

## Notes and news

### Annual Conference 2014

Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy (POGP) are delighted to announce that we will officially present our rebranding at our Annual Conference, which will be held at the Renaissance Manchester City Centre Hotel, Manchester, on 19–20 September 2014. Our professional colleagues will be invited as guests, as will many past members, and the exciting programme promises events, some of which will be breakout sessions, that will suit both the specialist and the less-experienced physiotherapist. The less-conventional aspects of our speciality will also be featured. The full programme will be announced in March, so please check the website then ([acpwh.csp.org.uk/conference-2014](http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/conference-2014)).

The costs will be kept to an absolute minimum, the exhibitors will be eager to see you and the atmosphere will be buzzing. Whether you are new to the area and want to know what we do, or an old hand who wants an update on the latest evidence-based practice, there will be something for you. Networking is always important, of course, and this will be a wonderful opportunity to do this. We are also delighted to be able to announce that, as part of our rebranding, Jeanette Haslam and Jo Laycock, two “old” colleagues, have agreed to present their thoughts on how we have developed over the years, and of course, the way forward.

To go with our new name, logo, strapline and corporate image, we will be announcing a new President, who will champion our expertise within the wider National Health Service (NHS).

We are also running a competition for members, who can enter by submitting abstracts of their research. The overall winner will be given the opportunity to present their work at Conference and will receive a prize of £100. If suitable, the remaining entries will be presented as posters, which will be judged at Conference and the best will receive a prize of £50. The closing date for submissions is 30 May 2014, and full details of the competition can be found on page 96.

Please keep the dates free! I look forward to seeing you in Manchester in September.

**Doreen McClurg**  
*POGP Chair*

### University of Bradford postgraduate course update

#### *Postgraduate certificates*

Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy recognizes two programmes of study at the University of Bradford. Postgraduate certificates in either Physiotherapy in Women's Health or Continence for Physiotherapists are awarded to students who successfully complete both the theory and practice core modules, which equate to 60 credits at Master's degree level. Completion of either programme is recognized by POGP as the most common method of demonstrating the level of knowledge and skills required for membership of the organization.

Both POGP-recognized programmes were delivered during the 2012–2013 academic year. Sadly, there were insufficient applications for the Physiotherapy in Women's Health postgraduate certificate that was due to commence in September 2013, so this was cancelled. However, the Continence for Physiotherapists postgraduate certificate is being delivered in the 2013–2014 academic year. During this academic year, Rachael Sharples left the university for pastures new. Louise Johnson continues in her role as the postgraduate physiotherapy programme leader, and is joined by Teresa Cook and Julia Herbert for the continence modules.

Applications are open for the 2014–2015 academic year, and we welcome your enquiries. Further information is available on the websites of both POGP ([acpwh.csp.org.uk/academic-courses](http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/academic-courses)) and the University of Bradford ([www.bradford.ac.uk/health/courses/postgraduate-cpd-professional/physiotherapy-and-occupational-therapy](http://www.bradford.ac.uk/health/courses/postgraduate-cpd-professional/physiotherapy-and-occupational-therapy)). The closing date for applications is likely to be 30 June 2014, but the POGP website will be updated if this changes.

#### *Awarding of certificates by POGP*

Graduates who complete the POGP academic requirements and attend the dinner at the its Annual Conference are presented with a certificate confirming eligibility to apply for membership of the organization.

A complete list of those eligible follows:

- *Postgraduate Certificate: Continence for Physiotherapists with Distinction:* Colette Wilson.

- *Postgraduate Certificate: Continence for Physiotherapists with Merit:* Victoria Barbour, Lucy Huntington-Whiteley, Daniela Long, Katrina Scott and Victoria Shilling.
- *Postgraduate Certificate: Continence for Physiotherapists:* Denise Woodcock.
- *Postgraduate Certificate: Physiotherapy for Women's Health with Distinction:* Kathryn Gore and Michelle Neal.
- *Postgraduate Certificate: Physiotherapy for Women's Health with Merit:* Magaretha Drewett and Sarah Wolujewicz.
- *Postgraduate Certificate: Physiotherapy for Women's Health:* Rebekah Taylor.

Certificates confirming eligibility to apply for membership are available for all those mentioned above, so if you didn't receive yours at the Conference dinner in September 2013, or haven't since then, please contact Teresa Cook (e-mail: [tcook1@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:tcook1@bradford.ac.uk)). If you are listed above and are currently registered as an affiliate member on the POGP membership database, you are eligible to change your status to member (often known as being a "full" member). To change your membership status, you need to contact Michelle McDougall at Fitwise Management Ltd (e-mail: [michelle.mcdougall@fitwise.co.uk](mailto:michelle.mcdougall@fitwise.co.uk)). She will need proof of eligibility to change your membership category, preferably in the form of documentary evidence from the University of Bradford or a copy of the above-mentioned certificate.

**Teresa Cook**  
*Honorary Visiting Lecturer*  
*University of Bradford*  
*Bradford*  
*UK*  
*Email: [tcook1@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:tcook1@bradford.ac.uk)*

### **Important notice for members of Chartered Physiotherapists Promoting Continence, and Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy**

Chartered Physiotherapists Promoting Continence (CPPC) and POGP (formerly ACPWH) have great pleasure in announcing that CPPC will become a subgroup of the POGP Executive that will be known as the Continence Subcommittee (CSC). The decision was made at a recent meeting between the two professional networks (PNs) with the assistance of an independent facilitator. Following extensive discussions, and new information and perspectives offered by each organization, the conclusion was reached

that this arrangement would be the most sensible and beneficial for the members of both PNs.

A working party has been established that will facilitate a full, effective and timely integration. A constitution and terms of reference will be drafted that will align the CSC with the already-established subcommittees of POGP, and resolve matters such as representation on the Executive Committee of POGP and self-determined objectives.

We believe that this choice will provide a unified and strong voice for the specialty, and we would like to thank all of you for your past support and understanding, especially over the past 18 months, and we look forward to your continued support.

No doubt some of you will have questions, and we have prepared a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) that may help. These FAQs be found on our website ([acpwh.csp.org.uk/news/2014/01/16/important-notice-members-cppc-pogp-formerly-acpwh](http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/news/2014/01/16/important-notice-members-cppc-pogp-formerly-acpwh)). However, if you have any additional concerns, please feel free to contact either of us.

**Annette Woodward**  
*CPPC Chair*

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**Doreen McClurg**  
*POGP Chair*

*E-mail: [Doreen.mcclurg@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:Doreen.mcclurg@gcu.ac.uk)*

### **Anne Bird Award**

Anne Bird was Chairman of the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (now POGP) from 1985 to 1988. As superintendent of the physiotherapy department of the Bristol Royal Infirmary, she created a centre of excellence for obstetric and gynaecological physiotherapy. The Anne Bird Award commemorates her by encouraging others and recognizing in them those qualities that she valued.

This prize will normally be awarded annually to an individual, or individuals, who show overall excellence, professionalism and empathy in their educational development within POGP. The successful nominee will also have made a special contribution to an POGP post-registration course or to physiotherapy in women's health.

Each candidate will be nominated by three people, one of whom must be a member of POGP. Nominations are confidential and should be made using the appropriate form, which

should be completed and returned by e-mail to the Chairman, Doreen McClurg (e-mail: Doreen.mcclurg@gcu.ac.uk), by 1 July each year.

The criteria for nomination are as follows:

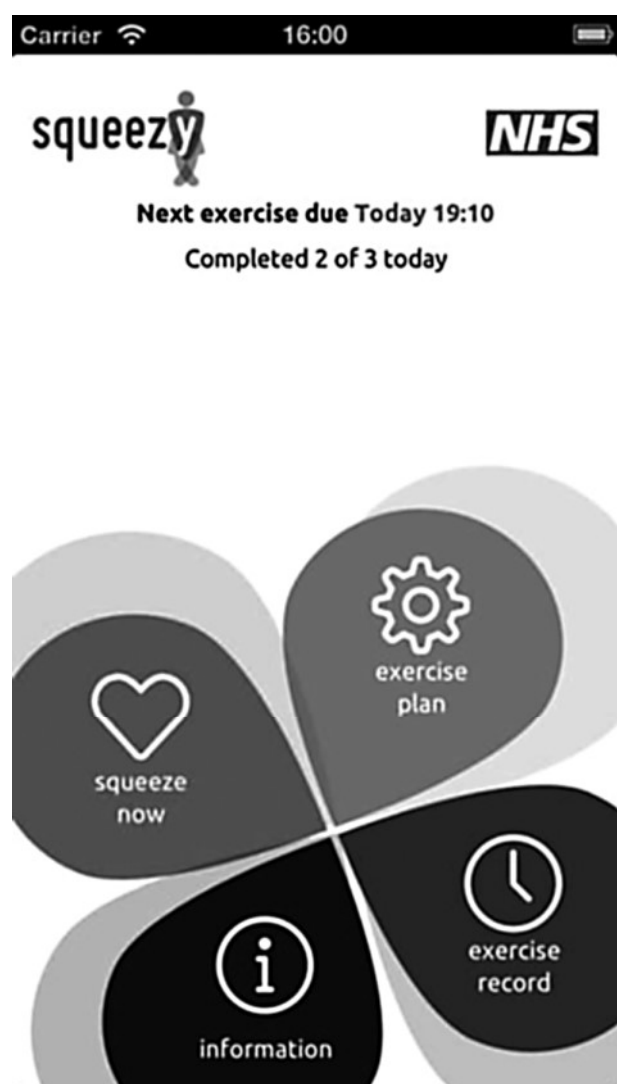
- The nominee *must* be a member or affiliate of POGP.
- At least one of the three nominators *must* be a member of POGP.

The nomination form for the Anne Bird Award can be downloaded from the POGP website ([acpwh.csp.org.uk/documents/acpwh-anne-bird-prize-nomination-form](http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/documents/acpwh-anne-bird-prize-nomination-form)).

**Andrew J. Wilson**  
Managing Editor

### Interview with Myra Robson

Have you or one of your team had an exciting year? We are pleased to present a new feature of



**Figure 1.** Screenshot of the Squeezy mobile phone application.

our “Notes and news” section in which we talk to one of our members about a journey or event that we think might be of interest to all our readers. Please do send in your suggestions for future interviews.

For this edition, we caught up with Myra Robson, a senior women’s health physiotherapist at Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust in London, who launched the Squeezy pelvic floor muscle exercise (PFME) mobile phone application (app) at our Annual Conference in September 2013 (Fig. 1). More details are available on the dedicated website ([www.squeezyapp.co.uk](http://www.squeezyapp.co.uk)), and Squeezy can be purchased from the iTunes App Store.

**Amanda Savage**  
Co-editor

**Amanda Savage:** *How did you come up with the idea of an app for PFMEs?*

**Myra Robson:** Two years ago, during a conversation with a friend about the challenges of complying with exercise programmes, such as those for PFMs, I mentioned that I needed something to remind patients when and how to exercise, something that would be with them wherever they were. My friend, who works for a technology company, said, “You could do an app for that!”

**A.S.:** *How did you fund the project?*

**M.R.:** I gave a talk for Pfizer in October 2012. The area representative told me about their medical education grants for health professionals who have specific, patient-focused projects that they would like to develop. I discussed the app and they were keen to pursue the idea. Propagator, the technology company my friend works for, expressed an interest in developing the app, and so I met the rest of the team and presented the proposal. The software developer started working at lightning speed – mostly in his own time at this stage, since we had no guaranteed funding. A prototype of the Squeezy “ball” and exercise configuration plans were available by early 2013. However, after several meetings, Pfizer said they were unable to provide a grant to cover the cost of producing the app, but would support me with one for marketing. This was a very disappointing result because there would be nothing to market without the initial investment. My supportive hospital manager was similarly unable to find funding, and I found myself sitting gloomily outside the hospital mortuary thinking my project was over. However, that same afternoon, Propagator

decided the app was a project that they wanted to remain involved with, and so we continued with development.

**A.S.:** *How did you develop the app further?*

**M.R.:** In April, I attended the UKCS [United Kingdom Continence Society] conference with a prototype of Squeezy on my teenage son's iPad – he is now very well informed about pelvic floor dysfunction! Within an hour, I met Teresa Cook on the stairwell, and approached her for an opinion on the app. This was an excellent decision because Teresa not only gave me some very positive and constructive feedback there and then, but she has also gone on to peer-review the entire project.

**A.S.:** *What happened next?*

**M.R.:** Then there was an avalanche of activity! A contact led me to an individual who was keen to invest in the app, and this was all confirmed in June. Then the app went through endless stages of development, testing and tweaking. There were many meetings, phone calls and midnight e-mails, as well as moments of panic – at least on my part – when I wondered if it would all get done in time. There were endless decisions to be made, including colours, design, legal issues and how much information to include. . . Only one decision was simple – the software designer had given the app a nickname, “Squeezy”, at a very early stage, and by the time it came to officially naming it, we could not contemplate calling it anything else.

**A.S.:** *Have you learned anything unexpected?*

**M.R.:** There were lots of unknowns that I had not anticipated. For example, it is surprisingly hard to donate money from sales of an app to a charity. The legal issues are complex because app use in healthcare is still quite new.

**A.S.:** *When was Squeezy finally launched?*

**M.R.:** The final day for submission to the App Store came in August. Propagator, Teresa and I worked on last-minute tweaks. Squeezy was submitted, and we waited 10 days until we heard that it had failed. . . This was because of a minor detail regarding whether you can mention money being donated to a charity, but this was enough to cause us great concern that it would not be live in time for the ACPWH Annual Conference. The software developer spent a Sunday afternoon resubmitting it with a plea for a quick review, and within 24 h, Squeezy was live!

**A.S.:** *Is the app as popular as you had hoped that it would be?*

**M.R.:** Definitely! Since the launch, Squeezy has been downloaded over 700 times at a rate of

around 40 a week. I have presented posters at two conferences with Propagator, it has been covered in *Frontline*, and the feedback from patients and physiotherapists has been overwhelmingly positive. Squeezy has also been approved and accepted by the NHS Choices Health Apps Library, and submitted for an award.

**A.S.:** *What do you think will happen next?*

**M.R.:** The work, and many midnight hours spent at the computer, goes on. We are marketing it widely to spread the message of Squeezy, pelvic floor dysfunction and women's health physiotherapy as far as we can. We hope to secure investment for the Android version, and we are starting work on Squeezy for Men soon. There are plans for research, and I am applying for a poster presentation at the UKCS conference. We are also looking at adapting Squeezy for countries outside the UK.

**A.S.:** *What have been your most important learning experiences?*

**M.R.:** I have learned so much from this process, including how much time and work goes into creating a high-quality app. I have been exhausted by the number of tasks involved in creating, testing, marketing and following up on such a project, and as it is all in my own time, it has required good time-management skills. Propagator are now fluent in the issues surrounding pelvic floor dysfunction in women, and have coped incredibly well with discussions that must have been very challenging!

### **Rachel Bromley awarded degree with distinction**

Rachel Bromley, *JACPWH* Online Content Editor, recently graduated from the University of Bradford (Fig. 2), where she was awarded the degree of Master of Science with Distinction. She began her MSc in Rehabilitation Studies (Continence for Physiotherapists) in 2009, and initially found the prospect of postgraduate study very daunting. “I qualified as a physiotherapist in 1992,” she told us, “and remember sitting for hours in the hospital library as a student, wading through paper indexes of journals to find current research and information. So much has changed in the way that research is stored and accessed – using the Internet to search for relevant literature is certainly a skill! Thankfully, there was a lot of help and support from the library and the academic staff at the university, which was easy to access despite me being a distance learner.”



**Figure 2.** Rachel Bromley at her graduation ceremony.

Rachel encourages her colleagues to emulate her success: “My advice to anyone considering postgraduate study is to go for it! Consider starting with a stand-alone Master’s module and see how you get on. I initially planned to stop after completing my postgraduate certificate, but found the whole process so stimulating and interesting that I decided to carry on. I never dreamt that I would be capable of achieving a distinction!”

Rachel is the Clinical Lead for Women’s Health and Continence Physiotherapy within Nuffield Health, and sits on the POGP Journal Subcommittee.

**Andrew J. Wilson**  
*Managing Editor*

### **Distinguished Service Award presentation**

The ceremony for the Seventh Annual Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) Awards was held at the Hotel Russell in London on Friday 22 November 2013. We were welcomed by the Chair of the CSP Council, Sue Rees, and then given a glass of champagne before lunch in the

Victorian Woburn Suite with about 180 awardees, guests and CSP staff.

This celebratory event recognizes the exceptional work done for the profession by physiotherapists. The categories of the awards are: Fellows and Honorary Fellows, Distinguished Service Awards (DSAs), and the CSP Excellence Awards. Three people were also mentioned for having received national honours.

Pauline Walsh was nominated for her DSA for services to women’s health (Fig. 3). Her guests were her husband, Ken, and Ruth Hawkes, Daphne Sidney and myself. Ruth is a Fellow of the CSP, and Daphne and I are previous DSA recipients, and we all received these honours in recognition for our services to women’s health.

After a sumptuous lunch, the ceremony began with the conferring of eight fellowships. Two of the eight recipients were sitting at our table, and both had connections with women’s health. First, Professor Tim Watson was being honoured for his contribution to the development of the profession through his advancement of the evidence base for electrotherapy and as an educator. Many members will know of Tim’s work with our organization over many years, not least as a member of the team that developed the guidelines for the safe use of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation during pregnancy. Secondly, Dr Janet Freeman, another physiotherapist, was honoured for her work in neurological research. Coincidentally, she is currently working on research relating to pregnancy-related pelvic pain, and mentioned that she and her team are using some excellent leaflets provided by POGP. She was astonished to find that I was one of the authors! All in all, it was an appropriate and interesting mix of people.



**Figure 3.** (Left to right) Ruth Hawkes, Pauline Walsh, Ros Thomas and Daphne Sidney at the Seventh Annual Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Awards.

Pauline was one of five DSA awardees, and the only one nominated for work in women's health. Her citation noted her significant and active contribution to POGP for over 20 years in a variety of roles, not least as Chairman and as a tutor on the organization's workshops, and for her long commitment to the advancement of women's health physiotherapy. She is to be congratulated.

Having been retired for a few years now, I was delighted to find that POGP continues to be more active than many PNs in nominating members who are then endorsed and honoured by the CSP. We currently have seven Fellows among our membership (one awarded posthumously), and POGP also boasts nine medallists in the 15 years since the CSP began conferring DSAs in 1999. Since only 53 awards have been made, our

organization's successful nominees make up over one-sixth of this total, which is a statistic that POGP should be justly proud of having achieved.

The nine DSA winners are: Jeanette Haslam and Jeanne McIntosh (2001), Margaret Bartaby (2002), Eileen Brayshaw (2003), Jane Goudge (2006), Gill Brook (2007), Ros Thomas (2010), Daphne Sidney (2011), and Pauline Walsh (2013).

Further details can be found on the CSP website ([www.csp.org.uk/news-events/events/csp-annual-awards/csp-awards-2013](http://www.csp.org.uk/news-events/events/csp-annual-awards/csp-awards-2013)) and in the December 2013 edition of *Frontline* ([www.csp.org.uk/frontline/article/csp-awards-celebration-time-physios-reeve-awards-fellowships](http://www.csp.org.uk/frontline/article/csp-awards-celebration-time-physios-reeve-awards-fellowships)).

**Ros Thomas**  
*Former Editor*