



ASSOCIATION  
OF CHARTERED  
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS  
FOR PEOPLE  
WITH LEARNING  
DISABILITIES

## ACPPLD NEWSLETTER

### Reconnecting Edition

May 2021

### A Welcome from the Editor



Welcome

Welcome back everyone to the ACPPLD Newsletter.

This is the first ACPPLD Newsletter for 2021, and maybe even since early Winter 2020 (!) as we have all been caught up in dealing with the Covid-19 Global Pandemic and all that it brought for our attentions. I'm sure, like me, you have been very busy doing lots of other things; perhaps even some things outwith your normal role and service delivery parameters. So, I will start off by extending good wishes to you all. I hope you and your colleagues are well and that you are starting to find your way out from where we have all been.

It's important to take time and reflect on what we have all been through over the past 14 months. Some of us may have been deployed out from our normal Learning Disability Services roles. Some of us may have been deployed out from our Professional physiotherapy roles. Some of us may have been doing things in other sectors. Where we have we been working as part of overall service delivery? How we have coped in doing this? What have we learned from doing this? What have others learned from us being in their spheres? How has our presence changed thing? How can we hold on to all the hugely positive benefits gained by how services (and ourselves) reacted to the impact of Covid? How can we help prevent the slip back into the "familiar"? How have we evolved?.....It's good to question and reflect. Please make and take time for this if you and your colleagues have not already invested in doing so.

I'm certain there will also have been challenges and pressures to overcome, how have we done this? What were the Enablers? Are there still issues to overcome? How do you plan to overcome and address these-if you can? Who do we need to influence to help with this? What connections need to be established.....lots to consider!



## So what have your National Executive been up to...?

Well, we have immersed ourselves into the wonderful Virtual world we are all exposed to now and we have continued to meet regularly to deal with business and ACPPLD representation by using Virtual Technology. We are all now (very?) adept at using MS Teams to have our Business Meetings and we have been ensuring ACPPLD Representation at National pieces of business and profiling.

We sent out (via our bulletins) information, updates and resources we were receiving throughout the Pandemic as Covid progressed about its impact on people who have a Learning Disability and specialist learning disability services.

We delivered surveys and also feedback to all our members. The first survey was about "exploring the role of specialist learning disability services during the Covid-19 Pandemic" and the second was based around "understanding the indirect impact of the Pandemic on the physiotherapy needs of adults with a learning disability and explore how services are managing the changes in people's physical and functional presentation".

We promoted Webinars via our bulletin information shots, two learning disability ones were even on the same day!

We held a virtual session with Regional Representatives last Summer which was really well attended from the regions and received very positive feedback from attendees, who found it very supportive and a great Networking opportunity.

We held a Virtual ALE in 2020, in conjunction with two other organisations (British Society of Rehabilitation Medicine BSRM- and also the Society of Research and Rehabilitation -SRR) and colleagues from South West and South Wales (SW2 Region) were instrumental in driving this collaboration and in ensuring that ACPPLD needs were addressed as part of the planning and delivery of the 2 Virtual Events, held in November 2020.

We have been attending relevant National groups and populating and promoting ACPPLD as much as we were able to, in and amongst Covid service demands. Reports and updates from these various groups were set out in the form of individual themed bulletins and these are all available to read on our ACPPLD Website pages, so please go to our website and have a look if you missed them in your inbox. There's information about the LD Senate, the GOLD Group, the PERG, Advanced Clinical Practice Network, the QNLD....if you want to know what all those acronyms stand for, visit our website & go have a read! 😊

**ONWARD**  
  
**TOGETHER**

So, in short, we have been keeping busy with ACPPLD business and trying to fit in the demands of doing so in and about our day jobs. The decision was made to step down our ACPPLD Newsletters in the interests of our membership, as we recognised that all of our time and energies were needed to be focused elsewhere, we decide to produce Bulletins to keep you connected, so we hope that you were appreciative of this decision.

Oh, and we managed to secure two new National Executive Committee members! More about them in this Newsletter.

As always, I extend my thanks to those of you who have sent me articles and information to be included in this Reconnecting Newsletter. The time and effort you have taken to do this is very much appreciated, especially in light of the daily challenges we still face as we slowly emerge from the Pandemic, national lockdown measures and restrictions. Welcome back. I hope you enjoy this edition.

Thank You

Angie, Newsletter Editor



(NB>old photo, I've now embraced the Lockdown grey look!)

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To the National Executive Committee

David Standley



I joined NEC as virtual Research & Education Officer in September 2019.

In November 2019 I co-launched the 'standards of practice for physiotherapists working with adults with a learning disability' written and developed with co-author

Sarah Bruce. To help launch the standards in presented the PMG and to the QNLD conference at the college of psychiatry.

At the beginning of 2020 I was reviewing how to make articles in the ACPPLD newsletter accessible as grey literature and am planning to re-organise the way they are accessed on the website to make it easier to find articles. I also hope this gives more incentive for members to write articles as they will be more accessible for narrative and literature reviews. This is a project I am planning to complete once the pandemic has passed.

In response to the pandemic in March 2020 I wrote 'COVID-19 update for Specialist Learning Disability Physiotherapists' outlining the potential implications of government COVID-19 publications for adults with a learning disability and specialist learning disability services. I followed this up with a second COVID-19 update for Specialist Learning Disability Physiotherapists focusing on Frailty.

In May 2020 I developed a survey exploring the role of Specialist Learning Disability Physiotherapy services during the COVID-19 pandemic. There was an unbelievable response from the membership with 94 people completing the survey. I published the results in August 2020. I am in the process of developing a second survey exploring the indirect impact of the pandemic on the physiotherapy needs of adults with a learning disability that I hope to launch in the coming days.(now done!)

The move towards virtual NEC meetings has meant that I am now able to attend meetings and be a more active part of the group.

**David Standley**

**ACPPLD Research & Education Officer**

[David.standley@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:David.standley@gstt.nhs.uk)



**Deepak Agnihotri**

I am a Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) registered Allied Health Professional with extensive experience of working in National Health Service (NHS). As part of my current role as Advanced Clinical Practitioner / Lead Physiotherapist, I ensure that the care group has clinical governance, risk management, quality and safety are incorporated; quality improvement projects are embedded within all activities to develop the culture of empowerment, learning and evidence-based practice. I have also worked as research associate at The University of Salford. I have been a co-author of a research study published in July 2014 in Gait and Posture journal.

I am very proud to be Staff Governor representing Therapies in the Council of Governors at Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. I understand the working of council bodies and their responsibilities as I have been part of scrutiny subcommittee. Having participated in the recruitment process of Non-executive NHS directors I have worked with political astuteness to ensure diversity at board level is encouraged. I have influenced the strategies and policies to open the advanced clinical practitioner training to allied health professions in my trust.

I have now taken a leadership role as Chair of Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) + network; I represent my trust in conversations with NHS England. I regularly liaise with our trust equality and diversity lead and specifically worked to provide more guidance in supporting the implementation of the risk stratification tool and COVID vaccines for colleagues from BAME backgrounds following the COVID19 disparity findings. I am proud to have found myself a new domain which has come as an opportunity during the COVID19 pandemic. I am helping to rejuvenate the BAME + network in the organisation, setting an ambitious vision for the future to reduce bullying and harassment to staff from BAME, LGBTQIA+ background and those with disabilities. I am interested in supporting our AHP and ethnic minorities staff to influence and shape the future direction of NHS workforce strategy.

Recently I have been selected as the BAME Allied Health Professions Strategic advisor at NHS England and Improvement. I will be working with a specific focus on race equality from a BAME perspective to influence, support and advise on the implementation and delivery of strategies, policies and practice that positively impact on BAME AHPs.

Allied Health Professions BAME Strategic Advisor @NHS England & NHS Improvement

Advanced Clinical Practitioner / Lead Physiotherapist (Independent Prescriber)

Staff Governor - Therapies / Chair of BAME+ Network

Deepak is our new Social Media Officer for the ACPPLD

**Deepak Agnihotri**

**ACPPLD Social Media Officer**

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Email:  
deepak.agnihotri@nhs.net



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Join  
US!

Membership Secretary Report -May 2021

Liz Griffen

It has been another busy period for the membership and we have had a steady hold in numbers. We now have approx **311 members**. Which is down from the great number of 342 we achieved in previous years. Our membership renewal year period has just opened as from 1<sup>st</sup> April, so figures may alter as memberships are processed

As keeper of the database and the point of contact for each regional rep it is **important that I have the correct contact details for each member**. The main method of contact is by email and for those joining online this is the email address that I use unless you specify a different one. This is particularly important if you have retired, changed jobs or provider- or if your NHS body has moved to a new email system.

Please encourage your colleagues to join - it's now even easier as you don't have to be a CSP member and is now open to all! Check out our ACPPLD "Join Now" website page for details

Don't forget ...

**Membership renewal was on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021.**

**Please remember we are not accepting renewal by cheque.**

Liz Griffen

ACPPLD Membership Secretary

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ACPPLD Website Update

Amanda Leech



After many months of asking we have finally had the website updated to allow us to include virtual events, yippee!

Previously we could only post events with an actual postcode location which has obviously been problematic during the COVID 19 pandemic.

We know that many of the regions have been successfully organising webinars and virtual networking events over the last few months so, if you have any planned for the future, please can you let me know the details so that I can advertise on the website events section as well as the calendar? Thank you.

The virtual world also gives us more opportunity to network over a much wider reach, so if you are organising an event which members in other regions are welcome to attend, please also let me know so that I can make this clear on the event details.

As an organisation we very much hope that as many of the learning events as possible will be open to all who are interested, but we appreciate there are certain events that may just be applicable to that regional group only. In addition to ACPPLD events we are allowed to advertise other relevant learning events, but only if there is no charge for this. This is in line with our website agreement with the CSP.

If you have any other suggestions for website additions, please let me know, I'm always open to suggestions.

The social media side of ACPPLD has now been split from the website officer role and is the responsibility of Deepak, but I never like to miss an opportunity to promote, so if you are not already doing so, please follow us on Twitter @acppld and use the #LDPhysio hashtag as much as you can to raise awareness.

Amanda Leech

ACPPLD Website Officer

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## REGIONAL NEWS UPDATE

### Future of the Northern Region ACPPLD??? by Dave Johnston.

We are currently living in a time of not knowing when some form of normality will fully return, being able to meet our colleagues face to face to network or attend a study day where we can discuss and share good working practice, also enhancing our CPD.

It's because of these unprecedented times that I feel the urge to let not only our membership know, but also our colleagues from further afield the dilemma that the Northern Region will soon have which will restrict future study day's if something is not acted on sooner rather than later.

We currently have 3 dedicated committee members Jestine Fennessy, Laura Sharp and Dave Johnston who make up the committee which at times can be very restrictive and time consuming when trying to do what is best for our members. The main point I want to highlight is that the dynamics of the committee structure is changing as in June 2021 the region will only have 2 remaining committee members

as myself (Dave) will be retiring and also that currently Laura is on Maternity leave until the Autumn so this will leave Jestine all alone for a period of time. ( at the time of submitting this article)

Over the years as the numbers on the committee have dwindled, mainly due to retirement or moving on to pastures new. People have been reluctant to step up and commit themselves to joining the committee. I don't know if this is because they are unsure of the workings of the committee, or if they are worried about how much time they will have to commit and what impact this may have on their professional role as a clinician?

I can assure you that having been an active member of the committee for the past 19 years there has been no impact to my employment role as meetings are carefully planned to suit the working needs of each individual and are held 3 to 4 times yearly for a couple of hours. The other thing to consider is with today's technology it is much easier to meet via virtual means and not having to travel to a central location, which you have to pre book, therefore reducing things like travel time.

We currently have good membership numbers, covering a large geographical area in the North East of the UK. Members have all benefitted from the variation of study days that have been organised over the years. Unfortunately this will come to an end if people from Northern Region don't take the initiative now, coming forward to ensure that training can be delivered regionally through regular study days by committing a small amount of their time and join the committee. People need to seize this opportunity and not wait until it is too late as this problem has been highlighted on numerous occasions to the Northern Region membership. This is also something that is good for your CPD record and you will get to meet and have access to external providers which is a bonus.

If you have any queries or thoughts of committing some of your time to joining the committee ensuring the progress of the Northern Region why not contact Jestine or myself and have a discussion!!

On a final note can I just say that I have enjoyed my time as a member of the Northern Region ACPPLD committee, having had the privilege and opportunity to meet and work with some fantastic people over the years.

I would also like to wish the Northern Region and everyone within the ACPPLD 'Far and Wide' all the best for the future.

**Dave Johnston.**

**Associate Rep & PRO Northern Region ACPPLD**

( Editors Note: Many thanks Dave for this article and we wish the Northern Region well, please update us on this situation...and of course our best regards to you Dave and thanks for all you have been part of over your 19 years. You'll be missed! Angie ☺ )

Received 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021



## Making a splash for hydrotherapy **Carrie Tbaily**

Carrie Tbaily, a post-graduate research student at Bournemouth University, is exploring how caregivers perceive hydrotherapy to impact on the needs of adults with severe and profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Hydrotherapy covers any therapy that can be delivered in water. It can be hot, warm, or cold, and it can be active or passive/sedentary. This therapy has a positive effect on posture and balance, range of movement, tone, mobility, and gross motor function, but Carrie's research aims to investigate how it impacts on social and psychological factors for adults with severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD).

Carrie Tbaily, researcher, commented: "I've been a learning disabilities physio in adult services for over 11 years and am passionate about delivering the best possible care to the people we support. Hydrotherapy is frequently used within children's services, and there is some research to support its use. But within adult learning disabilities research is scarce and resources are few, so access to hydrotherapy is often ad hoc and inequitable.

"I am so excited to be carrying out this much needed research, and really hope to use this study to get the ball rolling and improve the lives of adults with learning disabilities. Through a short questionnaire and virtual interview, SPLASH Study aims to find out how caregivers perceive hydrotherapy to impact on the lives of adults with severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities.

"We're recruiting carers, family members, and health and social care professionals now, so please email me on [ctbaily@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:ctbaily@bournemouth.ac.uk) for more information or to find out how to take part."

Carrie will be working alongside Dorset's disability charity, Diverse Abilities, throughout her research to engage with those who rely on hydrotherapy and share the results on its importance as part of The Splash Appeal. The appeal is run by Diverse Abilities and aims to raise £1million to build a hydrotherapy pool for adults at The Beehive Centre in Poole.

Helen Mortimer, development manager at Diverse Abilities, commented: "We're really pleased to be working alongside Carrie and her research whilst we are working on developing a new hydrotherapy pool for the adults we support at The Beehive. We know a hydrotherapy pool is desperately needed, but her research will help inform how we can maximise the benefit of the new facility for the people we support."

Carrie hosted an interactive talk in January introducing the study and the rationale to its requirement. Parents supported by Diverse Abilities were amongst those invited to the discussion, where they could also ask questions about the research.

Visit [thesplashappeal.org.uk](https://thesplashappeal.org.uk) for more information on Diverse Abilities' appeal, or search 'SPLASH Study' on Facebook and Twitter for more details on the project.

**About Diverse Abilities:**

Founded in 1955, Diverse Abilities is the only charity that supports children and adults with profound physical and learning disabilities, and their families, in Dorset.

The charity is a lifeline to many families in the county and provides round the clock care and support, offering a little bit of sunshine to their everyday lives.

Visit <https://diverseabilities.org.uk/> for more information.

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**A Personal Journey**

**Diana R Colville**

*Please enjoy this article I was sent by Jenny Burt written by her dear friend Diana Colville about her experiences of the changing role and service changes during her long time as a Paediatric Physiotherapist in a Special Needs School.*

*Jenny shared that Diana has been occupied since the first Lockdown in writing her life and family history story which she has had printed in book form. Also she has written movingly of her MND Journey over the past year.*

*Jenny sent me the following account from Diana and we hope it is of interest to the ACPPLD membership.*

*(Editors Note: I am sure it will be very well received and spark a few memories in those of us who have been around for a while.....Can we thank Diana very much for being so gracious in her time and energies and for sharing this article with us all. Can I thank you too Jenny for being so thoughtful and supportive in getting it to our membership to enjoy. Best wishes ☺ Angie )*

**Written by voice recognition on the I-Pad Diana R Colville January 2021**

**Submitted on behalf of Diana by Jenny Burt**

I qualified as a physiotherapist in 1974 after three years as a student at the London Hospital in Whitechapel. Training was hard work but enjoyable and I made some very long-standing friendships which continue today. I married my husband Mike six weeks later and started work as a Basic Grade rotational physiotherapist at Barnet General Hospital. Over the period of six years at Barnet, I developed a particular interest in neurological conditions, learning a lot from my colleagues and helping to run a group of in patient and out- patient

stroke patients. I also produced my two sons Rob and Ed of whom I am very proud.

In 1984, when we had begun to foster children at home, I was persuaded by a previous colleague to visit a special school in Cricklewood where a part time post had become available. I only went to look around but was immediately offered the job for whatever hours I could manage. So, with no interview, I began 32 very happy years at Mapledown School.

The school changed dramatically over that period. At the start it had approximately 40 pupils, all ages (2 - 19), mainly children with Down's Syndrome and, only three wheelchair users. The Avon chairs were covered in red washable vinyl and looked like armchairs on wheels. If a client needed more support another vinyl cushion was added and velcroed into place.

When I departed in 2016, our secondary school had nearly 80 pupils with multiple and complex needs, nearly half of them using wheelchairs. The other half were challenging young adolescents mainly on the autistic spectrum and, apart from the occasional orthotic intervention had rarely needed my assistance.

In 30 years the changing population, in my view, was mainly down to improvements in medical intervention, better assessment techniques, better antibiotics and a better outlook, acceptance and opportunity for pupils with special needs. The advancements in surgical interventions have included surgery for scoliosis, tracheostomies, gastrostomies and more intricate and advanced orthopaedic procedures. There was also a great shift in pupils coming from all over the world to access NHS provision. Travel improvements have made this possible and the invention of the Internet has widened knowledge and information globally.

The numbers of children with special needs rose in that time and many pupils would not have survived to their teenage years, when born in the 80's. Our feeder school, Oakleigh Primary School, had more than doubled in number, branching onto a second site.

It seemed sensible in the 90's, to sort our pupils by age instead of geographic address. Both schools continue to provide a service for children with severe

learning difficulties and complex needs within the London Borough of Barnet. Pupils leave Oakleigh singing nursery rhymes and within days are into "Heavy Metal"!

It has been a joy to be part of the changes in education and medicine. My role changed completely from teaching activities of daily living, bathing, dressing and feeding to the challenge provided by each new pupil who came into school. Many carried in from a car and having received no intervention throughout their early childhood.

Although well cared for, the deformities they had developed over the years were a challenge for myself, the special seating department and our orthopaedic surgeons.

Housing issues were often a priority and then referrals for medical intervention, social work assistance and equipment provision.

In my early days at school, we had no school nurse provision, no occupational therapist, no speech and language therapist and no music therapist. All consultations required a hospital visit with parents. By the time of my departure, a lot of the Consultants came into school. This gave the chance for school staff to express their views alongside that of the parents. All Orthotic appointments used to be based at the local hospitals but were then held in school. Barnet Wheelchair Service expanded and now come into school to review all seating. Multidisciplinary meetings were held involving all the school therapists, outside agencies as required alongside teachers and LSA 's from the class.

I am happy to say, that we graduated, in my time, from 'Four man lifts' to the use of moving and handling equipment, risk assessments and annual training for all our staff.

It was a huge challenge at the time to persuade our then Head Teacher that this had to be done, never mind the expense, but hopefully, no more bad backs!

Sessions in the School Hydrotherapy Pool are a valuable opportunity for additional sensory and mobility opportunities in the warm water environment. I was pleased for the opportunity to further develop pool-based activities and include a Therapeutic Programme into these Sessions. Those pupils who had complex physical presentations required 1:1 support from School Staff in the

pool. Carrying out a full pool- based assessment I developed an individual Programme of activities and interventions for staff to implement. Session goals were identified and the programme was documented and supported by photographs and I assisted staff in implementing these programmes. The programmes were reviewed as part of the pupil's Annual Review and I participated regularly to monitor or adapt the programmes as required. For both staff and pupils these Sessions were an enjoyable experience.

I think I am right in saying that all the physiotherapy students, Band 5's and work experience people who came into school thoroughly enjoyed the experience and we were able to work closely with the University of Hertfordshire. The majority of our visitors still keep in touch and hopefully learnt from their time at Mapledown. Our learning support staff at school were happy to answer questions and were keen to show off their practical skills to timid students and to correct or demonstrate if there were any safety issues. A bonus for both parties and certainly a boost in confidence.

My policy was always to keep in with all the staff and to offer assistance wherever I could. Just because I was a physiotherapist, I didn't have magic hands and was always prepared to muck in when assistance was needed. It was always reciprocated and an holistic approach was usually beneficial.

"Mums know best" was always well worth remembering and I found that a close relationship with the family was very helpful in understanding problems, assisting with advice and getting through good times and bad!

It was also a very good idea to keep in contact with the school caretaker. Wheelchairs had a habit of breaking down at 3:15 p.m. just as the buses arrived and a screwdriver or a bit of muscle was needed!

Three colleagues particularly deserve a mention, Moira Newton the physiotherapist at Oakleigh School and Jenny Burt physiotherapist for Adult Learning Disabilities. They both started at Barnet General at around the same time as myself, all those years ago, and have been by my side throughout, taking our clients from childhood and though transition to adult services, college, other

activities and community opportunities. Thirdly Janet Hall, my physiotherapy assistant and my right-hand person who put up with me for the last 20 years.

The other people I need to thank our lovely pupils, so many over the years, and their amazing families. Everyone has been different and given us challenges. No two pupils have been the same but they have taught me so much. They have let me become part of their families, living through good times, hard times and sad times but all of those experiences have made me a better person and enriched my life.

**Diana R Colville**

Written by voice recognition on the I-Pad Diana R Colville January 2021



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