

Editorial

At the beginning of another 3-year cycle at the POGP journal, it is with a mixture of anxiety and excitement that we take over from outgoing clinical editor Shirley Bustard. She has filled this position so comprehensively that it will take two of us to attempt to step into the gap that she leaves! It is with sadness that the team say goodbye to Shirley, and we all wish her luck in her new role as POGP research officer. She has set high standards at the journal, and will continue to do so in her new position.

As ever, this Spring edition has been produced by the dedicated team comprised of the Journal Subcommittee, managing editor Andrew Wilson, and of course, Shirley herself, which has allowed us to learn the ropes with a robust template already in place. We would like to thank the team for their work and support in producing both the printed copy and the extended online content.

We are also grateful to the speakers from last year's POGP Annual Conference in Cardiff, many of whom found the time to convert their talks into excellent articles so that those of you who were unable to attend could still benefit from their insights. In the 2018 Margie Polden Memorial Lecture (pp. 9–14), Julie Cornish discusses the difficulties faced by women with faecal incontinence. That many of these women suffer from this very disabling condition for many years without seeking professional help – despite there being a range of treatments that could alleviate their symptoms – is a sobering thought indeed. As professional groups start to work together, and patient groups become more involved in building our support networks, we must hope that this will improve the routes to accessing services.

Myra Robson's commentary on the mesh controversy (pp. 5–8) is not only timely, but also vital for both those of us working in pelvic health and also our colleagues in musculoskeletal physiotherapy. As she writes, these women are likely to present more and more frequently in clinic with a variety of symptoms. It is not only important that we recognize the problem, but we must also further our understanding of how their individual situations may have arisen.

Given the recent pause in surgical treatment for stress urinary incontinence, it may be helpful to turn to this edition's product reviews

(pp. 63–66). The authors offer a comparative review of continence supports (i.e. urethral splints). This is a practical guide to the most widely available devices for both clinicians and patients that addresses both ease of use and comparative costings.

When considering our goals as editors of *JPOGP*, we must refer to Shirley again, as we have done so often since we started. Her ambition to encourage more of the membership to publish will continue in her new role, and we will ensure that we maintain the good current links with the tutors at the University of Bradford, who encourage students to publish high-quality work in the journal. This is an excellent opportunity for aspiring researchers to start their professional portfolio by publishing their work in a peer-reviewed journal. While the peer-review process is rigorous, we aim to be supportive throughout it, and we will give constructive feedback. We hope that we can encourage more students to consider sharing their work in *JPOGP* during their doctoral training or Master's degree.

It is also important that clinicians also reflect on the work that they currently do, and recognize that their observations are often of benefit to the wider community. It is important not to underestimate the relevance to others of your work, and this is especially true even if the findings seem to show negative results. It is easy to think that only positive outcomes have merit, but negative ones are an answer in themselves and certainly worth sharing. This could be in the form of a case study or an audit, both of which we would encourage our members to share. Writing for a journal can be a time-consuming process, and quite daunting for first-timers. The guidelines for writing case reports can be found on pages 83–85. However, contributors could perhaps expand their approach beyond the standardized format, and embrace the world of infographics or a similarly innovative writing style.

Shirley's second aim was to promote *JPOGP* and extend its reach, which she has done throughout her tenure. We hope to build on this momentum by exploring Biljana's links to the Swiss health associations, and researchers at the universities of Lausanne, Bern and Interlaken. Innovation and progress require diversity of thought, and through fostering closer links with

similar organizations abroad, we aim to increase the range of the journal by publishing new insights and perspectives.

The third goal set by Shirley was the pursuit of an impact factor (IF). While *JPOGP* is already highly regarded, this is something that will help it to gain wider recognition. An IF is seen as useful in academia because it helps authors to decide where to publish their work. It is not an easy thing for a journal to achieve, and the process takes some time. An IF is calculated by dividing the number of citations made in the current year by the source items published in the preceding 2 years. This means that, as an IF increases, more high-quality research articles will be submitted and published, and therefore, more of these are likely to be cited. We are currently indexed by the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature, and the Allied and Complementary Medicine Database. However, if possible, we would like this to extend to the US National Center for Biotechnology Information databases and the Web of Science indexing service in order to raise our profile within academia, and assist with the IF of the journal.

On a final and important note, we must highlight the difficult decision that was made at the end of last year to cancel the POGP Annual Conference in 2019 (see below). This was a very hard decision to make, and it was not taken

lightly by the Executive Committee. It affects all the membership, not just those who are fortunate enough to attend, since we are able to publish the important contributions of the Conference speakers in the journal. We have included an interview with Jane Lofts, the previous chairman of the National Conference Organizing Committee in "Notes and News" (pp. 77–78), and we encourage members to put themselves forward to take on this exciting role. It is always a little frightening to volunteer for something new, but remember, it is the challenges we meet that often enrich our lives. We are a caring organization, and there are always other members on hand to provide advice and support.

As the new editors of the journal, we believe that there has never been a better time to be involved in POGP. The body of academic research and literature relating to pelvic, obstetric and gynaecological physiotherapy is growing increasingly quickly, and our clinical skills are continuing to expand. Our vision is to make *JPOGP* a more-visible academic journal, and to play a formative role in enhancing our members' clinical and academic portfolios. With our teamwork, passion and innovative approaches, we are confident that the journal will continue to improve its IF, and attract more members to join POGP in these challenging but exciting times.

Gillian Campbell & Biljana Kennaway

Conference statement

You may remember that POGP issued a call for a full member to chair the National Conference Organizing Committee (NCOC) a few weeks ago. Unfortunately, no one has volunteered for the position. Although a keen committee is in place and the conference management company is supportive, the Executive Committee regret to announce that the 2019 Annual Conference will not be held since there is no NCOC chair. This decision has not been taken lightly, and numerous other options have been explored.

The plan is to host a conference in 2020, but the location and date have yet to be confirmed. We are also taking advice about the 2019 Annual General Meeting. If you would like to be involved in the NCOC, then feel free to contact me (e-mail: k.mann@nhs.net).

Please also remember that we still provide other opportunities for continuing professional development throughout the year. These take the form of our short courses, and the networking sessions that are part of the local meetings arranged by your area representative.

If anyone would like to contact me regarding this decision, please e-mail me or get in touch via the POGP microsite.

Katie Mann
Chairman