



Association for
Palliative Medicine
Of Great Britain and Ireland

Trainees'
NEWS UPDATE

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APM Trainees' News

Dear Trainees,

Welcome to the May edition of your newsletter. It has been a busy time for everyone hence the delay in getting this newsletter out to you, however we hope that the information included here is of some use.

The current situation with Covid-19 has been an unprecedented situation for all of us and has affected us all in different ways. As a Committee we would like to send warm wishes to all of you going above and beyond during these challenging times. It hasn't been easy, and we know that some of you will have had a really rough time. We are thinking of you and looking forward to brighter times ahead.

In this newsletter we have pulled together some useful journal articles relevant to the Covid-19 situation which are worth a read – if you can manage any more Covid-themed information! Post of the month is from me, writing about my experiences of working from home during this time, and my learning points. On a lighter note, the RCP registrar scheme is looking for applicants – this is a great training opportunity so please [take a look](#).

As ever we are keen to hear from trainees on what we can be doing to help you. Please contact your regional reps if you have any thoughts or contact us on Twitter [@apm_trainees](#).

Wishing you all the best,

Vanessa Jackson

Wellbeing Apps

NHS Staff have been given free access to some wellbeing apps since March to the end of December 2020 to support their mental health and wellbeing following the onset of Covid 19. These include:

Headspace

Headspace is a meditation app. It aims to teach mindfulness meditation skills for a few minutes each day to help positively impact mental and physical health.



Unmind

Unmind is a workplace mental health platform aiming to help organisations and employees improve their mental wellbeing.



App Access

To explore these apps and for more resources on wellbeing at work:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2020/03/free-access-to-wellbeing-apps-for-all-nhs-staff>

Knowledge Hub

Palliative Care Formulary Access

New to 2020, eligible APM members i.e. full members (including reduced subscription) now have access to Palliative Care Formulary Online through MedicinesComplete.

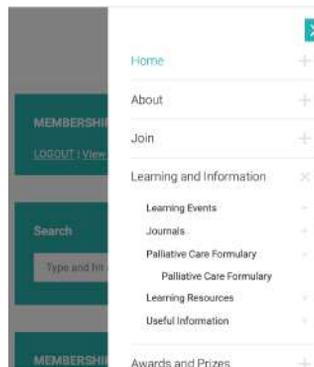
Access via the APM website by logging in and accessing PCF through the learning tab.



1. Login on to the APM website apmonline.org



2. From the list icon (top right corner) select 'Palliative Care Formulary'



COVID-19 Guidance

The APM has issued guidance regarding COVID-19 and Palliative, End of Life and Bereavement Care. The latest guidance can be found on the website: <https://apmonline.org/>



If there is anything else that you have found useful in preparing for the SCE, or for CPD in general, then please contact us and we will endeavour to add this to the next News Update.

Post of the Month

My experience of working from home

At the outset of 2020, the biggest change that I was preparing for was the arrival of my first baby in July this year. Like everyone else, I didn't anticipate that a global pandemic would throw my personal and work life into chaos! When things started to get serious with COVID, and we started to encounter suspected cases at work, my consultant colleagues supported me with the decision to begin working from home.

I am so grateful that my colleagues have been so supportive during this uncertain time, and that I have been able to continue to support the service whilst working from home. I was given a work laptop with access to our systems and an iPhone to take all the community advice calls. Our outpatient clinics are being done by telephone and I am allocated clinic patients three days a week. My consultants have been supporting me with any queries that I have about patients and I am still able to meet some curriculum competencies even though I am not in face to face work.

Working from home comes with its own challenges. I often wake up in the morning and forget what day it is! I miss the variety of working with the hospital palliative care team and the camaraderie of the workplace. The ad hoc nature of the community calls can also mean that whilst some periods can be quiet, some days are extremely busy – sometimes the phone doesn't stop!

One of the most difficult aspects of my current work is having telephone consultations with patients whom I have never met. On occasions I have spoken with patients and relatives who have been very distressed. My usual instincts to reach out a hand, lean closer, and just sit with the patient in their distress are lost in a telephone consultation. I hope that my empathy comes across on the phone, and if a patient seems particularly distressed, I will ask one of our nurses to make early contact for emotional support.

Even though I am not in the 'front line' of the COVID response, I am pleased that I am still able to contribute. I have learned a lot about the advantages and pitfalls of telephone communication and also developed time management and organisational skills. I am sure that the learning from this experience will stand me in good stead for the next stage of my career.

Vanessa Jackson

ST5 Palliative Medicine

Meet the Trainees' Committee



Dr Jasmine Lee

**Communications
Officer, APMT**

Hi, I'm Jasmine and the current APMT Communications officer. I took on the post early this year. My role encompasses communication forums between trainees and the APM including our Twitter, Facebook group, email account and these newsletters.

I am currently a ST5 trainee in the London and South East deanery and on placement at Royal Trinity Hospice.

Like many of us I can't wait for the opportunity to be able to travel again as I love to discover new places, cultures and foods. In the meantime, I'll be working on my baking, at home Yoga workouts and continuing trying out the mindfulness apps we talk about above.

Follow our twitter: @apm_trainees

Facebook group: APM Trainees

Research/Journals

Characteristics, symptom management and outcomes of 101 patients with COVID-19 referred for hospital palliative care

Lovell N et al. *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*. Apr 20 2020. doi.org/10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2020.04.015

This case series of 101 COVID-19 positive patients referred for hospital palliative care at two NHS Trusts in London in March 2020 explores common presenting symptoms and information on management to help inform practice.

The median time under palliative care was 2 days and 75/101 patients died. The most prevalent symptoms were breathlessness,

agitation, drowsiness and pain. The authors noted that most patients' symptoms could be managed with low doses of opioids and benzodiazepines and that the availability of subcutaneous infusion pumps is essential.

The authors recommend an international minimum data set as a useful way to gather more information about the palliation of patients with COVID-19 as the pandemic develops.

Digitisation and the patient–professional relationship in palliative care

Payne S *et al.* *Palliative Medicine*. Apr 7 2020. doi.org/10.1177/0269216320911501

This timely editorial in *Palliative Medicine* explores issues surrounding the growing use of technology to augment palliative care delivery.

The authors describe some of the benefits of technology such as digital applications which may allow for remote monitoring of the patient's condition and help support patients in their place of care. They also describe some potential pitfalls around issues such as confidentiality of patient data, and the risk that more attention may be focused on the screen than the patient.

It is important to be aware of these issues during the current climate when we will likely all be using such technology more.

Resources for trainees interested in research

The APM Science Committee have produced the following to help trainees providing useful resources and an outline on how you might approach carrying out a research project: <https://apmonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Resources-for-Trainees-Wanting-to-Carry-Out-Research.pdf>

Journals

The following journals can be accessed via your login through the APM website:

- Palliative Medicine Journal
- BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care Journal
- EAPC Journal (at a reduced subscription rate)

Publications may also be available through the BMA website, for those with membership. A list of these can be found at: <https://www.bma.org.uk/library/e-resources/e-journals>.

OOPE Advert

RCP Chief Registrar scheme

The RCP Chief Registrar scheme is currently open for recruitment for 2020/21.

Chief registrars work in clinical practice and have 40 to 50% of their time protected to develop, lead and support projects which focus on key local challenges and priorities. This may include service improvement, engagement and morale, education and training, workforce and sustainability.

- You need to be minimum ST4 to apply
- Posts are for minimum 12 months.
- You will need to apply for a post locally.

Further information is available here:

www.rcplondon.ac.uk/projects/outputs/chief-registrar-programme-information-doctors-training

Contact the APM Trainees' Committee

We always want to hear your feedback, so please do get in touch:

- Via your regional APM Trainees' Representative.

For a full list of regional representatives go to

<http://apmonline.org/committees/trainees-committee/>

- Email us directly via apmtraineescommittee@gmail.com
- On our Facebook page 'APM Trainees'
- On Twitter @apm_trainees



Joining the APM provides a host of benefits: if you are not already a member join today! <http://apmonline.org/join/>

Please remember to upgrade your membership to 'full membership' on commencement of your first consultant post. This can be done by emailing the APM at office@compleat-online.co.uk