Chair Report 2022

The Chair’s report last year concluded with my excitement about the opportunities for more member engagement, building an education programme that will provide physiotherapists with the tools and understanding to become pelvic health specialists and looking forward to working with the Trustees in this journey. As you will hear – we have made significant strides forward in these areas despite some challenges.

Although Covid restrictions have largely been lifted, the NHS continues to be hesitant in resuming normal activity and our courses remain restricted for participant numbers, but happily we have managed some face-to-face courses and meetings – travel strikes allowing. This includes the launch of the totally revamped MSK course.

POGP is continuing to grow and develop, and I acknowledge the work of current and past Trustees of the Charity who have put us in a sustainable financial position. We finished last year with a substantial reserve. The current Trustees are committed to a programme of reinvestment to build the courses programme, expand tutor support, create course delivery supersites, support website upgrades and the introduction of professional administrative services. Executive Business Support (EBS) have now been in place since November 2021 and the team led by Paula Banks has been invaluable; creating time for our Trustees to focus on driving through our objectives and meeting member needs.

At the present time the costs of supporting member services exceeds our subscription revenue but the Trustees have determined to hold the current subscription level for the coming year recognising the challenges that members are facing.

The ongoing improvements to the website have expanded our reach and there are several projects ongoing that seek to link substantially with POGP including perinatal health provision, tools, workforce and management of birth trauma. The Complex Mesh Removal Centres all have a POGP member involved and will link back to POGP providing information and website content. We have already installed Reciteme to create an inclusive experience online by providing accessibility and language options to enable everyone to customise the POGP website in a way that works for them.

We are about to launch a leaflet on gender-affirming care to help physiotherapists understand the needs of trans/non-binary people who either are yet to undergo or do not desire gender affirming genital surgery or are awaiting it. All will be available on the website.

The Trustees have agreed a package of member benefits to encourage research in the specialty; to be announced at the AGM. Increasing membership remains a priority and encouraging new members with designated course place allocation will also be put in place.

POGP now have an established endorsement and engagement programme and have issued several endorsements permitting use of our endorsement logo. This and our distinctive POGP badge with Excellence Matters strapline will be copyrighted in 2022.

POGP remain a professional network of the CSP and have linked with them to provide expert spokespeople to enable a swift and current response to media queries and calls for statements on topics in the press.

This is my public opportunity to thank all the 1125 members who have been working on behalf of POGP, not just the Trustees and subcommittee teams but all the pelvic health physiotherapists who promote our work, raise the clinical standards and are active on social media to make the speciality matter.

The Chairs of our subcommittees work tirelessly to steer their programmes. Dr Gillian Campbell who has completed her time as Clinical Editor of the Journal subcommittee and is handing over the reins to Gráinne Donnelly (supported by Christine Addington) who we welcome to the Board. The Journal committee have worked incredibly hard to produce two editions each year with high quality, interesting, evidence building content and all the extras of Twitter activity, interviews and linking to the international organisations. We are delighted that all this will continue safely in the hands of Gráinne.

Jane Dixon has completed nearly a year at the helm of the Education subcommittee and has her feet under the table and plans afoot to capture the huge resource of the ESC to keep the website updated and growing.

We have our fingers crossed that Helen Shepherd will get a chance to gather all the Area Reps together next year in person as they are such an important cog in the POGP UK organisation.

The Communications subcommittee under Lucia Berry, despite its size, packs a punch with swift outputs and Social Media savvy. The newsletters have been well received and give an opportunity to raise member profiles and showcase pelvic health work. We would really like this to be a bigger team – there is much to be done.

Shirley Bustard did not leave last year and as Research Development Officer has put in place new research opportunities which will be announced at the AGM. She will step down this year and we thank her for a decade of work with POGP which has included Journal Subcommittee Chair/Clinical editor and IOPTPWH delegate.

Miti Rach has steered the financial activity of POGP with an admirable attention to detail and an enthusiasm that has been essential as we make significant decisions on behalf of our members. The treasurer role would be easily shared and if anyone with a financial bent wanted to be involved, we would love to hear from you.

Finally, it is thanks to Debbie Plowman as Chair of the Conference Organising Committee that we are here today enjoying an excellent expanded AGM event free to members.

My report this year concludes with a plan for 2022/2023 to actively increase the number of members being involved with POGP at Board and subcommittee levels supported by POGP’s broader team of EBS, Karen Armitage as Course development officer and Andrew Wilson as Journal Editor.

This is an exciting time to be part of POGP and I urge any member to find their place in the organisation.