



Forthcoming events

7 - 10 November 2010
NCRI Conference, Liverpool
<http://www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference/>

2 - 3 December 2010
BPOS Annual Conference, Chester
<http://www.bpos.org/events.html>

17 -20 February 2011
APOS Annual Conference,
Anaheim, California
<http://www.apos-society.org/apos2011/index.asp>

25 – 28 August 2011
World Congress of Psychosomatic
Medicine, Seoul, Korea
<http://www.icpm2011.org>

16-20 October 2011
IPOS World Congress of
Psycho-Oncology, Antalya, Turkey
<http://www.ipos-society.org/>

How to Join **BPOS**

Membership forms are available from
<http://www.bpos.org/membership.html>

Full membership - £85
Associate membership - £25
Students receive a £5 discount on either type of membership by sending proof of student status to the secretary on application of membership

Full membership includes subscription to Psycho-Oncology journal, voting rights, reduced entry cost to meetings and newsletter.

Associate membership includes the newsletter, notification of meetings, and reduced entry cost to meetings.

Advertising in the newsletter

Advertisements will be printed at the discretion of the Executive, at a rate of £3.00 per column inch (3 columns per page) for BPOS members or £5.00 per column inch for non-members (£50 per half page). Please contact the Editor in the first instance.

BRITISH PSYCHOSOCIAL ONCOLOGY SOCIETY

Newsletter Issue 2 2010



Update: on the IPOS Federation of National Societies

The IPOS Federation met for the third time at the recent IPOS conference in Quebec.

Representatives from over 26 countries gathered to reflect on the progress of the Federation and its future plans. With a number of newly-federated national societies, the IPOS Federation now represents in excess of 5,000 individuals working in psycho-oncology around the World. Nonetheless, national outreach, and assisting in the setting up of new national societies in countries where they aren't already established, remains a key priority for the Federation.

Over the past year, the IPOS Federation website has gone live and contains some very useful information, including key contacts for the various federated national societies, and membership lists for the various Federation Taskforces. Three taskforces exist at present: Guidelines, Standards, Accreditation and Training (chaired by T Hack); Scientific Research (chaired by P Butow and M Rohanszky); and, National Outreach (chaired by E Andritsch). The national

outreach team has been particularly active over the last in supporting the planning of future IPOS conferences: Turkey in 2011 and Buenos Aires (tentative) in 2012.

As members of BPOS you all receive a number of personal benefits from our own society being Federated. Whilst a full benefit package is still being developed, these currently include both reduced rates for future IPOS World Congress Meetings and a 20% reduction on the purchase price of the new Psycho-Oncology textbook by Holland et al. To take advantage of these benefits, BPOS members need to register on the IPOS website (see <http://www.ipos-society.org/about/federation/federationbenefits.htm> for more details).

We'll be sure to keep you informed of any developments in the Federation through them BPOS newsletter as and when we hear about them.

Nick Hulbert-Williams
University of Chester

In this issue



Update: on the IPOS Federation of National Societies 1
Nick Hulbert-Williams

Editor's Column 2
Nick Hulbert-Williams

Coming of age: The NCRI Psychosocial Oncology Clinical Studies Group 2
Ziv Amir

Conference Report: 2010 IPOS World Congress of Psychology 3
Nick Hulbert-Williams

Conference Report: Appearance Matters 4 4
Geeta Patel

SIGOPAC Symposium: Implementing Peer Review Measures in Psychology 6
Liz Coombes and Inigo Tolosa

BPOS Committee contact details 7

Notices and forthcoming events 8



British Psychosocial Oncology Society

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Editor's Column



Welcome to the Summer 2010 issue of the BPOS Newsletter.

Thanks to all of our contributors to this

issue who have written some really interesting content, including two conference reviews, an update on the work of the National Cancer Research Institute Psychosocial Clinical Studies Group and an article on the recent SIGOPAC symposium on 'Implementing Peer Review Measures in Psychology'. There is also an update on the IPOS Federation of National Societies and some of the benefits that BPOS members can enjoy through this.

Towards the back of the newsletter you'll find updated details of the BPOS executive committee and how to get in touch with us. Some members of the executive will be completing their terms on the committee at the end of this year and so if you are interested in standing for any positions, please do get in touch with us. The back page also lists some forthcoming events that you may be interested in attending.

If you would like to contribute an article to the BPOS newsletter, please do get in touch. I would welcome articles on research, service development, conference reports, or any other issues that will be of interest to those working in the field of psychosocial oncology. The next issue is due in early 2011 and initial expressions of interest for contributions need to reach me by Friday 5th November.

BPOS are currently busy preparing for our 2010 annual conference. This will be held at the Hilton Doubletree Hotel in Chester on the 2nd and 3rd December and the theme this year will be on 'Cancer and Relationships with Others'. Don't forget to register before 11th October to take advantage of the Early-Bird discount! We have now opened up abstract submission for late-breaking work so please do consider presenting your work at the conference. Abstract submission forms can be downloaded from the BPOS website. We are also starting to think about our 2011 annual conference: If you think you might like to host a BPOS annual conference, please do get in touch with the Executive Committee.

In other BPOS news, we would like to send our congratulations to Claire Foster (Chair Elect) who had a baby earlier this year. Claire has now stepped down from her position on the Executive Committee. Elections will be held for a new BPOS Chair at this year's annual conference. We will also be holding elections to replace a number of other outgoing Committee members: Secretary, Treasurer, Psychology, and an Open Position. If you are interested in standing for any of these positions, you are encouraged to contact the current post-holder for more details. Nomination forms will be sent out to BPOS members in due course and should be returned to the Executive Committee by Wednesday 1st December 2010.

Enjoy the issue and I hope to see many of you in Chester in December.

Nick Hulbert-Williams
Newsletter Editor
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Coming of age: The NCRN Psychosocial Oncology Clinical Studies Group

The psychosocial Oncology group is now officially a full Clinical Studies Group (CSG).

Based on the recommendations of the Progress Review Report (May 2010) the National Cancer Research Network (NCRN) Operation Steering Group has decided that this group should drop its developmental status and become a mature CSG.

The Group is chaired by Professor Julia Brown (University of Leeds), and its remit is to: (1) encourage the development of research protocols in psychosocial oncology, and (2) consider research protocols submitted to research funders in the area of psychosocial oncology.

The group has an established national and developing international profile and is consulted within national initiatives as a voice for psychosocial research.

The Psychosocial CSG has between 20 to 25 members at any one time. Current members coming from a range of clinical and research backgrounds (nursing, oncology, psychosocial research, consumers, trialists, psychologists, network co-ordinator, psychiatry, social work and palliative medicine). Arising from the Group's activities, three sub groups have been set up. These groups are research development working groups, and are used as the engine room for the CSG.

Members of these three subgroups meet once a year with teleconference in between as required. The subgroup's focusing on the following:

1. Transition from active treatment to living with cancer, co-chaired by Dr. Penny Wright and Dr. Ziv Amir. The group was set up originally as there was a recognition that the 'time of transition' for patients moving from active treatment into follow-up was a stressful time of adjustment and a period in which support to patients was probably reducing. To date, two areas have been the focus: (1) patients expectations after their last course of treatment and the realities

one month later; (2) Money matters intervention. The group is very keen to have new members joining which will help to widen the group's focus and to generate studies around this critical time of transition.

2. Side effects and intervention, chaired by Professor Galina Velikova, and its main aim is to generate interventional studies about side effects of treatments and measurement of side effect of treatment and quality of life. The actual projects are largely determined by the current membership of the group and are focused on: (1) Patients' experiences during treatment; (2) Detection and monitoring of side effects, psychosocial problems and quality of life issues; (3) Developing and testing interventions for those adverse events aiming to improve patients' well-being. The group will welcome new members that will enable the development of new and more stimulating ways of generating new ideas for further research in this area.
3. Living with cancer, this is a relatively a new group, chaired by Professor Nora Kearney. The goal for this group will be determined by its members; however, the focus will be on research that aims to fully understand the multidimensional factors associated with living with cancer (i.e. social well-being, carers/partners, functioning, fatigue etc.).

This is a significant stage in the life of the Group, where we should celebrate our promotion but this is particularly important for the psychosocial research community at a time of uncertainty and concern around future funding opportunities. Moreover, in the case of these difficulties we need to work hard to maintain our momentum and deliver a national research portfolio.

Are you interested in joining or working with our subgroups? If yes, please contact Dr. Judith Mills – Judith.mills@icr.ac.uk

Ziv Amir
University of Manchester

Conference report:

2010 IPOS World Congress of Psychology

The 12th World Congress was co-organised by the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology (CAPO) and held in Quebec, Canada, in May 2010. The Congress was the usual high standard that we've come to expect from IPOS with excellent speakers and a great location.

Delegates were invited to the Congress Opening Reception which was held in Quebec's Parliament Building. As well as getting to see inside this fantastic building, the reception gave a great opportunity for networking and catching up with colleagues from both the UK and abroad. The real work started the following morning and the conference programme ran for a very full two and half days.

The theme of the Congress was 'Hope, meaning and science for quality of care in psycho-oncology and palliative care' and the plenary speakers certainly reflected this. Highlights included plenaries from Patricia Ganz on Measuring Outcomes in Psycho-oncology; Bill Breitbart, Harvey Chochinov and Pierre Gagnon on Existential Issues; and Susan Folkman on Hope, Meaning and Coping. Like other delegates, I was disappointed not to be able to attend all of the plenary sessions as many were scheduled alongside concurrent sessions and workshops.

A varied programme of concurrent sessions was included. Topics ranged from decision-making, the needs of minority populations; continuity of care, caregiving, oncology staff training issues, and continuity of care. I was also particularly impressed at the number of sessions on the varied range of psychosocial interventions being tested in the oncology setting, including dignity therapy, meaning-centered



psychotherapy, and mindfulness to name but a few. Unfortunately, there was almost a sense that there were too many sessions to choose from at the same time and many of us felt that we had missed out on so many potentially interesting presentations.

As always, two displays of very informative poster presentations were included at the conference and in some respects, I found these to be more interesting and of a higher standard than some of the oral presentations. It was a shame that poster

presenters weren't always available during poster sessions to discuss their work.

A word of congratulation should also go out to the many award winners at the Congress. IPOS awarded its Life Fellowship Award to Lea Baider; the Hiroomi Kawano New Investigator Award to Maiko Fujimori; and, the Bernard Fox Memorial Award to Harvey Chochinov.

Having heard about cutting-edge research and having had the opportunity to network with a number of new colleagues, I left the congress feeling enthused and inspired. No conference is ever ideal, and I always think that IPOS suffers somewhat because they try to include so much into such a short space of time, but I certainly think the balance between plenaries, research presentations, clinical presentations, poster sessions, and network opportunities was much improved from previous years. UK delegate numbers were low this year, perhaps reflective of the cost and time-commitment to get to Canada, and so I hope that we'll see a much bigger UK turnout at the 2011 congress in Turkey.

Nick Hulbert-Williams
University of Chester



Appearance Matters 4

The Centre for Appearance Research (CAR) based at the University of the West of England, Bristol strives to make a real difference to the lives of the many hundreds of thousands of people with appearance-related concerns both in the United Kingdom and across the world. CAR acts as a focus and centre of excellence for psychological and interdisciplinary research in appearance, disfigurement and related studies.

This year, CAR successfully hosted its fourth Appearance Matters Conference. This two day conference attracted many national and international delegates of various disciplines. The conference included various workshops, symposiums and oral and poster presentations that highlighted a wide range of appearance-related issues including visible difference, weight, provision of care, psychosocial interventions and areas for further research. Within these interesting topics was a session dedicated to appearance concerns amongst cancer survivors.

Dr Diana Harcourt chaired four highly stimulating talks. The first two talks were presented by Dr Sarah Kagan from the

University of Pennsylvania, USA. Dr Kagan's first talk focussed on the use of grounded theory and interactionist methods in understanding appearance and embodiment in oral cancer survivors. Dr Kagan highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of using such methods in order to capture the arrays of experiential shifts in oral cancer survivors; whose lives are profoundly altered by the cancer and its treatments. The author further discussed the extent to which grounded theory and other interactionist approaches are largely under-used and compared this with other approaches that are familiar and commonly used by healthcare researchers, offering an alternative method to gaining an insightful and detailed understanding of cancer survivors' experiences.

During her second presentation, Dr Kagan went on to discuss how she and her colleagues used grounded theory methods to understand an under-researched area: oral tongue cancer survivorship. Her paper titled 'Speaking legibly: Voice in embodied appearance for oral tongue cancer survivors' was delivered with great enthusiasm as she outlined the findings of this qualitative, open-ended interview study. Findings from this study revealed how oral cancer survivors spoke of their experiences of an altered voice, affects of surgery and other treatments and having to regain and maintain acceptable speech in public and in private.

The author concluded how this area is not extensively explored and consequently alterations in appearance are poorly understood. This is an important area and further explorations of voice and other expressions of embodiment and

appearance in oral cavity cancer survivors are warranted.

Following a similar format, Hanne Konradsen from Gentofte University Hospital and Aarhus University, Denmark presented her work on the processes towards integration – a psychosocial process of adjusting to facial disfigurement following surgical treatment for head and neck or eye cancer. This stimulating talk highlighted the lack of research conducted on how patients who have undergone treatment for head and neck or eye cancer adjust to living with a facial disfigurement as a result of their cancer treatment. Using a longitudinal grounded theory design, this study interviewed fifteen patients shortly after surgery, after six months and after one year. Findings from this study showed the complex process and interactional adjustment that is involved for those living with a facial disfigurement; further increasing our understanding in this area which can aid in the design of interventions targeted at patients who experience psychosocial problems.

The final presentation from this session was by Dr Michelle Fingeret from the Anderson Cancer Centre, University of Texas. Dr Fingeret presented some fascinating work on the body image difficulties that are encountered by patients with facial cancer. On surveying 350 patients, data revealed that 77% of patients acknowledged concerns or embarrassment about bodily changes at some point following their cancer



diagnosis/treatment. Consequently, greater number of bodily concerns resulted in higher behavioural and emotional difficulties. The author also discussed the introduction of The Body Image Therapy Service (BITS), an evidenced-based intervention utilizing a cognitive-behavioural therapy model. This was very well received by patients, providers and the clinical staff.

In summary this remarkable cancer session emphasised body image concerns and difficulties in living with facial disfigurement with various types of facial cancers. All the presentations were very engaging and highly insightful. The presenters delivered their research with great passion which generated interesting discussions amongst the audience regarding the challenges of providing psychological services when resources are limited. Studies exploring appearance concerns in patients with facial cancer yield important clinical implications for improving psychosocial care and the survivorship experience for cancer patients, as these presentations demonstrated.

In addition to these oral presentations were three poster presentations on the topic of cancer. Heidi Williamson (from CAR) presented a poster that illustrated adolescents' experiences of appearance change during treatment for cancer. Adolescents were given a camera to keep a diary of their thoughts and feelings in photographic form. They then discussed these photographs during interviews. This unique methodology generated interesting findings whereby adolescents described

feeling anxious and self-conscious of their appearance and experienced staring and teasing which often resulted in low self-confidence and often led to social avoidance. Adolescents also discussed their use of strategies including concealment, warning friends about their altered appearance and humour as ways to manage the impact of their altered appearance. Findings from this study are being used to inform the provision of a psychosocial intervention for adolescents with appearance related concerns during cancer treatment.

Geeta Patel (from CAR) presented a poster which described appearance concerns in African, Caribbean and South Asian breast cancer survivors. On interviewing these women, issues around femininity, anxiety in getting into future intimate relationships, practicality of cosmetic aids and clothing restrictions emerged. Many of these appearance related issues were influenced by cultural-specific concerns. This study also has important implications for healthcare professionals and recognises the need to provide culturally sensitive care and support to ethnic minority women that is tailored specifically to their cultural values and beliefs.

There was also a poster by Caroline Hood (from the Ayrshire and Arran NHS trust) which looked at the development of a body image toolkit to support patients with cancer. Six focus groups and five individual interviews were used to elicit cancer patient's experiences. The interviews were analysed via thematic analysis and seven key themes were

identified (context, loss of self, adapting to a 'new self', communication and information provision, sign-posting, peer support and social networks). Based on these themes, an e-learning programme for healthcare professionals (to improve their knowledge base and skills through reflective practice) and a workbook for patients (based on cognitive behavioural principles) were developed. These initiatives will act as a 'toolkit' and be available nationally through Macmillan Cancer Support. This study has important implications as the development of this body image toolkit will help healthcare professionals to understand body image issues and support patients with adaptation and self-management.

The above presentations were just some of many stimulating and inspiring sessions from this engaging conference. After two days of excellent workshops, symposiums and presentations, the conference came to an end; leaving everyone well informed of the appearance and body image issues that exist in various disciplines. Appearance Matters 4 was a great success and has left everyone looking forward to Appearance Matters 5, taking place in 2012! For more information on CAR and its research, visit <http://hls.uwe.ac.uk/research/car.aspx>.

Geeta Patel
University of the West of England, Bristol

SIGOPAC Symposium: Implementing Peer Review Measures in Psychology

This was a really interesting day beginning with two presentations on commissioning and the process of Peer Review and continuing with experiences of developing and implementing training to meet levels 1 and 2 of the four tiered model of psychosocial care as per Chapter 5 (Psychological Support) of the NICE Improvement Outcome Guidance for Supportive and Palliative Care and impending Peer Review Measures.

Jill Ireland, Cancer Commissioning Support Project Lead at the North London Cancer Network, presented on a National Cancer Action Team pilot project to commission Levels 3 and 4 psychological support provision in the North London network. Key outputs from the project are:

- Developing a clinical pathway for psychological support for patients and relatives
- Developing a service specification
- Shared learning about how clinical teams can influence commissioning services

One key outcome is also the ongoing development of a Map of Medicine for psychological support in Cancer, based on the patient's journey through services, and the aim to change commissioning from provider based to patient need.

Annette Halliwell, Lead Cancer Nurse from Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Foundation Trust, then gave an informative overview of the new Peer Review process, based on improving the patient and carer experience and focussing more on outcomes. The new process involves:

- Annual self assessment
- Sampled external validation of self assessments
- Targeted Peer Review

Annette then explained how psychology measures will be reviewed once they have been ratified later this year.

Kathy Burn is a palliative care nurse and now an accredited Cognitive Behavioural Therapy practitioner (BABCP) and gave a first hand experiential account of the CBT skills training (Stirling Moorey et al 2008) delivered at St Christopher's Hospice in London. Key outcomes of the training were:

- Nurse felt able to put emotions and feelings into a framework, to take account of them, and to explore what previously had been missing e.g. the patient's thoughts about their illness, symptoms etc
- This changed the way many nurses worked with their patients and allowed them to help patients where before they had perceived hopelessness, or felt stuck
- Ongoing supervision was vital to maintain learning from the training and practical application of skills learned.
- They found CBT skills training fascinating and enjoyable but demanding.

Alex King and Vicky Robinson, Nurse Consultant in Palliative Care at St Thoma's Hospital, presented on Sage and Thyme – an evidence based level 1 training for health professionals to improve their communication with patients and relatives by making it more patient focussed. Developed and being rolled out in [UHSM] Key aspects of the training are:

Setting – If you notice concern – create some privacy – sit down

Ask – “Can I ask what you are concerned about?”

Gather – Gather all of the concerns – not just the first few

Empathy – Respond sensitively – “You have a lot on your mind”

&

Talk – “Who do you have to talk to or to help you?”

Help – “How have they been helpful?”

You – “What do YOU think would help?”

Me – “Is there something you would like ME to do?”

End – Summarise and close – “Can we leave it there?”

This training is currently being evaluated in collaboration with the Maguire Communications Skills Training Unit

The conference moved into workshops to debate the issue of providing supervision for non psychological staff trained to level 2. Two key areas were discussed and preliminary ideas developed:

- Definition of supervision (in psychological support skills) for Level 2 staff
- Clinical governance framework for commissioning supervision (in psychological support skills) from external supervisors.

Feedback from the day showed that the symposium was extremely informative and thought provoking and a good basis for progress over the coming months in rolling out the Psychological Support Peer Review Measures and deciding how to begin to plan for the Peer Review.

Liz Coombes and Inigo Tolosa
University Hospital Birmingham



BPOS Committee contact details

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The following positions will soon be up for re-election:

- Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Psychology
- Open

If you are interested in standing, please let the Executive Committee know.

Nomination forms will be distributed shortly and must be returned by Wednesday 1st December 2010.

Elections will be held at the BPOS AGM which will be timetabled into the 2010 Annual conference.