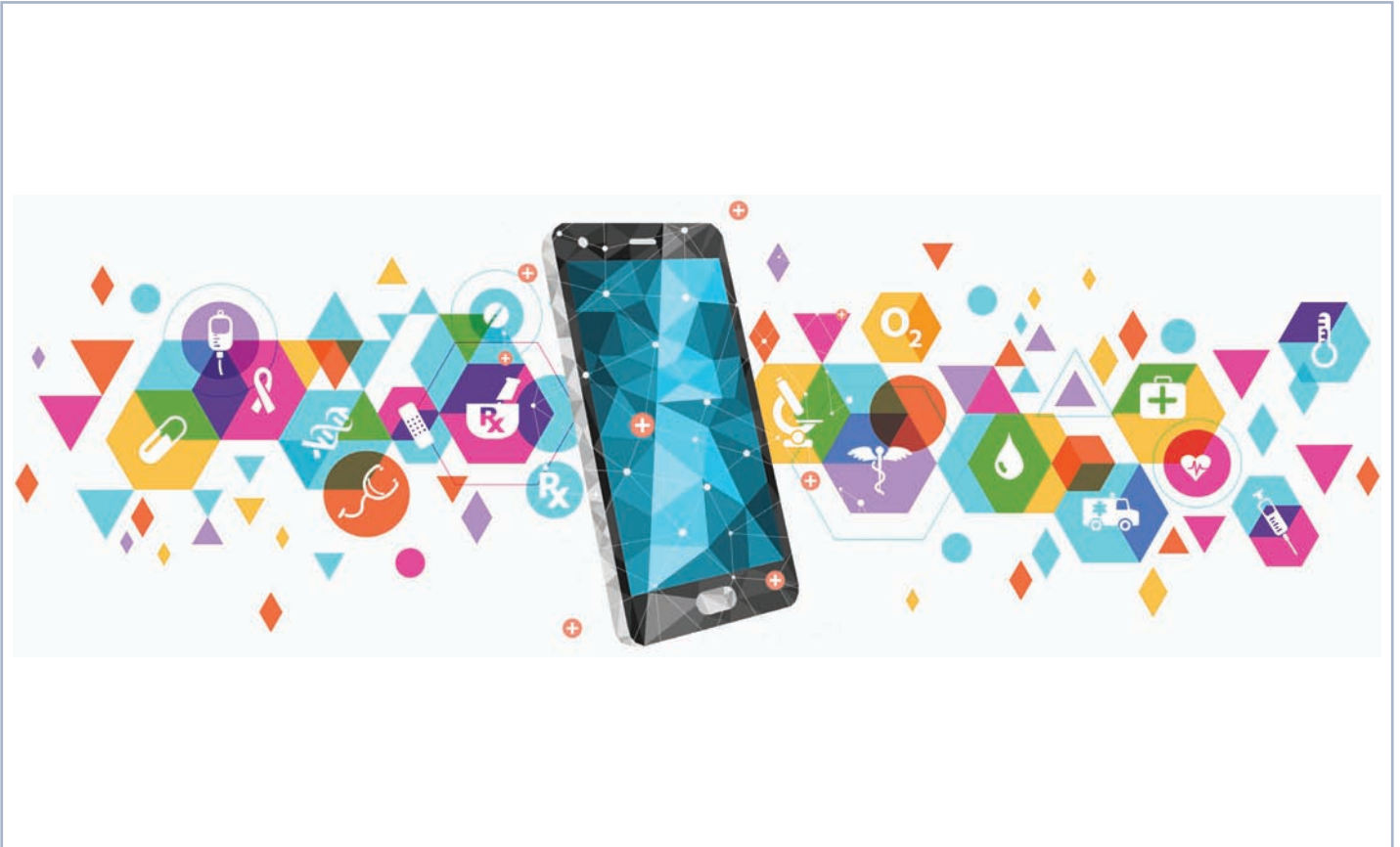


DECEMBER 2016 VOLUME 14 ISSUE 4

PAIN NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE BRITISH PAIN SOCIETY



To heal or not to heal

New perspective on placebo

**Apps, Bots and Wearables : The future is here
at present**

**Educating secondary school students about
paediatric chronic pain**

Misuse of gabapentinoids

ISSN 2050-4497



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THE BRITISH PAIN SOCIETY
PAIN NEWS

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The Editor welcomes contributions including letters, short clinical reports and news of interest to members, including notice of meetings.

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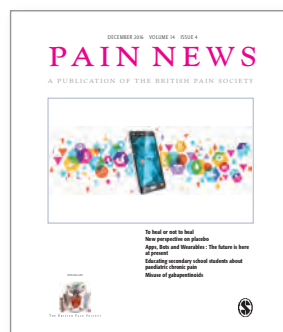
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<https://www.britishpainsociety.org/for-members/pain-news/>



British Pain Society Calendar of Events

To attend any of the below events, simply book online at:

www.britishpainsociety.org/mediacentre/events/



2017

Patient Liaison Committee Webinar

Wednesday 18th January 2017

Online

The Patient Liaison Committee will be hosting two 45 minute webinars, these will be free to view and will have the facility to ask questions at the end.

50th Anniversary Annual Scientific Meeting

Wednesday 3rd – Friday 5th May 2017

Birmingham

Put the dates in your diary now for this flagship event – the 50th Anniversary Annual Scientific Meeting. We have an exciting and high profile line up of plenary speakers and parallel session topics for the Meeting. The ASM is a great opportunity to:

- Network with colleagues
- Keep up to date with the latest cutting edge research and developments relevant to pain
- Raise questions, partake in debates and discuss outcome
- Meet with poster exhibitors and discuss their research

To view the list of plenary speakers and for further information please visit: <https://www.britishpainsociety.org/2017-asm-birmingham/scientific-programme/>

Living Well Right to the End

Philosophy & Ethics SIG Annual Meeting

Monday 26th – Thursday 29th June 2017

Rydall Hall, Cumbria

How to live well at all can prove elusive and has been much debated for thousands of years.

Is it to do with physical health or pleasure or a general sense of wellbeing or happiness or fulfilment or meaning or is it merely the absence of suffering?

Can we somehow enable those we care for to achieve a level of wellbeing even as they become ill and perhaps face death?

Can we achieve a measure of wellbeing in our own lives?

Our meeting this year takes place in the beautiful surroundings of Rydal Hall amongst the lakes and fells of Cumbria where we will be considering all of these issues.

Gonnae no dae that! – exploring patient and clinician fears

Pain Management Programmes SIG Biennial Conference

14th & 15th September 2017

Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland

Speakers including: Amanda C-de-C Williams, Tamar Pincus, David Gillanders and Johannes Vlaeyen.

Social events:

- Wednesday evening: drinks reception in the iconic Glasgow City Chambers.
 - Thursday evening: Scottish gin and real ale tasting, plus the chance to play the bagpipes at the National Piping Centre!
-

Further details for all our meetings can be found on our events listing page:

www.britishpainsociety.org/mediacentre/events/

Dr Arasu Rayen *Editor*

pns.rayen@gmail.com



Apps are everywhere. Your smartphone is just a brick if you do not have any installed Apps. Apps, even though started in the

mobile world now, have invaded the PC world as well. In 2002, Blackberry was introduced, followed by iPhone in 2007 and Android phones in 2008. Because of its ease of use and multiple functionality, mobile phone adoption among general public escalated exponentially. Along with smartphone industry expansion, App world grew rapidly. It is estimated that Google Play has around 2.2 million Apps, and Apple's App Store has around 2 million Apps (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/276623/number-of-Apps-available-in-leading-app-stores/> – accessed on 10 October 2006). Apple's Mac series, Google's Chrome books and Microsoft's Windows 10, all have App

stores to download Apps and explore. Apps are invading health industry thick and fast. Stephen, Damien and Arun's third article in their series of articles on Technology in health, 'Apps, Bots and wearables' deals with Apps and more interesting technologies like Bots and Wearables which are already in use or in the horizon. The future is Apps; the future is technology. One thing to point out at this stage is about the App that The British Pain Society (BPS) will have for the Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM). Please read the President's message to know more about this.

Eric Berne was a prominent psychologist from Canada. In his best-selling book, *Games People Play*, he introduced a concept 'transactional analysis' – a method for studying interaction between people. Berne defined three ego states – parent, adult and child. He described that every single social transaction we make involves any of these three ego states in each individual. Similar to this Performance studies is a discipline which takes a whole system analysis to analyse human-to-human interaction. Sara

Goldingay, Researcher and Senior Lecturer, Department of Drama, University of Exeter, in her article, 'To heal or not to heal: the Hamlet effect', compares the medical practice to theatre performance. She compares the health professionals to the actors with pre-existing script like 'history taking' with white coat and stethoscope as props. Sarah has also presented a programme in BBC Radio 4 'The Problem of Pain, BBC Radio 4' (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b061t68w>). Please read the article and listen to the podcast of the programme in BBC Radio 4 website.

We are fast approaching 2017. By the time you read this, Christmas is almost upon us. We are celebrating our 50th ASM Meeting Anniversary next year with an exceptional meeting in Birmingham. I would encourage you to book your study leave and get ready for great Celebrations. If you have any nostalgic memories of your yesteryears in BPS and ASM, please share it with us. You can write to me or if you have any photographs, please send them to me. I am eager to see them and publish them.

Dr Andrew Baranowski



What is the role of the President's Report in *Pain News*?

I have had a discussion with a number of people about the style of my President's Report in *Pain*

News. The discussions have been revolving around whether or not this is a report by 'myself' as President of The British Pain Society (BPS) or from the President of the BPS and I happen to be writing it? I am sure that all Presidents will have their own style and in the past many may have been more formal in their reports, but I see *Pain News* as your newsletter and not a formal audit report or prospectus that needs a Presidential approach ... I feel it is important to make this exciting newsletter as personal for you as possible. As a consequence, I am writing about my thoughts – I will not always be correct and I aim to listen to the responses that come out of my musing both as a result of this report and other contacts.

2017 is going to be a very exciting year for the BPS

Team BPS has been working on modernising our Society for several years and whereas there is still a lot to do, you will see change ...

The Annual Scientific Meeting

As I hope you will be aware, the 2017 is the 50th anniversary of our Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), taking into account those meetings from the

inception of a national pain Society – which started as the Intractable Pain Society. This makes us the oldest Pain Society. We are also the only British multi-disciplinary Society.

The ASM that we have planned for May 2017 will reflect the importance of this anniversary and our multidisciplinary team (MDT). We have started advertising the outstanding programme that we have lined up, both within this newsletter and our social media; please prioritise this meeting as the BPS needs you and hopefully you will see the importance of the Society in supporting the MDT. I am clear that not only are the speakers highly regarded for their expertise and delivery, but because the Scientific Programme Committee have organised the meeting to represent a number of themes, we have maximised the impact for you. There will be items of relevance throughout the meeting to stimulate all those attending, whatever your level of expertise and discipline. This is one of the changes that we have instigated following feedback from our members, both those that have attended regularly in the past and others who are less frequently involved.

At the request of our members, we have reviewed the branding, design, presentation and advertising of the meeting. We have brought in a new company, 22 Design, to modernise our ASM documents bringing them in line with our new brand for the BPS (see below). Hopefully, this will provide a fresher and cleaner experience but more importantly simplify the paperwork so that life is easier for those attending.

As a part of modernising our documentation for the ASM, we will be introducing a conference App. This is an

App that we have specifically chosen for its ease of use, its ability to help members organise their meeting day and a functionality that will enable those attending to be much more involved with the speakers by facilitating questions and ratings. We hope to move away from more didactic presentations and to facilitate discussion as our members have requested.

The ASM party

The social side of the ASM is important to me (!), and I was pleased to support the re-introduction of the ASM Party a few years ago. Choosing the disc jockey (DJ) is the key, and the play list is essential if we expect you to get up and dance. If you have any recommendations for the DJ, please let us know. Please also consider emailing us five songs (band and title) that will drive you crazy on the dance floor and will get even the consultants up there with their team; please email to asm@britishpainsociety.org with the subject 'Let's get the party started', and we will see what we can do.

For our 50th anniversary, Team BPS is looking at other ways of making the venue a home away from home. We are working on moving away from 'holding slides' while you are waiting towards more and more interesting approaches – I see this as work in development. You will need to attend to be able to judge our early efforts and to know more!

Future ASMs

The new App will enable us to collect more information about your views of the ASM. It is your opinion that has informed change to date and will continue to inform change. As we begin to plan for

2018 and beyond, we are looking at smaller venues which hopefully will provide a warmer more cohesive atmosphere. That is only one of the changes, being discussed; if you have ideas, then please email to asm@britishpainsociety.org.

Rebranding

Over the past 6–9 months, we have employed a branding consultant. The aim was to modernise our appearance but not lose our heritage. Bill Wallsgrove has done a great job in sharpening our image but maintaining our traditional logo. It is important that we have a sharp clean image that is clearly associated with us and easily identifiable. However, rebranding was essential as The BPS brand will be rolled out across all our paperwork, social media and events, and, as a consequence, had to be appropriate for those media. Although, ultimately, it is also key for our fundraising.

Fundraising

The Society, over the past 5 years or so, has made cost savings where possible. Any further such approaches would potentially jeopardise the work that we currently undertake. The concept of the National Awareness Campaign was, partly as the title suggests, to increase awareness of the problems of those faced with pain and what the BPS does to support such individuals, but also to act as a means to enable fundraising so that we can support our members to support those who live in pain. The setting-up of the BPS trading arm was also to facilitate income generation by enabling us to explore new opportunities that a charity cannot do.

After nearly 18 months of research, proposals, business cases, debate and meetings (good for building character and for governance, so I am told!), we now have an agreed prospectus that can be used in our fundraising efforts. We

also have a collection of branded posters – these are quite dramatic and informative in a punchy way. Finally, we have some ideas!

Having been involved in this work for nearly 5 years, I am amazed as to how much time and effort has been required to move this forward from our Secretariat, Council Members, Execs and a significant number of volunteers as well as Bill. If we pull this off, it will be due to their altruistic efforts on the behalf of the Society and for its members.

Exciting ideas aimed at bringing in support for the work of the Society

To a certain extent, we are now the stage when we just have to do it. Currently, we have the following:

Cycle challenge

Glyn Williams, elected Council member, has drawn up a proposal for a cycle fundraising event. Hopefully, there will be more about this in the not too distant future. I have some inkling of what is involved, and I will need to be sure the ‘granny’ gears work on my bike. As well as involving members, we are looking at variations that may work with those that are living with pain, friends and relatives. Glyn and Team Cycle keep up working on the proposal.

What has become known as the ice bucket challenge?

A variation of the successful ice bucket challenge, where iced water is poured over someone in the name of charity (!), is being devised by Ann Taylor and Sam Ahmedzai. This is likely to morph but is an example of some of the background work happening.

Art awards

It is early as I write this report. The BPS is currently working on building up relations

with a number of famous artists and societies to launch an arts awards prize competition, awards ceremony and art show. To date, the discussions have been well received, and this may potentially be an ongoing programme. I’m very excited about the range of possibilities that this project may enable. In my mind, I feel it could potentially put us in closer contact with those who live with pain, it may help them to express their feelings about the problems they face, it will help us to spread the word and potentially facilitate us to develop close relationships with individuals and agencies that might look towards supporting the activities of the BPS and its members.

Proactive working with media

In the past, a lot of our BPS work with media (newspapers, magazines, radio and television amongst others) has been when we have been contacted for help. However, we have set up a small working group to look at being more proactive. The members have been asked to undertake a number of activities which include: developing a number of BPS standard responses so that we can respond quickly to requests from a well thought – out position. We are also looking to be more proactive in recognising where opportunities for media working exist (essentially monitoring publications and providing reports to agencies before they ask for them). We are looking at media training so that we can develop ‘BPS media gurus’ who sound good on radio or look good on television! Finally, we will work up some ideas around engaging media to include pain in their portfolio of activities, documentaries and even as a part of serial story lines. We want to position the BPS as the place to go to for advice and information around all issues related to pain. Thank you Austin Leach, Roger Knaggs, Alan Fayaz and Dina Almulji for taking this forward.

Dr Andrew Baranowski

Enhanced member engagement through improved communication

As you'll see, I am really keen that the members have the opportunity to interact with Council and Execs as much as possible. There is no doubt this has to be in a controlled manner as I already receive around 100 emails a day. For that reason, I am suggesting that we set up specific email addresses for certain issues (as above). We have also made the minutes from Council available under the members section of the website, and we are working on developing discussion forums within our website. This work is ongoing but should, over the next year or so, significantly open the Society for its members.

Enhanced website

As you are aware, John Goddard and his team revamped the website. Ann Taylor and Sam Ahmedzai, as Webmasters, have provided Council with further recommendations as to how to open up the website so that it is more user-friendly and how we can improve its functionality. Those developments will be undertaken in the context of the rebranding exercise. Zoey Malpus is currently leading a working group that is collaborating very closely with Ann Taylor to look at how we integrate many features from the Pain Community Centre website into our website. For Ann Taylor, to have facilitated this merger is a huge gift for our members. The merger of the two websites will significantly increase the amount of information that we have for patients and members as well as providing continued medical education facilities. We will have to strike a balance between what is free for members, what members are charged at a nominal fee and what non-members are charged. The fact that this is your website will be central to any decisions around that.

Recognising member contributions through awards

William Campbell in his capacity as Immediate Past President is leading a working group looking at our current awards system. There are a number of proposals, and, in due course, these will be presented to the members. However, there is one area that I am keen to push forward: *recognition of BPS members by their colleagues and patients*. The details are to be ironed out; however, at this stage, my thoughts are that members of the Society who are recognised (such as by a thank you letter) from their colleagues or patients will have their name, institution and a key paragraph or so published in a quarterly (possibly monthly) push email from the President to all our members. The details would also be published on our website. Every time we publish a new list, we would Tweet it. We are always happy to complain, we need to be more positive about promoting our members who have been acknowledged. I hope that you will all see the benefit of a system where your colleagues' achievements are recognised by the BPS and our members.

Regional meetings

Members have for many years requested that meetings are less London-centric. Paul Cameron and the Education Committee are currently looking at ways in which this could occur. Joint meetings between local departments, societies and agencies with the BPS are one such model. The benefit for the local team would hopefully come from the collaboration with the BPS and the badging of the meeting by our Society providing evidence that the meeting meets certain standards. I envisage that this would only be available where the organising committee has a significant number of BPS members, that it is a benefit for members.

Membership fees and what you as members benefit

Martin Johnson is involved in multiple discussions and meetings looking at the way we structure membership fees and the benefits of being a member. Despite a huge amount of work to date, there is still a lot to be done. We are listening to members as the team review membership.

In conclusion - there is a lot to do...

So, 2017 is a significant year. We will be instigating numerous changes to improve your experience, and we will continue to evolve as is right for a 50TH Anniversary. As I have said before, we need you. Please approach us if you have the time to work on BPS projects and are happy to be a work engine to bring about change that will improve what the Society can do to support its members to help those living with pain and to work towards the Society meeting its values:

ENABLING BEST PATIENT CARE:

So people in pain live their lives to the fullest.

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS:

So health and social care professionals work together to provide comprehensive support.

MAKING PAIN VISIBLE:

So pain and its consequences are on the national health agenda.

INFORMING PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE:

So professional standards are elevated through research, audit and education.

INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE:

So we have sustainable financial growth to invest in our mission.

Professor Roger Knaggs



Pain News
2016, Vol 14(4) 143
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Special Interest Groups: the lifeblood of the Society

During the ongoing review of membership and recruitment, I have been reminded on numerous occasions that

The British Pain Society primarily is an organisation for its members. One of the many ways that the Society serves its members is by providing a range of Special Interest Groups (SIGs). The SIGs allow members who have a specific interest to discuss and debate their interest in more depth and the Society encourages the work of the SIGs as it demonstrates the multidisciplinary nature of the Society.

There are currently 14 SIGs which cover specific types of pain or specific populations (e.g. acute pain, headache and neuropathic pains, pain in children and older people), treatments for pain (e.g. interventional pain medicine and pain management programmes) to other aspects of clinical practice (e.g. medicolegal and pain education). SIGs only work with dedication and commitment of a relatively small number of members. I would

encourage you to think about how you contribute more actively to the SIGs that you are a member of or consider joining a new SIG, or if you feel an area of pain medicine is not represented by the current SIGs think about creating a new one.

Access to medicinal cannabis: meeting patient needs

No doubt you will have seen media reports from an influential parliamentary group, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Drug Policy Reform. After taking evidence from patients, medical professions and examining how medical cannabis is regulated in other countries, they proposed the legalisation of cannabis for medicinal purposes. A report commissioned by APPG that reviewed the evidence for use of cannabis for a range of conditions and the final report from the APPG are worth reading.

In an online survey of medicinal cannabis use in the United Kingdom, the most common indications were chronic and severe pain (24% of respondents), arthritis (12%), insomnia (21%), fibromyalgia (9%), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (7%), depression (30%) and anxiety (26%). There is also a summary from a survey of pain clinicians that was organised by the Chronic Pain Policy Coalition.

In response to the APPG group report, elected Council members issued the statement below:

The British Pain Society welcomes the interest of the APPG for Drug Policy Reform in expanding access to medicinal cannabis.

The expert report commissioned by the APPG identifies that there have been several studies that have investigated the effectiveness of cannabinoids for different types of persistent (chronic) pain although there have been other studies that have showed negative results too. In neuropathic pain specifically, cannabis and cannabinoids are not effective.

Like all medicines, cannabinoids have side effects and potential harms for users. There are significant concerns from the epidemiological literature that cannabis use has significant mental health risks in susceptible individuals and the degree of this risk for 'therapeutic' users is unknown.

The British Pain Society welcomes the APPG for highlighting the issue but recommends there is insufficient evidence to support its use in pain management at present.

Spotlight – Thanthullu Vasu

The width and breadth of BPS membership is testimony to the diversity within the organisation and in the pain world. The Editorial Board would like to acknowledge this richness by shining a spotlight on some of our members. In this edition, we speak to Dr Thanthullu Vasu, Consultant and Head of Pain Management Services, Leicester.



*Dr Thanthullu Vasu
Consultant and Head
of Pain Management
Services, Leicester*

1. What first brought you in contact with the BPS?

As an enthusiastic trainee, I attended the British Pain Society (BPS) Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) regularly. This paved the path for networking

among numerous friends in the pain specialty.

2. What was your role in the BPS? What excited you about this role?

I was honoured to be elected as a BPS Council Member (2009–2012). The most exciting role was that of the Honorary Editor of the *Pain News*. Being the Editor helped me to establish productive professional relationships with a wide variety of multidisciplinary healthcare professionals.

3. If you were President of the BPS for a day, what would you do?

It is said, 'You have to dream before your dream can come true!' I had the

unique opportunity to work with different Presidents of BPS including Dr Hester, Prof. Bond, Prof. Langford and Dr Campbell; I have realised that the role of the President is very challenging with huge responsibility! If this dream comes true, I will heavily subsidise the next ASM fees to make sure that many hundreds of members attend the 50th ASM meeting in Birmingham.

4. What are you known for professionally?

I am known for my skills in helping young children with persistent pain; this is made possible by our multidisciplinary team in Leicester. I also lead the pain service at the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust.

5. What are you most passionate about professionally?

I am very passionate about our paediatric pain clinic and the achievements that we have made in the last 2 years (including winning the National Grunenthal Award for an innovative project for young children living with pain).

6. What do you have a knack for?

My biggest strength is in setting the patient expectations to the right level that could be delivered! I have high rate

of satisfaction from our patients. Furthermore, our paediatric chronic pain service achieves 100% satisfaction rate in the *Friends and Family test*.

7. Where can we find you in your spare time? What is your favourite way to spend a weekend or a Sunday afternoon?

You will find me walking with my friends along a scenic canal-side or in a rural farm side in Leicestershire during my spare time; I lead a walking club in Oadby, Leicester. I organise cultural events and take active part in dancing and debates in these events. My two children keep me very busy and happy during the weekend.

8. Any other volunteer activities apart from the BPS that you're passionate about?

I have linked with patient charity groups in and around Leicester and have used these links to start new services for patients with persistent pain. I am proud that these activities are publicised with appreciation in the local media.

9. Any favourite non-profit organisations that you support and why?

I support Leicester Hospitals Charity and they reciprocate by supporting our innovations. Recently, I have established

link with another patient charity 'A way with Pain' and have written patient information details for their website (<http://www.awaywithpain.co.uk/acupuncture-children>).

I want to be remembered as a compassionate and caring friend who will not hesitate to challenge when necessary but support at all times.

Faculty of Pain Medicine published this as very innovative project in their website (<https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/faculty-of-pain-medicine/useful-links>).

10. What would be impossible for you to give up?

Reading – I have to read at least 30 minutes every evening before bedtime. My favourite authors include Dan Brown, Paulo Coelho and Jeffrey Archer; I am addicted to the Tamil authors Balakumaran, Sujatha and Kalki.

12. Any life achievements you are particularly proud of?

I changed the style and format of *Pain News* when I was the Editor; this was appreciated by the Executive committee, Council and the wider membership.

I am proud to win the National Grunenthal Pain Award for our innovative paediatric pain workshop; I was elated when the

13. Anything else you'd like to tell people about yourself?

BPS has given me a new dimension to my professional life and instilled the importance of team working. It is famously said, 'If you want to walk fast, walk alone; but if you want to walk far, walk together'. Let us all walk together to raise the profile of our Specialty. See you all at next ASM in Birmingham!

11. How do you want to be remembered?

The British Pain Society is nothing without you, its members, and we appreciate your continuing involvement and support. We recognise that, for many members, in recent years, the decision to pay the membership fee for a non-compulsory professional society has been more challenging so we will continue to look closely at our fees and we will take care to limit any increases. We hope that you will continue to encourage your colleagues to join us.

May we also remind you that The British Pain Society is a registered charity and we welcome funds received from legacies and through sponsorship. As we know from the numbers who have joined fun runs at previous ASMs, many of our members are actively engaged in sporting activities. So, if you are signing up for any marathons, half-marathons, triathlons, swims or tiddlywinks contests, please consider nominating The Society as your chosen charity.



Thank you for supporting the BPS!



Follow the Society on twitter

Please follow the Society on twitter **@BritishPainSoc**

We will be sharing relevant information and updates from the Society.

Would you like to read the full version of *Pain News*?

**-then sign up today to become a member of the
British Pain Society**



**Over 1,200 healthcare professionals are already enjoying the
benefits of membership of The British Pain Society:**

- ACCESS to original research and reviews on all major aspects of pain and pain management via your *FREE* quarterly copy of the *British Journal of Pain*.
- UP TO DATE information on new developments within the field of pain via your *FREE* quarterly newsletter *Pain News*.
- NETWORKING opportunities to meet with other professionals working in the field of pain management offering a multi-disciplinary viewpoint.
- REPRESENTATION at Department of Health and other associated professional bodies.
- ACCESS to join a wide range of Special Interest Groups.
- FREE SUBSCRIPTION to *European Journal of Pain* - the renowned international monthly journal
- SPECIAL RATES for our Annual Scientific Meetings and Society Events
- WEBSITE with up-to-date news and secure Members only areas
- OPPORTUNITIES for grants and awards

Visit our website to find out more and to apply for membership:

<https://www.britishpainsociety.org/become-a-member/>



JOIN US TODAY AND YOU'LL BE IN GOOD COMPANY