



GPIAG/IPCRG News

GPIAG News

GPIAG National Conference, 8th–9th July 2005, Wychwood Park, Crewe, Cheshire

This year's GPIAG Conference was titled 'Delivering Optimal Respiratory Care' and the varied programme of events certainly lived up to expectations. Superbly organised by Tricia Bryant and the secretariat team, Committee member Hilary Pinnock, and Anne Smith our Chief Executive, the conference programme was inspirational and varied and in such a relaxed environment, education and professional development becomes an absolute pleasure. I can also report that the social events and ambience were well up to the exceptionally high standards which our standing GPIAG members have come to expect. . . .

Steve Holmes, the GPIAG Chairman, gave an excellent introduction on the Friday morning, and this was followed by presentations from senior GPIAG members Dermot Ryan, Mark Levy, David Price and Rupert Jones, which set the scene by asking whether or not we were meeting the needs of our patients who have asthma, occupational asthma, allergic disease and COPD. After morning coffee there were several different sessions available for delegates: a COPD symposium which included excellent presentations from Karen Heslop, Kevin Gruffydd-Jones, and Scott Murray; oral presentations of selected abstracts chaired by Aziz Sheikh; and two workshops – one on allergic rhinitis facilitated by Mike Thomas and one on acute asthma chaired by Marilyn Eveleigh. Further workshops on spirometry, skin prick testing and inhaler devices followed, given by Marguerite Wintle from Ferraris, Samantha Walker, and Stephanie Wolfe respectively.

The GPIAG Annual General Meeting took place at 13.00 on the Friday lunchtime and was well attended by GPIAG members. The Chairman of the Trustees, Dr David Bellamy, introduced the meeting, and then handed over to Steve Holmes, the GPIAG Chairman, and Anne Smith, the GPIAG Chief Executive, who gave their annual report. Several important changes to the GPIAG Memorandum and Articles of Association were confirmed by the membership, as outlined below.

After lunch the Conference continued in a similar vein: a symposium on specialist clinicians (GPs or Practitioners with a Special Interest (CPWSIs or PWSIs) and expert patients which included presentations from Hilary Pinnock, Noel O'Kelly, Ann Andrews and Richard Popplewell; oral presentations of selected abstracts chaired by Samantha Walker; a workshop on Wheezy infants facilitated by Paul Stephenson; and a consensus meeting on pulmonary rehabilitation facilitated by Rupert Jones. After tea there were further presentations from Steve Holmes and Rob Horne, as well as an excellent speaker from Asthma UK, in the session on 'concordance in asthma care', and there were further abstract presentations chaired by Daryl Freeman. An additional spirometry workshop was given by Marc McDonnell from Micromedical.

Three satellite symposia took place throughout the conference, sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline, Boehringer Ingelheim/Pfizer, and Schering Plough. All were well attended, stimulating, and valuable, and, as ever, we are enormously grateful to our core sponsors and sponsors of the GPIAG Conference.

Dinner on the Friday evening was an informal barbeque, a very relaxed affair, with a superb hog-roast and other delectable delights, together with suitable quantities of alcoholic beverage to

help the food go down. After dinner, those of us fortunate enough to cram into one of the workshop rooms for Mark Levy's wildlife slide presentation were treated to a stunning display of beautiful wildlife photography which was really inspiring.

Saturday morning started just about on time (!), and after the Boehringer satellite symposium during breakfast there were further 'breakout' sessions: an extremely good symposium on rhinitis and allergy chaired by Dermot Ryan with presentations from Aziz Sheikh, Mike Thomas, and Samantha Walker; a workshop on the differential diagnosis of asthma and COPD given by Stephanie Wolfe; a further spirometry workshop given by Susan Archer from Vitalograph; and a session on GPwSIs given by Kevin Gruffydd-Jones. These were followed by an excellent keynote symposium on implementing guidelines and the way in which the new General Medical Services (GMS) contract and its Quality Outcome Framework (QOF) targets for asthma and COPD have changed respiratory disease management in UK general practice; superb presentations by Monica Fletcher, Malcolm Campbell, David Price and Hilary Pinnock preceded the Balloon debate on the QOF/GMS targets which was expertly chaired by Malcolm Campbell who encouraged many vocal contributions from the floor.... Various topics were debated, and the motion on each occasion was whether or not the GPIAG should propose the criterion for inclusion in the QOF targets. Whether or not this riotous but enjoyable form of debate manages to influence the respiratory policy decision makers, we can only wait and see! A fitting end to an extremely enjoyable and fruitful conference. [Conference Report – Paul Stephenson, with contributions from Noel O'Kelly.]

National Service Framework (NSF) for COPD

The GPIAG is delighted that the Chief Medical Officer has highlighted the burden of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in his annual report, On the State of the Public Health, published 19 July 2005 – <http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/57/86/04115786.pdf>. We fully support the recommendation that a National Service Framework (NSF) for COPD should be formulated. This comes at a time when the Department of Health has completed a scoping review of respiratory disease and the Healthcare Commission has embarked on an improvement review of provision for COPD patients. It therefore seems that respiratory disease, which has been largely ignored by national policy makers for many years, is finally coming centre stage.

The GPIAG is working closely with the British Lung Foundation, British Thoracic Society and others to ensure that this is an opportunity for an increased focus on all respiratory disease, not just COPD, and to ensure that practical primary care issues are addressed so that respiratory disease management is given the priority it requires at local PCT level and that uniformly high standards of care are available for patients.

For an update on the most recent developments please see <http://www.gpiag.org/news/index.php>.

New GPIAG Membership Schemes

We would like to thank everyone again who took the time to respond to our survey on the proposed new membership scheme. The survey results showed that the majority of members supported the proposals, namely:

- To introduce distinct membership schemes aimed separately at primary care health professionals with a 'specific interest' in respiratory disease, and 'generalist' primary care health professionals
- Paid membership for respiratory-interested primary care health professionals through which members receive the PCRJ and other benefits in return for a modest fee
- Free membership continued for 'generalist' primary care health professionals
- Nurses and other health professionals should have equal membership status within the GPIAG to GPs i.e. they would be eligible for 'company' membership
- The GPIAG should remain GP-led
- A majority of General Committee places to be held by GPs
- At least two Trustees must be health professionals and at least one must be a GP
- Company membership should be open to any primary care health professional who is a member of the paid subscription scheme

The changes required in the Articles of Association to implement the proposals were approved at the recent 2005 AGM (see below). Full details of the new paid membership scheme will be available soon and will come into effect from January 2006.

Annual General Meeting

The GPIAG 2005 AGM was held on 8th July 2005. Following a report by Steve Holmes highlighting the successes of the GPIAG in 2004, members considered some significant resolutions to amend the GPIAG Memorandum and Articles of Association, aimed at further enhancing risk

management and governance within the Charity. Most notably, the GPIAG membership resolved to allow full membership to all healthcare professionals working in primary respiratory care. This change comes into immediate effect, so if you are currently an associate member and would like to become a full company member please see <http://www.gpiag.org/newmems/update1.php>.

A copy of the minutes of the AGM and 2004 annual report are available on <http://www.gpiag.org/legal/index.php>.



IPCRG Update

European Respiratory Society Meetings

During the ERS in September, the IPCRG held a number of committee meetings including an Ordinary General meeting. Details of the minutes from this meeting are available on our website for comment.

Membership

We would like to welcome Sri Lanka as a recently signed up associate member. We are also pleased to announce that Novartis has signed up as an Associate Corporate Member for 2005, joining Altana, Boehringer Ingelheim, Pfizer, GSK, Vitalograph and Orion Diagnostica.

Website

We are constantly updating our website and any new news item is flagged on our welcome page.

Research – grant and research register

In August we found out that our applications for EU grants were unsuccessful but will continue to develop other proposals for any future calls for applications. We have launched a searchable database to register current primary care respiratory research, to aid colleagues in developing new proposals. This can be accessed at <http://www.theipcr.org/researchreg/index.php>. We also invite authors to inform us of recent relevant publications that can be added to our recent publications database via <http://www.theipcr.org/researchreg/index.php>.

Contact Update

From 19th September 2005 until 12th May 2006, our Business Manager contact will be Tricia Bryant. Tricia can be contacted on +44 (0)1461 600639 or by email at tricia@redhotirons.com. We wish Sam Louw well during her maternity leave.



British Lung Foundation

Breathing Space – a new magazine for your waiting room, from the British Lung Foundation

In March of this year, their 20th birthday, the British Lung Foundation launched a new magazine, Breathing Space. Two copies of the quarterly magazine are sent, free of charge, to every GP surgery in the UK. Breathing Space is an upbeat lifestyle magazine, with a strong respiratory theme. It includes celebrity features, inspiring stories, competitions, research news, campaign items and more. Its aim is to appeal to the many people who will be in the waiting room, and particularly to those who are there for respiratory reasons. And it should be of interest to their doctors, too...

The British Lung Foundation is the only UK charity working for everyone affected by lung disease. It provides support to people living with a lung condition, and those who look after them. It also campaigns for positive change in the broader environment of respiratory health. As well as Breathing Space magazine, The British Lung Foundation can provide you with free publications on a broad range of topics. They have also recently launched a helpline, open Monday-Friday, 10 am – 6 pm. The number is 08458 50 50 20.

For all further information, please call the helpline, email enquiries@blf-uk.org, or write to British Lung Foundation, 73–75 Goswell Road, London EC1V 7ER.



National Respiratory Training Centre

New Masters Degree in Respiratory Care Launched by the National Respiratory Training Centre

The National Respiratory Training Centre (NRTC) has become the first academic institution to develop and run a Masters programme in respiratory care, with doctors and nurses attending their study days in Warwick. The NRTC has launched the course in response to increasing demands for practitioners to take up specialist posts and the National Guidelines requirement for the development of skills-based competencies.

The programme is a three-year, flexible, distance-learning programme, validated by the Open University and includes compulsory modules in respiratory disease and research methodology. Students are given the choice to study for either the full MSc in respiratory care, a Post Graduate Certificate, or Post Graduate Diploma.

Steve Holmes, Chairman of the General Practice in Airways Group states that "The

new NRTC Masters-level programme provides an exciting opportunity for the many GPs and health professionals with an interest in respiratory care to develop their practice. It covers the competencies set by the GPIAG to gain recognition as a General Practitioner with Specialist Interest, and I am sure will enhance respiratory care for patients served by those able to undertake this course. I am delighted that a number of GPIAG members have already signed up and am sure there will be more in the future.”

The OU Validation Services report describes the Masters programmes on offer as “reflecting current thinking from both a clinical and academic perspective, providing a rewarding educational experience.”

Monica Fletcher, Chief Executive of the NRTC comments; “The Masters programme in respiratory care is a natural evolution for the NRTC. The organisation has always been at the forefront of health professional education and it is most apt that we are first to offer this type of course. I am delighted that the OU report has commended the organisation for its institutional commitment to lifelong learning, which is supportive and understanding of adult learners who are practitioners.”

For further MSc programme information, please contact; Rosie Stone, Programme Administrator: Tel.: 01926 838968; E-mail: r.stone@nrtc.org.uk.

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