

## Website watch

### Introduction

Since one of the themes of this edition of *JPOGP* is male pelvic health (see pp. 74–80), the present article will discuss a range of current websites that offer good-quality resources and advice for our patients. Furthermore, many also provide reliable information to broaden our own understanding of male pelvic floor disorders and the treatment of these conditions. The subject matter encompasses the pathophysiology and management of urogenital disorders, pelvic floor muscle (PFM) dysfunction, chronic pelvic pain, chronic prostatitis, and cancer.

The featured websites are maintained by a variety of charitable, governmental and professional bodies. In addition, several commercial (.com) sites have been included when this can be justified by the quality and/or originality of the material on offer. In some cases, the selection is underpinned by Health on the Net Foundation Code of Conduct (HONcode) certification (for details of this endorsement, see below). While almost every website covered immediately presents obviously relevant and useful content on its homepage, there are one or two nuggets of information that might easily be missed. Having teased these out for you, I have provided hyperlinks to those particular pages. To avoid re-typing the links, these are best accessed via the “Journal” pages of the POGP website ([pogp.csp.org.uk/group-journal](http://pogp.csp.org.uk/group-journal)).

If you are reading this in a back issue, it is important to recognize that the functionality of websites can become obsolete over time if these are not maintained, and the value of any information should be questioned if there are no signs of recent updates.

### General health websites

Many of your patients will have already come across the following general health websites while searching for health information online. Nevertheless, these provide a solid starting point for patients, providing them with basic information that will help them to understand their symptoms and treatment options:

- Healthline ([www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com));

- Health A–Z – Conditions and treatments – NHS Choices ([www.nhs.uk/Conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions));
- Patient ([patient.info](http://patient.info));
- Medscape ([emedicine.medscape.com](http://emedicine.medscape.com)); and
- WebMD ([www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)).

### [www.urologyhealth.org](http://www.urologyhealth.org)

The Urology Care Foundation is the official foundation of the American Urological Association. The website is very well presented and easy to use. Free downloadable resources can be found under the “Educational Materials” tab. These brochures and factsheets can be selected in formats that are suitable for either patients or healthcare professionals. Of particular interest are those that deal with prostate cancer and its treatment, and urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction after prostate surgery. The *Prostate Health Playbook* is a resource that has been designed with enthusiasts of American football in mind, and a poster called the “Male Incontinence Infographic” stresses that “it’s not just a ‘female problem’”. Other brochures give advice on how to answer patients’ questions and how to talk about overactive bladder (OAB). There is also a free brochure about OAB that is aimed at clients with low levels of literacy.

### [www.menshealthforum.org.uk](http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk)

The Men’s Health Forum was established to promote and make accessible health education, information and services for all men and boys, particularly those in the most disadvantaged areas and communities. This interactive website is a source of statistics, reports and factsheets for patients, as well as the “man manuals” on various topics, which are produced in the style of the well-known Haynes manuals. Visitors can search for information and engage in discussions by entering a health question or a search term (e.g. a body part, problem or topic).

### [prostatecanceruk.org](http://prostatecanceruk.org)

Prostate Cancer UK is the Britain’s largest men’s health charity. Its useful publications can be accessed via the following hyperlink:

<http://prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information/our-publications>

### **www.prostate.org.au**

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia is a community-based organization that is dedicated to funding research, improving awareness and offering support. The website and some leaflets are available in English and five other languages. Its publications include leaflets that can be downloaded or read online, which notably deal with bowel dysfunction following prostate treatment, and provide information for recently diagnosed men, parents and carers, and gay and bisexual men.

### **www.andrologyaustralia.org**

Continuing with the Antipodean theme, Andrology Australia is a government-funded centre for male reproductive health that uses “what every man needs to know” as a tag line. As well as a newsletter and a range of clinical guides, its publications include booklets and factsheets covering topics such as sex after prostate surgery, boys and puberty, prostatitis, and osteoporosis. The booklets can be downloaded in either Portable Document Format or as e-books for the Kindle. The site is also a source of men’s health statistics, although these are predominantly drawn from Australian data.

### **www.pelvicfloorexercise.com.au**

Pelvic Floor Exercise is a commercial Australian website that is a one-stop shop for men’s pelvic rehabilitation devices. However, it also features some useful additional resources (see the hyperlinks below).

First, there is a list with direct links to scientific papers, reviews, statements, conference proceedings and guidelines, and secondly, two DVDs featuring pelvic floor exercises for men and relaxation techniques are available for purchase:

- <https://www.pelvicfloorexercise.com.au/resources/terminology-reports-position-statements-and-reviews>
- <https://www.pelvicfloorexercise.com.au/shop/mens>

### **www.pelvicpain.org.au**

Moving on to pelvic pain resources and our final Australian website, the Pelvic Pain Foundation of

Australia is a not-for-profit body that came into being after the 2010 National Pain Summit held in Canberra recognized the need for a pelvic-specific strategy. Resources specific to men can be found by hovering over the “Information” tab and selecting “For Men” from the drop-down menu. The sections include: “Easy Stretches to Relax the Pelvis”; “Pelvic Pain in Men”; “Pelvic Floor Muscle Relaxation for Men”; “Male Pelvic Pain: Self-help Strategies”; and “One Man’s Story of Chronic Pelvic Pain”. Two hyperlinks to further resources follow:

- <http://www.pelvicpain.org.au/information/men/pelvic-floor-muscle-relaxation-men/>
- <http://www.pelvicpain.org.au/information/pelvic-pains/understanding-long-term-chronic-pelvic-pain/>

### **www.pelvicpainrehab.com**

Founded in 2006 by American pelvic pain specialists Stephanie Prendergast and Elizabeth Akincilar-Rummer, the Pelvic Health and Rehabilitation Center is a physical therapy provider that has four clinics in California. Select “Male Pelvic Health” from the “Services” tab on the home page to find an overview of typical symptoms and associated diagnoses, along with a description of evaluation and treatment techniques. The archived and searchable blog pages are perhaps the most useful resource here. Click on “Blog” and type “male” into the search box. Some of the informative and sensitively written male-specific articles are found at the following hyperlinks:

- <http://www.pelvicpainrehab.com/male-pelvic-pain/2834/is-it-still-prostatitis-if-my-cultures-are-negative/>
- <http://www.pelvicpainrehab.com/male-pelvic-pain/2911/a-cock-in-the-hen-house-a-look-inside-the-male-anatomy/>
- <http://www.pelvicpainrehab.com/male-pelvic-pain/2322/men-kegels/>
- <http://www.pelvicpainrehab.com/male-pelvic-pain/2140/case-male-pelvic-pain-painful-sex/>
- <http://www.pelvicpainrehab.com/female-pelvic-pain/2233/pelvic-pain-sex-great-bedfellows/>

### **www.pelvicpain.org**

The International Pelvic Pain Society provides online unisex brochures about pelvic pain as well as tips for exercising with chronic pelvic

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pain (CPP). These resources can be accessed via a link to an article on the Pelvic Health and Rehabilitation Center website mentioned above. The following hyperlink takes you directly to the CPP brochure:

<http://pelvicpain.org/docs/patients/patient-education-brochure.aspx>

### **www.pelvicpainhelp.com**

The National Center for Pelvic Pain Research (NCPPr) is devoted to research into pelvic pain syndromes in men and women, and treatment of these conditions using the Wise–Anderson Protocol. Pelvic pain syndromes treated at the NCPPr include prostatitis, pelvic floor dysfunction, levator ani syndrome, chronic pelvic pain syndrome, interstitial cystitis, urethral syndrome and pelvic floor myalgia. The Wise–Anderson Protocol (also known as the Stanford Protocol) was developed at the Department of Urology, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA, by David Wise PhD and Rodney Anderson MD, who have published a book about it (Wise & Anderson 2015). This website has been included in recognition of the importance of the psychological element of chronic pain management. The site supports links to full-text articles, videos and the history of the Stanford Protocol. The blog pages contain recent articles of interest including the following:

- <http://www.pelvicpainhelp.com/using-modern-concepts-like-airplane-mode-computer-freeze-up-and-default-setting-to-explain-the-importance-of-lowering-sympathetic-nervous-system-arousal-in-the-successful-treatment-of-chr/>
- <http://www.pelvicpainhelp.com/chronic-pelvic-pain-syndrome-reduction-of-medication-use-after-pelvic-floor-physical-therapy-with-an-internal-myofascial-trigger-point-wand/>
- <http://www.pelvicpainhelp.com/successfully-treating-the-stress-dimension-of-prostatitis-chronic-pelvic-pain-pelvic-floor-dysfunction-and-other-pelvic-pain-syndromes/>
- <http://www.pelvicpainhelp.com/the-treatment-of-prostatitis-and-taking-hot-baths/>

### **www.pelvicphysiotherapy.com**

Maeve Whelan is a well-known Irish physiotherapist who specializes in pelvic floor dysfunction. On her website, Pelvic Physiotherapy, she shares resources for both patients and professionals. Patients are helped to master relaxation of the

PFMs as a prerequisite for progressing through a strengthening programme. For professionals, the principles and techniques of manual therapy to release overactive PFMs are explained. To find the male-specific pages, go to the “Pelvic Floor” drop-down tab, hover over “Male PF dysfunction” and then choose between “Bladder Control & Prostate” and “Male Chronic Pelvic Pain” for patient-friendly practical advice.

### **www.yourpelvicfloor.co.uk**

Although there appear to have been no recent updates, Professor Grace Dorey’s website, Your Pelvic Floor, remains a solid resource. It will help men to understand post-prostatectomy urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction, and also teach them how to perform PFM exercises. The site is easily navigated using the menu tabs with drop-down choices on the home page.

### **www.hon.ch**

The Health on the Net Foundation was established to encourage the dissemination of high-quality health information, and to facilitate access to recent and relevant data for patients, professionals and the general public. The HONcode is a trustworthy ethical framework for medical and health-related information that is available on the Internet. Certification indicates



**Figure 1.** Seal representing Health on the Net Foundation Code of Conduct (HONcode) certification.

compliance with this code. Of the websites featured above, the following currently hold HONcode certification:

- Healthline ([www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com));
- Patient ([patient.info](http://patient.info));
- WebMD ([www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)); and
- Andrology Australia ([www.andrologyaustralia.org](http://www.andrologyaustralia.org)).

### **Reference**

Wise D. & Anderson R. U. (2015) *A Headache in the Pelvis: A New Understanding and Treatment for Chronic Pelvic Pain Syndromes*, 6<sup>th</sup> edn. National Center for Pelvic Pain Research, Occidental, CA.