

## Notes and news

### New members of the Executive Committee

#### *Caron James*

I first developed an interest in women's health when I was lucky enough to be taught by Jill Mantle as a student physiotherapist at The London Hospital (now The Royal London Hospital). After graduating in 1986, I initially chose to specialize in neurology. Like many other women's health physiotherapists, I began treating patients with pelvic floor dysfunction by default; on returning to work part-time after maternity leave, I was asked to take on women's health referrals in addition to neurology out-patients. I soon realized that women's health was the area that I wanted to work in for the rest of my career. After moving to Wales, I was able to specialize in women's health in 2001. I attended the ACPWH courses on vaginal examination and anorectal dysfunction, and I completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Continence in 2009.

I currently work as a clinical specialist in women's and men's health in Newport, Wales (Fig. 1). I lead a small team of women's health physiotherapists and work as part of an integrated continence service. I have recently developed a keen interest in male continence, and I am currently working with a urology nurse specialist to develop a continence pathway for post-prostatectomy patients. I am involved in regular teaching sessions for midwives and I presented at the Royal College of Nursing Continence Conference in 2008.



Figure 1. Caron James.

Although I have been a member of ACPWH for many years, I first became more involved in the Association as the treasurer for the 2006 Conference in Cardiff. Joining the ACPWH Executive will provide a great opportunity to contribute to our Association. I am particularly looking forward to bringing a Welsh perspective to the Committee.

**Caron James**

#### *Kate Lough*

I have had a long association with women's health, having been fitted by Margie Polden with a transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation machine before labour 20 years ago! Some time elapsed before I took up women's health as my own career when I stepped in as maternity cover at the Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea and Hammersmith hospitals in London about 10 years ago. This started me on my current path. A move north to Scotland interrupted my plans, but I managed to get a women's health post in Glasgow, where I have happily remained. Since then, I have honed my skills treating male and female pelvic floor dysfunction, got full membership of ACPWH, played a tiny part in the Pelvic Organ Prolapse Physiotherapy trial and become the area representative for Scotland (Fig. 2).

Why have I joined the Executive?

- I want to be another strong voice supporting the specialism of women's health physiotherapy.



Figure 2. Kate Lough.

- I want to help the Executive guide and strengthen the profile of ACPWH within the physiotherapy profession and the wider media.
- Along with fellow new recruit Irene Pullar, I want to be part of the growing Scottish representation in the Association.

I am looking forward to the tasks ahead and to working closely with the other members of the Committee.

**Kate Lough**

#### *Irene Pullar*

I qualified from The Queen's College in Glasgow in 1981 with the old-style Diploma in Physiotherapy. During this time, my only exposure to women's health physiotherapy was a demonstration of short-wave diathermy for the pelvic floor, which was carried out under a blanket! Following this, I spent many years in both junior and senior rotations in Glasgow, Pontefract and then, ultimately, in Dundee, none of which had any formal placements in woman's health.

Here in Dundee, I met the woman who has made the most profound effect on the area of work that I have now chosen, the redoubtable Helen Gowland. I am sure many of you still remember how enthusiastic Helen was – and still is – about life and women. She was our 'mum' in the department, always encouraging, always a staunch supporter and champion of woman's rights and dignity, and always an advocate of the holistic approach to any treatment programme. When Helen suffered a stroke in her early forties, I was literally thrown in at the deep end.

I applied to do the women's health module in Bradford and started on 11 September 2001. This introduced me to the wider network of woman's health physiotherapists across the country, many of them working hard with little or no close peer support. I had truly found a specialism that I loved and so I worked my way through all the Bradford modules, albeit finding some easier than others, until I finally completed my Master's degree. This has changed my way of working and guided me through several significant developments in woman's health physiotherapy in Dundee.

I believe that my new role as Research Officer will enable me to encourage other woman's health physiotherapists because, no matter how small some projects may seem, these are the building blocks that produce the evidence that allows our speciality to progress.

**Irene Pullar**

## ACPWH Conference

*Crowne Plaza Hotel, Leeds, 10–11 September 2010*

The ACPWH Annual Conference is being held in Leeds this year. For those who remember, it was last here in 1999. Some of the previous organizing group have got together with a few new – and younger! – colleagues to organize our next event.

Leeds has developed rapidly and is continuing to do so. We have excellent shopping (including Harvey Nicks), restaurants, bars, theatres and museums (the Royal Armouries are free). There are excellent transport links with our well-connected airport, which is just a few miles from the city centre. Leeds has good rail links: it's just over 2 h journey from London, and is also well connected with the West and North.

This year, we have chosen the Crowne Plaza Hotel (Fig. 3) as our venue and we're sure it will not disappoint. The hotel has extensive leisure facilities and is close to the city centre, which is a bonus for anyone who wants to stay on to make the most of the shopping or nightlife. It is under 10 min walk from the railway station and is also easily accessible by road. For those driving, the M1 and M62 are the major road networks that pass close by, and there is free parking at the venue for all delegates.

As I write this, the programme is not yet confirmed, so please look at the flier inserted in the *Journal* or check out the website. We plan to have a good mix of obstetrics and gynaecology, and a number of physiotherapists will be presenting. Conference is also an ideal opportunity to network with your peers, and is an excellent way of contributing to continuing professional development and the National Health Service Knowledge and Skills Framework.

The food promises to be outstanding and the committee can particularly recommend the chocoholic-themed break!



**Figure 3.** Crowne Plaza Hotel, Leeds.

We look forward to welcoming friends old and new to the Leeds Conference.

**Ann Johnson**  
Chair

*Conference Organizing Committee*

## Postgraduate courses

The following students have successfully completed the two core modules, i.e. theory and practice, of either the Continence for Physiotherapists or Physiotherapy for Women's Health postgraduate certificates at the University of Bradford, Bradford. They are eligible for membership of ACPWH, having commenced their postgraduate study prior to September 2008.

### *Continence for Physiotherapists: theory and practice*

Postgraduate certificates were awarded to: Kate Burge, Nikki Cameron, Ada Cardiff, Thelma Cooper, Carolyn Davie, Naomi Gill, Penny Graham, Helen Grove, Alison Hennessey, Karen Irons, Caron James, Judith Landhausser, Charlotte Lion, Lynda Morgan-Jones, Maire Oakley, Michaela Pienaar, Roisin Rooney and Sarah Tempest.

### *Physiotherapy for Women's Health: theory and practice*

Postgraduate certificates were awarded to: Jenny Blizard, Rosie Butler, Rebecca Corran, Monica Donaldson, Shalini Eapen, Kim Gainsborough, Emma Hammerton, Emily Hoile, Nicola Hopkins, Maria Jones, Sarah Nosworthy and Teja Parbhoo.

From September 2008, students commencing the postgraduate programmes at the University of Bradford become eligible for membership of the Association on completion of the postgraduate certificate (60 credits at Master's degree level). Further information about ACPWH-approved programmes and eligibility for membership, including other routes, is available on the website ([www.acpwh.org.uk](http://www.acpwh.org.uk)).

**Teresa Cook**

*E-mail: [tcook1@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:tcook1@bradford.ac.uk)*

## New faces

As Kathleen Vits (Fig. 4) writes in her editorial (p. 3), "Change may not be to everybody's taste, but it is inevitable." With respect to the editorship of the *Journal*, this is very much the case because each appointee commits to a 3-year



**Figure 4.** Kathleen Vits.



**Figure 5.** Linda Boston.

term. Kathleen volunteered to take over from Ros Thomas as the latter came to the end of her six-issue run from 2007 to 2009. In a break with tradition, Kathleen decided that she wanted to work with a collaborator and we were delighted that Linda Boston (Fig. 5) agreed to do this.

I would like to join the JACPWH in thanking Ros for all the time and effort that she has dedicated to *JACPWH* during her editorship, but I am also glad to say that we have had the opportunity to work together further while preparing the *Margie Polden Memorial Lectures: The First Ten Years*, a commemorative booklet that will be distributed to the membership with the Autumn 2010 edition of the *Journal*. Ros' professionalism, pragmatism and good humour make her a delight to work with.

Nethertheless, I want to look forward as well as back, and would like to formally welcome the eminently capable Kathleen and Linda as they take the helm of *JACPWH*. The edition in your hands presented some interesting challenges, but your new editors steered a steady course through these choppy waters and things are set fair for the future!

**Andrew J. Wilson**  
*Production Editor*