2023.

connections with people from only the shoulders upwards! This too shall pass. . .

I have taken over just as the new POGP website is launched. This has taken a huge amount of work, and been a considerable investment for us. It really does tick all the boxes, and will be an excellent resource for members and stakeholder organizations that are seeking to form professional links with POGP.

I am indebted to the Board of Trustees for staying on to help me negotiate my way forward by sharing all their considerable experience and expertise. I am joined by Miti Rach, who has calmly taken over the role of treasurer from Jane Newman. The tutorial she gave me on banking early on assures me that our finances continue to be in safe hands. Now that the major work of becoming a charity and building a website have been completed, I can take the opportunity to use my time as chair to spread the word about POGP, and get as many members as possible involved in all aspects of our organizational life: subcommittees, promotion, shared ventures and education.

The clear road ahead has been created by the collective effort and graft of the Board of

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Trustees over the past 4 years under the leadership of Katie Mann. She has given so much to POGP, and her time as chair has forged new opportunities for all our members. On behalf of our

entire community, I offer her enormous thanks for all that she has achieved.

Dr Kate Lough
Chair

Copy deadlines

Copy for the Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022 editions of the journal (Nos 129 and 130, respectively) must be submitted to the editor by **22 April 2021** and **15 October 2021**, respectively. 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 presented double-spaced with a wide margin, and adhere to the author's guidelines found on the POGP website (https://thepogp.co.uk/journals/authors_guidelines/guidelines.aspx), which can be accessed using the QR code on the right. Articles for consideration should be sent to Dr Gillian Campbell, Ashbourne Physiotherapy and Sports Injuries Centre, 1 Spire House, Waterside Business Park, Ashbourne DE6 1DG, UK.

