

Notes and news

Distinguished Service Award

Is this really me: awards and accolades, champagne and candelabra? Marching down a long room to celebratory music dressed in a beautiful blue gown? That photo in the awards book and on the screen?

I'm standing in front of a roomful of peers with my nomination being read out aloud. My hand is being held warmly by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) Chair of Council as she relays the pleasure Council have at giving me the Distinguished Service Award? I'm clutching the box containing the medal and the award certificate as I make my way back to my seat.

Someone will pinch me and I will wake up from a pleasant dream . . .

But no, it really was me, and I can't describe the pride that I felt at receiving such an award from the professional body which my membership of has meant so much to me throughout my working life. This was undoubtedly the pinnacle of my career.

I was also conscious throughout the ceremony of the pride I felt in representing ACPWH, who had nominated me for the award. We were well represented because Kathleen Vits was being awarded a Fellowship too. To have two women's health physiotherapists among such small number of awardees is quite an achievement. It was a far cry from when I first became interested in women's health, back when it was very much considered to be the Cinderella of physiotherapy. That was in the days when ACPWH was known as the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, or ACPGOG.

Much more than our name has changed since then. Full membership of ACPWH is now through one of the two university-based courses that are run annually, and many members have completed both. Membership numbers have increased greatly over the years, our *Journal* has changed beyond recognition, and I consider our emphasis on education for members to be second to none when compared to other CSP special interest groups, now known as professional networks. Five weekend workshops run by experienced tutors are regularly evaluated to ensure that standards are maintained. These are

approved by ACPWH and one is CSP endorsed. Watch this space for further study days.

We have come a long, long way. Nevertheless, perhaps the bias has swung a little too far towards the continence side of women's health? After all, most of the damage is done in the child-bearing year and we have a lot of skills to offer in that area.

I evaluated the antenatal workshop a couple of weeks ago, and it was very interesting to see the list produced for the justification of our role and the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (i.e. SWOT) analysis. I feel that it is important that we look at ways to get back into antenatal education and put to use the unique skills that we have at our fingertips. Throughout the antenatal workshop, we heard that there was "no evidence for this", "no evidence for that" and, of course, "Well, we've been doing this for years and we know that it works, but we can't prove anything."

There is much to do. Remember, most of the people awarded a CSP Fellowship were involved in research, so if you want to wear a gold hood over the beautiful blue gown, you know which direction to head in!

We must stand up and be counted. We owe it to the women we serve.

When I was talking with Chair of Council Ann Green after the ceremony, she said to me, "Physiotherapists like you are the backbone of the profession and very necessary for the cause of the Society." Well, you are the backbone of our Association, and your support and involvement is very necessary to the ongoing success and development of our group as we strive constantly to provide an excellent service for our clients. As I hand on my baton, I hope it may be taken up by several people rather than just one.

Thank you for my award: it has been a pleasure and a very special experience to work with and for ACPWH.

Daphne Sidney

NICE and ACPWH

As an Association, we are asked to contribute to National Institute for Health and Clinical

Excellence (NICE) guidelines (www.nice.org.uk). In fact, the request has been so frequent recently that the Executive Committee have decided to set up a database of the guidelines that we have been involved with and those that we may contribute to in the future. Since NICE will only take comments from registered stakeholders, we usually try to register ACPWH whenever we are made aware of an opportunity to participate. This typically happens by invitation from the Institute.

A new position has been developed within the Executive, the NICE Coordinator. Once she has been made aware of a guideline in development to which we have a contribution to make, the Association will be registered as a stakeholder. If applicable, the Executive will ask for or nominate a person with relative expertise to be part of the guideline development group. This individual will then attend any meetings that may be relevant. We already have some names of people with a special interest in a specific area of women's health/continence, but if you feel that you may have specific knowledge that we can use, then please contact ACPWH Secretary Katie Mann via the website for consideration as a representative.

Once the first draft of a new guideline or its review has been published, all stakeholders are invited to comment on the document. The link to the draft document will be published on our website under the "News" section, where you will be able to read it. Any comments can be submitted, again via the Secretary, who will complete the appropriate NICE form and present all our comments. Please be aware that you cannot stand as an independent stakeholder, nor can you comment without going through a registered NICE stakeholder.

This is our chance to have the physiotherapist's view heard. In the past, we have had a high profile on some leading guidelines, and been able to change a draft document to reflect our expert opinion when the body of evidence did not necessarily exist in robust research.

Subjects that we have been invited to contribute to include:

- the management of urinary incontinence in women;
- faecal incontinence;
- prostate cancer;
- childhood enuresis – the management of bed-wetting in children and young people;
- breast care;

- incontinence in neurological disease;
- familial breast cancer;
- osteoporosis;
- intrapartum care;
- antenatal care – routine care of the healthy pregnant woman;
- Caesarean section;
- antenatal and postnatal mental health;
- postnatal care;
- domestic violence between intimate partners; and
- weight management before, during and after pregnancy.

A member may occasionally be directly approached by NICE to be a part of certain aspects of the process. We respectfully ask that you inform the Secretary of your involvement so that the database can be kept up to date.

The Executive Committee are also looking at the procedures of the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (www.sign.ac.uk) with the aim of increasing our profile with them as well.

Katie Mann
ACPWH Secretary

University of Bradford postgraduate course update

Our Association recognizes two programmes of study at the University of Bradford, Bradford, UK. The award of a postgraduate certificate in either Physiotherapy in Women's Health or Continence for Physiotherapists is made to students who successfully complete 60 credits at Master's level. Completion of either programme is recognized by ACPWH as the most common method of demonstrating the level of knowledge and skills required for membership of the Association.

Summer 2011 was a busy time at the University, with the end of the 2010–2011 academic year being followed by the opening of the new School of Health Studies. This now hosts both ACPWH-recognized programmes, which means that the attended teaching blocks are no longer residential. While this has the drawback of students having to stay in various different locations and, therefore, mixing less out-of-hours, it also has many advantages. We are able to use the new purpose-built facilities available at the School, and are also now on the main University campus, mixing with many other students and having easy access to the library. In addition, the

programme fees have been reduced now that students no longer have to cover the costs of hiring the teaching rooms.

Because of changes to the core modules for each certificate, including the number of credits awarded for each module, we are pleased to announce that a greater number of students have been awarded a postgraduate certificate since the last update was published.

The following students have recently been awarded postgraduate certificates, and therefore, are eligible for full membership of the Association:

- *Postgraduate Certificate: Continence for Physiotherapists:* Gemma Barnes, Lucia Berry, Sadie Booker (with merit), Sally Broadhurst, Rachel Bromley, Charlotte Church, Alison Clarke (with merit), Alison Crocker, Isabelle d'Almeida (with merit), Bronwyn Dunn, Kirsteen Ferguson, Deborah Higgins (with merit), Jennifer Horrigan (with merit), Rachel Hurst, Louise Kerr, Lindsay McLaren-Brown, Nicola Mulkeen, Sylvia Nagle, Funmilayo Odofoin (with merit), Liz Sheehan, Jennifer Sheppard (with merit), Kimberley Sinclair (with merit), Julia Spencer and Karen Whitehouse.
- *Postgraduate Certificate: Physiotherapy for Women's Health:* Amanda Adie, Kirsten Barratt, Rebecca Bennett, Amanda Casey, Natasha Chesler (with merit), Clare Haslam, Jennifer Heron (with merit), Victoria Keates (with merit), Nicola King (with merit), Eibhlin Mulhall (with merit), Daniela Papezova, Camilla Pleydell-Bouverie (with distinction), Rebecca Sessions and Kirsty Simpson.

Several of these students are continuing with their studies, and proceeding to either the postgraduate diploma or the Master of Science degree.

For those who are interested in applying for the next academic year, the closing date for applications to both the Physiotherapy in Women's Health and the Continence for Physiotherapists postgraduate certificates is likely to be 30 June 2012. If this changes, any new information will be posted on the ACPWH academic courses page of the website.

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ACPWH Annual Conference 2011

As predicted in the previous edition of the *Journal* (No. 109), the Association had an excellent week in Glasgow, UK, at the joint meeting running from Sunday 28 August to Friday 2 September 2011. The successful ACPWH Conference programme on the Sunday was shared with the members of the International Continence Society (ICS) Physiotherapy Round Table. The 200 attendees enjoyed outstanding presentations on pelvic girdle pain and prolapse, as well as short talks on a variety of research topics that are currently being pursued.

The members of ACPWH then joined the ICS Annual Meeting on the following day, and all delegates had access to specialist workshops for 2 days. There was something on offer for everyone, and all aspects of continence, healthcare and treatment were covered.

The ICS Annual Meeting that ran from the Wednesday until the Friday was described on the website as "either the icing on the cake or the straw that broke [the camel's back] . . . depending on the elasticity of your grey matter!" (ACPWH 2011). There was a huge variety of presentations to choose from, and miles of walking were involved in getting from hall to hall in the vast conference centre.

One of the highlights saw physiotherapists providing definitive proof that pelvic floor muscle exercises are effective in helping pelvic organ prolapse: the Pelvic Organ Prolapse Physiotherapy (POPPY) trial has now concluded and Diane Stark presented the results in her Margie Polden Memorial Lecture (see pp. 5–16). Another notable event was the presentation of a lifetime achievement award to Dr Jo Laycock by the ICS.

Linda Brubaker spoke about conflicts of interest for clinicians and her presentation is available as a webcast (Brubaker 2011) until September 2012. Naveed Sattar, a Professor of Metabolic Medicine, was "genuinely both scary and illuminating" on obesity, and his insights were applauded as being very relevant to any health professional.

Physiotherapy was well represented overall throughout the week in terms of research, policy, presence and posters. As noted on the website (ACPWH 2011), "[W]e are part of the continence health package – and it seems that we're good at it – and cheap!"

The Association would like to thank everyone who attended this unique event.

Andrew J. Wilson

Production Editor

References

Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health (ACPWH) (2011) *Conference 2011*. [WWW document.] URL <http://acpwh.csp.org.uk/conference-2011>

Brubaker L. (2011) *State-of-the-Art Lecture 3: Tage Hald Lecture – Conflict of Interest for Clinicians*. [WWW document.] URL <http://webcasts.prous.com/ICS2011/html/1-en/template.aspx?section=7&p=7,19574>