

Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy: what's in a name?

Physiotherapy is a dynamic profession, and new treatment methods and skills are constantly being developed to accommodate the ever-changing demands and challenges of healthcare practice. It is not surprising that, as an established professional network (PN) of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), there is a regular need for the Association to consider and review current developments in practice and the

speciality, and reflect on how well it is serving its members and the public at large.

The latest change of title has come about after at least 2 years of consideration and debate. It was felt that the role of the specialist physiotherapist in our particular field had expanded, as had the function of the organization and the way in which it supported its members. In short, the name no longer matched the specialism's

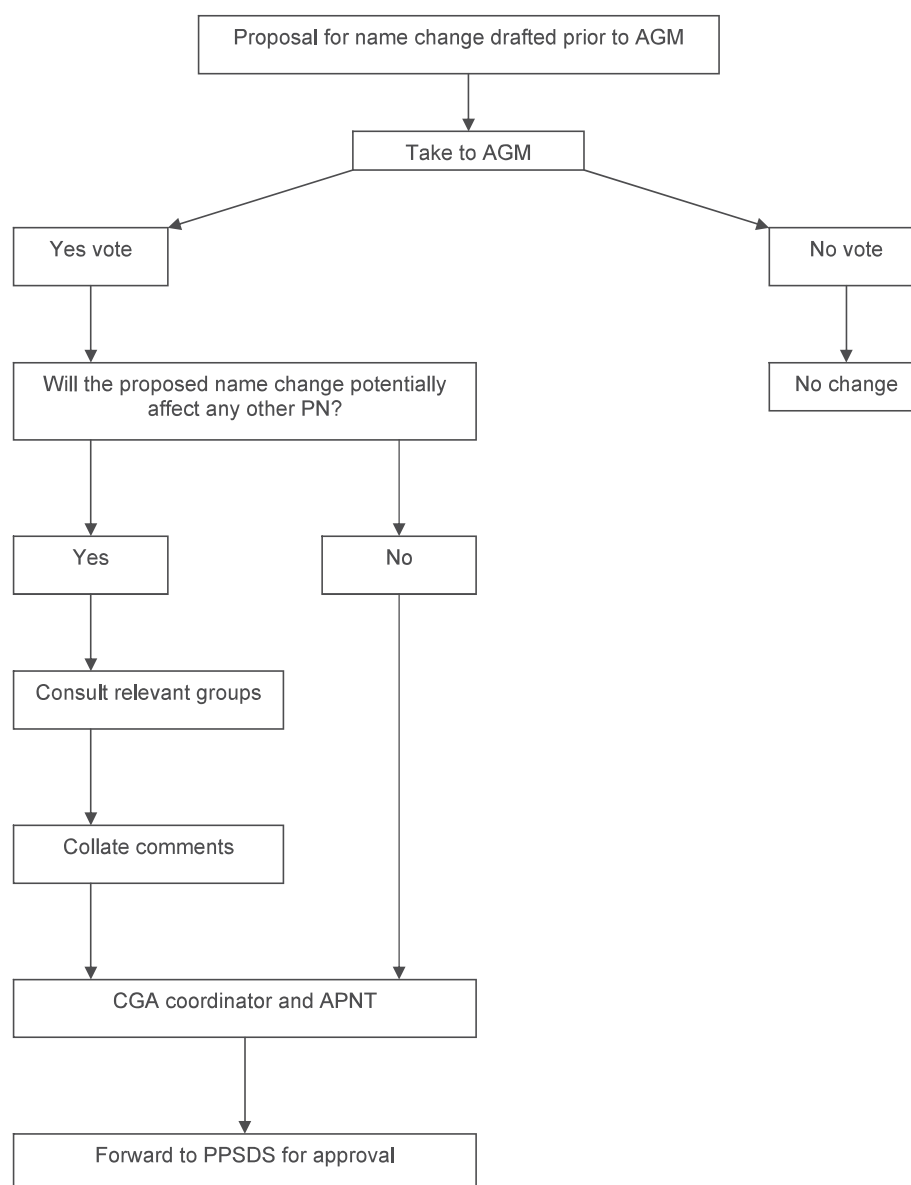


Figure 1. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy algorithm for changing the name of a professional network (PN): (AGM) annual general meeting; (CGA) Client Group Alliance; (APNT) Alliance and Professional Networks Team; and (PPSDS) Professional Practice and Service Delivery Subcommittee.

expanded role, and if anything, could be seen to be restricting its success. The rapidly changing world of communication and multimedia networking processes meant that our name was perceived as significantly limiting our ability to connect to all the different forms of informatics now available, and therefore, was reducing the scope of our audience.

In taking on the challenge of exploring a new title, the Executive Committee decided that the objectives of the constitution would help to define the range of the Association's work, thereby helping to narrow our options for the choice of name.

The task of choosing a new title was not easy. In the early stages of the consultation, the Executive were faced with such a plethora of choice that, even after considerable debate and engagement with the membership, it was impossible to reach an agreement on a new name.

A PN that is affiliated to the CSP must follow a clear pathway when changing its title (Fig. 1). It must inform the other CSP PNs of its intention. It must also present the CSP with the reasoning behind the decision for the name change, and show clearly that it has been through a period of consultation with its members and also with other PNs. Notice of our intention to adopt a new name was given at both the Client Group Alliance (CGA) meeting and at the annual Professional Network Chairs Forum (PNCF).

The Association decided to seek professional help, and was given expert guidance by Max du Bois of the consultancy firm Spencer du Bois. His practical advice included recommendations about how to structure a meeting devoted to choosing a name. The responsibility now rested with the Executive to examine all the material collected over the past 18 months and to focus on finding a title.

The following advice was given by Max du Bois:

“A name is a signature and not a full biography. It acts as a shorthand introduction and reminder of what an organization does. No name, no matter how descriptive, covers everything.”

The idea of considering a strapline to augment the title and reinforce its message was also introduced.

The Executive Committee devoted a day to choosing the name. The day was structured, and there was a clear pathway to follow in order to reach a successful outcome. By the end of the session, the Executive had decided on the name Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy (POGP), and a supporting strapline. This has since been shortened from “educates, supports and promotes the specialist physiotherapist” to “excellence matters”.

A notice informing the members of the proposed new title was sent in the second mailing to the membership prior to the 2013 Annual General Meeting (AGM), along with the further small changes to the constitution. The chairmen of the CGA and PNCF were also notified, as was the CSP via the CGA coordinator.

At the ACPWH AGM on 20 September 2013, the membership voted to adopt POGP as the new name for the Association. The final stage was to submit a paper to the CSP Professional Practice and Service Delivery Subcommittee on 19 November 2013. This was unchallenged, and it was forwarded to the CSP Practice and Development Committee on 3 December 2013, who accepted the recommendation.

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