



Chair's Report 2023

I have great pleasure in submitting my report to the members for the 2023 Annual General Meeting in York.

It has been a busy and interesting year involving a broad range of projects for the organisation and at times, somewhat exacting with tight deadlines and a high volume of commitments. We remain in a sound financial position to support our objectives for the forthcoming year.

I concluded my report of 2022 with a key goal for POGP for the year ahead to increase the membership involvement at Board and subcommittee level. I stated that this was an exciting time to be part of POGP and urged you to find your place in the organisation.

I was not wrong. New members to the Board and Subcommittees are always surprised at the breadth and extent of involvement that POGP has in the wider speciality of pelvic health at member, network, national and international level.

I shared the organisational graphic in the June newsletter. This showed the growth of member involvement with a full Board including five Chairs with subcommittees, five additional Trustees without committee, two affiliate member representatives invited to the Board and four additional member groups for the Complex Mesh Services, Physiotherapy in Pessary Practice, Research Network and POGP Awards. The affiliate member representatives are Sally Reffold and Bill Taylor. They bring to the Board the previously unrepresented voice of the large affiliate membership and we welcome their involvement at this key time for POGP.

The developments mentioned in my previous report have influenced the growth and reach of the organisation. This year has seen the launch of the booklets for the trans women, trans feminine, trans men, trans masculine and non-binary people undergoing procedures affecting their pelvic floor. This has been part of wider work with the CSP in a diversity and inclusion project where POGP has had a key role.

We have also been delighted to achieve CSP Fellowship for Professor Doreen McClurg for her contribution to pelvic health physiotherapy from her research, clinical practice and education. Our professional network is well represented by Fellows of the CSP, and we will continue to seek recognition of our members in this way next year.

Membership levels are rising and the demands on the POGP charity increase year on year. This requires POGP to be responsive to the changing needs of members, patients and wider stakeholders. To this end, a key task for this year has been to revisit our strategy and wider objectives. The Board and our administrative partners have attended a series of meetings and workshops to set out our

vision, our priority values and our objectives for the next four years. The highlights are set out below:

We are POGP: Pelvic, Obstetric & Gynaecological Physiotherapy, the professional membership organisation leading excellence in pelvic health physiotherapy.

Our vision:

The POGP aims to provide evidence informed care and advocacy for the public and its members.

Our priority values:

Excellence: we are committed to excellence in all aspects of pelvic health (clinical, leadership, research, and education)

Collaboration: we collaborate with other professionals and patient groups who share the vision to provide support and care for our members and patients

Advocacy: we speak out for our members to achieve their goals and our patients to provide the care they need

Evidence: by supporting pelvic health research we aim to build the evidence base that informs our clinical work

Member involvement to fully mandate our plan, including the first survey, is in process and I will share some of this at the AGM.

As POGP widens its activities in the field of pelvic health physiotherapy, the workload of our volunteers can become unsustainable for a positive work/life balance and over the course of this year we have directed more income to increase support from our administrative team supporting the membership (Executive Business Support (EBS)), Journal (Andrew Wilson, Managing Editor), Course administration and development (POGP tutors, Karen Armitage and EBS) and the website (Light Media). We will continue to monitor the level of support required to enable our volunteers to bring their skills to the organisation.

This year has seen the launch of several initiatives to increase support for members in their continuing professional development. We have kept the existing Dame Jo Bursary and the Margie Polden Student Award and added research grants totalling £15,000 to sit alongside the existing Research Poster and Infographic competition prizes. We thank Shirley Bustard for her work in launching and running these with help from Doreen McClurg and Gillian Campbell; POGP have committed to offering the grants next year. Shirley steps down from her extended period of Research Officer, and the research grants for 2024 will be administered at Board level.

In addition, we have set up the Ruth Hawkes Early Career award to enable a physiotherapist new to pelvic health to attend up to three introductory POGP courses within two years. This drew a large number of applicants, and the winner will be announced at the AGM.

In addition to the ongoing Board work, the Chairs of the Journal, Education, Public Relations and Conference subcommittees and Area Representative coordinator have continued to work with their volunteer committee members. The Journal Committee under Grainne Donnelly, and peer reviewers, have produced two excellent journals with supporting webinar and podcast content. The Education committee have added website updates, new content, up-to-date patient information resources, represented POGP member opinion in National Institute for Health and Care Excellence reviews and overseen the portfolio process to full membership. Jane Dixon, the Education Subcommittee Chair, has also worked closely with the tutor group and the courses administration

team to deliver our education programme across the UK. The Public Relations and Communications work now led by Daniele Alebon, with Sally Reffold and Clare Bourne have provided the members with three excellent newsletters, loaded up the website and still managed to keep up the POGP Social Media output. The Conference Committee, also small, but here we are at our first face to face conference with a “full to capacity” event. Our thanks go to Debbie Plowman, Camilla Lawrence and Sarah Morris.

Alex Stephenson as Area Representative coordinator has the biggest team of all and although new to the role has already gathered our UK and International representatives together to set an exciting agenda for their local members.

I want to take this opportunity to say how proud I have been this year to lead an extraordinary group of people whose passion and commitment to our professional network and clinical speciality is unbounded. The enthusiasm, innovation and energy that has come to the Board meetings has been fun, feisty and visionary. We just need more hours in the day and longer meetings it seems.

The whole Board and membership beyond would join me in thanking Andrew Wilson, Paula Poole and Amy Williams from EBS, and Karen Armitage for the support that they have provided for the POGP Board, the members and course participants. They have brought much needed practical, administrative and technical support but also new ideas and efficiencies.

I am delighted to have one more year as Chair to meet the objectives that we have set in our priority areas and move the organisation towards its vision.

Dr Kate Lough,
POGP Chair