

NEWS

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GPIAG News

GPIAG Website

The GPIAG launched its new website at the beginning of October 2008. As well as offering a new livery with visual images the site has been made more user-friendly and easier to navigate. We really value your feedback so please let us know what you think of the new site by completing the online survey available on the website at <http://www.gpiag.org>.

Resources and Materials

GPIAG Online Quick Guide to the BTS/SIGN Management of Asthma Guideline

The preliminary response to our online quick guide to the management of asthma has been excellent. Of those who have completed the survey the average score was 46% – demonstrating the need for tools such as ours which provides concise and relevant guidance to healthcare professionals working in primary care with people who have asthma. To access the survey and materials please go to http://www.gpiag.org/asthmaguide/asthma_guide_home.php. For a fuller summary of the recent BTS/SIGN guideline, see the newly-published *PCRJ* summary supplement which is being sent out with this mailing.

New Protocols, PGDs and COPD checklist

Members of the GPIAG are welcome to visit our website to download new protocols, Patient Group Directives (PGDs) and other tools especially designed for nurses working in primary care respiratory medicine. These new materials offer support to nurses in the management of acute asthma and COPD and include PGDs for the use of salbutamol in reversibility testing and in acute asthma. All materials provided by GPIAG must be authorised by the relevant authority in your primary care organisation before being implemented. To access these tools please go to http://www.gpiag.org/resources/nurse_tools_m.php

Opinion Sheets

At the GPIAG national conference we launched ten new opinion sheets on a variety of topics. To access the opinion sheets go to <http://www.gpiag.org/pubs/opinionsheets.php>

GPIAG Conference Feedback

After our best conference ever we feature two reports below from delegates who attended the event for your information. If you were unlucky enough not to be able to attend and you are a member of the GPIAG you can view and listen to webcasts of the main plenary sessions at http://www.gpiag.org/conferences/2008_webcasts_m.php

Report 1 - Dr Hilary Pinnock

A packed audience at the opening session of the GPIAG annual conference 2008 were advised by both Dr Iain Small and Professor Martyn Partridge that '*The world is changing – and we need to change with it*'.

The Innovation Zone provided clear evidence that GPIAG members were ready for the challenge. Salutory messages from audits of current services were adjacent to descriptions of new initiatives which provided practical ideas for developing local services and augured well for the future of respiratory care in the community. The showcase presentations by the Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh stimulated discussion on topics as diverse as how teenagers cope with the risk of anaphylaxis, the management of anxiety and depression in people with asthma, and what patients need of respiratory services to support self-care.

In line with the conference theme of 'coming of age' the major symposia were designed around three case studies which reflected a 'cradle to grave' perspective on respiratory care. The 'child who has never been well' symposium provided an opportunity to discuss the pitfalls of diagnosing asthma in pre-school children as well as a reminder of the dangers of co-morbid peanut allergy and asthma. The session on 'the adult who has never been ill' dealt with two common, but overlooked problems: the misery of rhinitis and the hidden burden of occupational asthma. The session on 'the elderly person who is gasping and coughing' focused on the importance of early diagnosis of respiratory malignancies, and the challenge of addressing the palliative care needs of severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

The sessions on practical topics such as oximetry, computerised self-management plans, inhaler devices and allergy testing proved as popular as ever, and this year workshops on 'how to read a paper' and 'getting started in research' offered an academic perspective. The changing policy environment attracted interest: there was standing room only at the Department of Health workshop on the COPD National Service Framework, and English delegates appreciated learning from the Scottish system of Managed Care Networks.

This year marked the 21st birthday of the GPIAG, and delegates were reminded of the responsibilities that follow with 'coming of age'. From the presentations, workshops and discussions at this conference, there is little doubt that the GPIAG can look forward to an exciting, albeit challenging, adulthood.

Report 2 - Carol Stonham, Primary Care Nurse

I placed myself in the main lecture room for most of the conference as the sessions there were of interest and relevance to me. The paediatric session ran smoothly, nicely brought together by the case study running throughout, as did the adult sessions.

These sessions were more representative of respiratory care generally than previous years when the focus has been more on asthma and COPD. It made me think in more detail about differential diagnosis and blocked the tunnel vision we can all have when seeing patients routinely in general practice.

IPCRG News

External Affairs

Following a productive meeting in Berlin on the **Brussels Declaration on asthma**,

1. A paper will be published in December in the ERJ
2. Lobbying will continue on the update of EMEA guidance on asthma key issues include endpoints beyond spirometry, and a special approach to paediatrics. Mike Thomas is our lead.
3. The pilot phase of the **Helping Asthma in Real Patients (HARP)** study, led by David Price, has completed its first audits. It is attracting interest at government level in Ireland, and its rollout to other European countries - in conjunction with EFA and Ga2len - is supported by the members of the Brussels Declaration. We hope to be able to involve other IPCRG members in due course.

Research

1. We were delighted to welcome Prof Lan from Vietnam to our Research sub-committee to hear about the development of her work supported by the e-faculty. Niels Chavannes' second visit to Vietnam will occur in mid-November.
2. Updated research needs statements on COPD and asthma are being prepared for publication. Thys Van Der Molen is leading on COPD, and Karin Lisspers on asthma. Contact the Secretariat if you want to know more. Statements on allergic rhinitis, smoking cessation and infectious disease including pandemic flu are also in preparation.
3. **A research-only IPCRG meeting will be held on 5 June 2009.** More details to follow - but get the date in your diary! Purpose: to present research protocols and early findings for discussion with peers as well as presentation of findings of both treatment and service delivery research. The best abstracts will be published in the *PCRJ*.
4. We are supporting a consortium bid to the European Commission Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) to investigate biomarkers for severe asthma in a project called U BIOPRED. Mike Thomas and John Watkins are representing the IPCRG in the planning phase.
5. The first IPCRG-funded research study is now completed, was presented at the ERS meeting in Berlin, and has been accepted for publication by *Chest*: "Antibiotic prescribing and outcomes of lower respiratory tract infection in UK primary care". C. Winchester, *et al.* (Aberdeen, United Kingdom).

Conferences

1. Videos of Seville are online: hyperlink to <http://www.ipcrg.respinet.com/> and summary of IPCRG and ATS hyperlink to http://newsweaver.co.uk/horizonmedical/index_000294383.cfm

2. The website for Toronto 2010 is now live: Toronto 26-29 May 2010 website <http://www.ipcrg-toronto2010.org/>

3. After successful sessions at Wonca Europe in Istanbul, we are working with the organisers of Wonca Europe's 2009 meeting in Basel to develop at least one respiratory session. If you are interested in participating please let the Secretariat know.

Asthma control

1. The latest paper from the IPCRG is in press with *Respiratory Medicine*, now online at [http://www.resmedjournal.com/article/S0954-6111\(08\)00294-1/abstract](http://www.resmedjournal.com/article/S0954-6111(08)00294-1/abstract) "Achieving asthma control in practice: Understanding the reasons for poor control" (please note this and other key publications can all be accessed from the IPCRG home page - top peer-reviewed papers from IPCRG and partners box www.theipcrg.org). A slide set will be available shortly.
2. At the ERS Linda Kemp showed results supporting the *Respiratory Medicine* paper. We are planning a meeting on inhaler devices for the first quarter of 2009.

Resources

1. We are preparing some material for **World COPD Day** for your use (19 November). Meanwhile, if you are planning any activities, please log them with GOLD - we suggest that you enter data as IPCRG - [country name] to demonstrate primary care activity <http://www.goldcopd.org/ActivityForm.asp?I1=3&I2=2#3>
2. Ga2len has just announced that the French Epidemiological Study on the Genetics and Environment of Asthma (EGEA study) has just published results on the *NEJM* website, www.nejm.org <<http://www.nejm.org>> It identified the effect of 17q21 genetic variants that confer increased risk of early-onset (4 years or younger) asthma. This risk is further enhanced by exposure to environmental tobacco smoke in early life.

Recruitment of board director/trustee with governance expertise to stand for election as treasurer

We seek an individual with strong governance experience to co-opt to our Board of directors with immediate effect.

We anticipate that the successful applicant will use their experience on the Board to put themselves in position to stand for election as Treasurer at the 2009 Annual General Meeting when the present incumbent, Dr Ron Tomlins, stands down. If you are interested in this role, please go to <http://www.theipcrg.org/about/recruitment.php>, read the information, and email the IPCRG Business Manager, Carmen Morris-Coulson on carmen@planmylife.co.uk, with the required information by 19 November 2008.

The application process will not involve a face-to-face interview but will be conducted electronically and by telephone, which is our usual way of operating.

Siân Williams, Executive Officer

Available online at <http://www.thepcrj.org>