

## Notes and news

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### **Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary**

In February 2019, I began the fourth module of the University of Bradford Rehabilitation Studies: Continence for Physiotherapists MSc. This unit is entitled “Leadership for Advanced Practitioners”. The previous modules had been very clinical, which had greatly improved my knowledge and skills with patients. However, learning more about leadership and management particularly appealed to me since I had recently taken on the lead role in a pelvic health service.

Because I was self-funding the majority of my Master’s degree, I looked into the Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary after reading an article on how to apply for it in the seventieth anniversary edition of the journal (Mann 2018). This award gives financial assistance to physiotherapists who want to attend courses and conferences, conduct research, or promote pelvic health. The bursary is named in memory of Dame Josephine Barnes, a past president of the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (now POGP), who did so much to promote the health of women.

The application process is explained on the website (POGP 2020), and is fairly straightforward. I completed a form, describing the type of learning that I wanted to do, and the reason why it would be beneficial to my practice and, ultimately, my patients. I was delighted to learn that my application had been successful, and this allowed me to pursue the module.

A variety of health professionals were in attendance, and although some had roles as advanced clinical practitioners, the course is designed for practitioners who are working at an advanced level within their clinical area, or as part of an extended role. The tutors had a wealth of knowledge relevant to the subject, all having worked on change projects throughout healthcare organizations. The module was very well run: it had clear objectives, and the teaching was very specific with regard to the marking criteria. We were assessed on the basis of a 4000-word assignment and completion of a competency framework.

The aim of the module is to encourage students to explore and critically analyse not only the role of the advanced practitioner as a leader, but also

as a role model for others. It is designed to help students develop skills applicable to leading innovation and change, while also understanding the challenges facing service delivery.

The objectives of the course included being able to: understand the relationship between leadership and management roles; evaluate theories of effective leadership; and analyse developments within these roles in relation to health and social care. It involved analysis of various theories and approaches to service improvement, innovation and change, and the application of these to the healthcare setting in order to effectively design and lead services in the future. Underpinning this, the role of the advanced practitioner was considered as being that of a leader in the process of initiating change to create a sustainable healthcare system.

This module gave me some extremely useful tools to use in my everyday practice. Although I do not have a formal management role, working within the specialist area of pelvic health means that I am involved in service evaluation, development and change, often in a leading role on the local level. My responsibilities also include training newer members of staff to work in this role.

Therefore, I found the “Leadership for Advanced Practitioners” module invaluable. It encouraged me to evaluate how I approach different aspects of my job, and empower others to work with me in a more-efficient and sustainable way. The course has helped me to understand the way in which an organization and the people in it work at both the local and national levels, which are both equally important. It also gave me the knowledge and skills that I needed in order to approach change in a logical and organized way, and the confidence to lead others in change projects. Unlike the previous times when I was involved in or led changes to services, I now have a systematic approach to follow, and can utilize many tools and theories to plan, implement and evaluate modifications.

This module has been incredibly helpful to both my practice and the service that I work in, and I would highly recommend a course of this type to all practitioners. It would not have been possible for me to do this without the support of POGP and the Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary,

and I would like to offer my sincere thanks for being given this opportunity. Anyone who is unsure about how to apply for this award should take comfort in the knowledge that the process is simple. It can be used for a variety of forms of continuing professional development. The Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary has already helped many members to achieve their ambitions within pelvic health. It is fantastic that this resource is available to the membership of POGP.

**Emma Bakes**

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## Reference

Mann K. (2018) Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary: applying for financial assistance for courses, conferences and research. *Journal of Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy* **123** (Autumn), 79.

Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy (POGP) (2020) *Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary*. [WWW document.] URL <https://pogp.csp.org.uk/content/pogp-bursaries-and-awards#Dame>

## Area representatives

### London

Virginia Rivers Bulkeley and Colette Pollard have been the London area representatives for the past couple of years (Fig. 1). They have both very much enjoyed the role, but are now stepping down in order to embark on furthering their MSc work. The London POGP team, Dee, Holly and Orla, are integral to the support provided for the London area representative. They also help



**Figure 1.** Colette Pollard and Virginia Rivers Bulkeley (second from and last on the right, respectively), outgoing POGP area representatives for London.

to promote POGP, pelvic health, and interesting and varied talks for members in London.

The London committee has two important aims: providing education for specialists, and promoting pelvic health among the future generation of specialists. They will continue to achieve this by organizing regular evening talks across central London. These are delivered by a variety of colleagues who work in the multi-disciplinary team, and cover a wide range of topics. In the past year, there have been talks on sex in the postnatal year, the return to running postnatal advice (see p. 73) and the modern midwife. The committee also provide information about upcoming local and national POGP events, workshops, and interesting literature in a quarterly newsletter for members in the London area. Additionally, they have recently embarked on a mission to promote pelvic health, and provide junior and student physiotherapists with some introductory knowledge. They will continue to provide London members with the best forum for learning and interaction across our specialty that they can.

**Colette Pollard**

*Area Representative*

### South

I am very pleased to be the new area representative for the South region (Fig. 2). I spent my twenties pursuing a career in the British Army, but decided to retrain in 2005 and have worked in pelvic health since 2012. I left the National Health Service in 2016 in order to set up my own clinic, Physio Down Below ([www.physiodownbelow.com](http://www.physiodownbelow.com)).



**Figure 2.** Alex Lambert, POGP area representative for the South.

com), and now work as an independent practitioner. I am pleased to be part of a wider team of POGP physiotherapists who all work together to share evidence and ideas in a collective effort to be the best healthcare professionals that we can be.

We held our first meeting in November 2019 in Aldbourne, Wiltshire. We discussed our experiences of men's health and how we plan on moving forward as a group. A meeting in Bristol in March 2020 to discuss bladder pain syndrome and chronic pain has been provisionally arranged. We will aim to hold two meetings a year at this point unless interest dictates otherwise. Please get in touch with me if you would like to come along to a meeting, even if you are not based in the region (e-mail: alex@physiodownbelow.com).

**Alex Lambert**  
Area Representative

## Returning to running following pregnancy

The question of how best to advise women about returning to running following pregnancy has been identified as a gap in our knowledge of clinical practice. Gráinne Donnelly and Emma Brockwell, who are both members of POGP, teamed up with Tom Goom, a specialist running injury physiotherapist, to take the initiative in tackling this topic. The result is *Returning to Running Postnatal* (Goom *et al.* 2019), which was published online in March 2019 and is free to download (Goom 2019).

Running is becoming an increasingly popular form of exercise, especially with women (RunRepeat.com & IAAF 2019). Research continues to enhance our understanding of the postpartum recovery period, and the steps that women need to take in order to make a safe return to high-impact activities such as running following giving birth have been identified.

In an interview with Lori Forner that was released as an episode of *The Pelvic Health Podcast* (Forner 2019), the authors of *Returning to Running Postnatal* (Goom *et al.* 2019) revealed the passion and commitment that they share with regard to advancing the service that healthcare professionals currently provide for this group of women. According to Tom, Gráinne and Emma, there is not enough good-quality research in this area, but their guide assimilates the best advice for evidence-based practice and relate this to their own clinical experience.

The aims of the authors were to start a conversation about this topic in the professional community, and identify the need for further research in this area. Additional objectives included collecting feedback from clinicians on its successful application and inviting comments for discussion. It is particularly exciting to note that the guide will be trialled by one of the authors, Gráinne Donnelly, who recently gave birth. This will certainly provide us with a unique and useful perspective!

*Returning to Running Postnatal* (Goom *et al.* 2019) was primarily written for healthcare professionals, and deals with both musculoskeletal and pelvic health. However, it has also found an audience among fitness instructors and patients.

We plan to feature an interview with Tom, Gráinne and Emma in the Autumn 2020 edition of the journal (No. 127). The authors will discuss the trials and tribulations involved in writing and publishing their guide, and explore how their project has progressed.

It would be interesting to receive feedback from our readers about *Returning to Running Postnatal* (Goom *et al.* 2019), and we would like to start a discussion about its use. Please write to us so that the conversation can begin.

**Biljana Kennaway**  
Assistant Editor

## References

- Forner L. (2019) *Return to Running Post-natal Guidelines with Tom Goom, Grainne Donnelly and Emma Brockwell*. [WWW document.] URL <https://www.loriforner.com/single-post/2019/06/19/Return-to-running-post-natal-guidelines-with-Tom-Goom-Grainne-Donnelly-and-Emma-Brockwell>
- Goom T. (2019) *Returning to Running Post-Pregnancy, Free Guide for Clinicians*. [WWW document.] URL <https://www.running-physio.com/postnatal-guide/>
- Goom T., Donnelly G. & Brockwell E. (2019) *Returning to Running Postnatal – Guidelines for Medical, Health and Fitness Professionals Managing This Population*. [WWW document.] URL [https://gallery.mailchimp.com/8840453d8807b816fd1ebf287/files/24704332-123b-4ea9-8587-0dde0f838553/Returning\\_to\\_running\\_postnatal\\_guideline\\_for\\_medical\\_health\\_and\\_fitness\\_professionals\\_managing\\_this\\_population\\_ACPSEM\\_Endorsed\\_.01.pdf?utm\\_source=mailchimp&utm\\_campaign=0300d8c8e1f0&utm\\_medium=page](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/8840453d8807b816fd1ebf287/files/24704332-123b-4ea9-8587-0dde0f838553/Returning_to_running_postnatal_guideline_for_medical_health_and_fitness_professionals_managing_this_population_ACPSEM_Endorsed_.01.pdf?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_campaign=0300d8c8e1f0&utm_medium=page)
- RunRepeat.com & the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) (2019) *The State of Running 2019*. [WWW document.] URL [https://runrepeat.com/state-of-running?fbclid=IwAR3x\\_Z4MeyKxCALBwOTBL8uSqcAnz64s5H\\_Lh8aGHbsm72GxRz\\_G4Su1zcU](https://runrepeat.com/state-of-running?fbclid=IwAR3x_Z4MeyKxCALBwOTBL8uSqcAnz64s5H_Lh8aGHbsm72GxRz_G4Su1zcU)

## Infographic guidelines

Most readers will remember the saddle pain infographic by Bianca Broadbent that we featured on the back cover of the Autumn 2019 edition of the journal (Fig. 3). We think that you will agree that this was an exciting new addition to our regular content. This short item is intended to make you aware that we are actively pursuing infographic submissions.

It is important to note that our guidelines for infographics may be a little different to those that you will be familiar with if you have published on social media. This is because of the journal's layout. This is a new format for us – we are still working towards deciding what is optimal in print – but the guidelines that have been established to date are listed below.

Submitted infographics need to fit a single A4 page of the journal. Therefore, these should be in portrait orientation, and allow a 3-mm bleed and a 12-mm border.

Since the interior pages of the journal are printed in black-and-white, colour should not be used unless the infographic is intended for the back cover.

For text within the graphic, choose a sans-serif typeface such as Arial, and limit the number of fonts used. The main title and image headings should be in 40-point bold and 12-point bold, respectively. Other text within the graphic should be in 10-point roman, and the total word count of the graphic should be no more than 250. The author's full name and preferred correspondence address should be in 12-point roman, and be placed at the bottom left of the infographic.

Accompanying text (i.e. the abstract) should consist of a single paragraph of up to 400 words in 12-point roman.

Up to five references can be included. These should be Harvard style, in 8 point and aligned left.

All infographics will be subject to peer review, as are most other submissions.

A PowerPoint template is available from the editors on request. We would strongly encourage potential contributors to use this since it employs the format that we require for print.

We look forward to receiving your work!

**Gillian Campbell**  
Editor



Figure 3. "Saddle issues in female cyclists" infographic by Bianca Broadbent.

## Female athlete health

At the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, half of the athletes in the British team will be women, but as little as 3% of research into training includes female subjects. The science and sports medicine team at the English Institute of Sport have been working on ways of improving the health and performance of our female Olympic and Paralympic athletes through a number of initiatives. One of is the SmartHER programme, which aims to educate both athletes and support staff about the potential performance impact of all areas of female athlete health.

Part of this initiative includes a roadshow for athletes that aims to:

- help them better understand their menstrual cycle, and the effects, both positive and negative, that it may have on their performance;
- to educate them about the importance of adequate and appropriate breast support; and
- to highlight the issue of pelvic floor health.

We are working with a number of academic organizations in order to improve awareness of all areas of female athlete health and performance, and hope to liaise with POGP to reduce the impact that pelvic floor dysfunction may have on our athletes. We would be keen to hear from any practitioners who are involved in this area,



**Figure 4.** Elaine Miller (second from the right) with other winners at the 2019 Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Awards.

particularly in relation to elite-level athletes. Please contact Dr Anita Biswas (e-mail: [anita.biswas@eis2win.co.uk](mailto:anita.biswas@eis2win.co.uk)).

**Dr Anita Biswas**  
*Senior Sports Physician/  
 Consultant in Sport and Exercise Medicine  
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### POGP research competition

This is an early reminder that a competition for both platform and poster presentations will be held at the POGP Conference in York on 2–3 October 2020. Full details and entry forms will be available on the website when it is launched later this year, so please watch this space! I would like to encourage as many physiotherapists as possible to enter since this is a great platform to share your work. It is a particularly good opportunity for any members who are new to designing posters or speaking for the first time. I look forward to the launch of this competition. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions (e-mail: [Shirley.bustard@nhs.net](mailto:Shirley.bustard@nhs.net)).

**Shirley Bustard**  
*Research Officer*

### Elaine Miller awarded Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Fellowship

We extend our congratulations to Elaine Miller on being awarded a Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Fellowship for promoting pelvic, obstetric and gynaecological physiotherapy to the general public through the medium of humour (Fig. 4). She has promoted our specialty in the national media and at various conferences, making the sensitive subject of pelvic floor dysfunction an easier topic for the public to raise with health professionals when they need help.

The award citation acknowledges “her substantive and innovative contribution to health promotion and advancing the knowledge and understanding of the importance of pelvic health to the general public, including hard to reach communities” (CSP 2019).

Well done, Elaine!

**Katie Mann**  
*Chairman*

### Reference

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) (2019) *CSP Announces 2019 Award Winners*. [WWW document.] URL <https://www.csp.org.uk/news/2019-11-05-csp-announces-2019-award-winners>