



Term: Winter | Issue: 31 | Date: January 2023

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Dear all,

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

I hope you have all had some time off over Christmas to relax and spend time with friends and family in this busy time for the healthcare sector.

In this issue we have an in depth article from Dr Laura Gordge talking about her time as an **education fellow for the RCP**. A really interesting read for anyone considering an OOPE or interested in education opportunities.

In our journal articles in focus we look at the **health care impact of ACP** in terms of health care use and costs, as well as a fascinating article on the **decision making process for palliative care patients and relatives on being involved in an RCT**.

We welcome **Anna Grundy to the Committee as Clinical Quality Representative** – welcome Anna and we look forward to working with you!

We still have two **vacancies on the committee** for the regional reps co-ordinator and the BMA liaison. Both great opportunities to get involved in the committee and get some management experience, as well as a chance to have your voices heard!

Best wishes

Lucy Ison
Chair of the APM Trainees Committee

Trainees' Committee Update

APMT Facebook Group and Twitter

If you are a new palliative medicine trainee or not yet in our Facebook group, please join to share educational events, discuss topics and for latest APMT news.

Follow us on Twitter **@APM_trainees**

OOP Trainees Facebook Group

The Facebook group that was formerly set up to help support APM shielding trainees has evolved into a support group for trainees going OOP (parental leave, OOPE/T, sick leave)

– <https://www.facebook.com/groups/apmt0>

If you would like to join, please request to join via Facebook and drop us a message with your name and region.

Website update – Wellbeing Resource List

Our website has been updated throughout this year. You'll find links to the curriculum including the Covid-amended curriculum.

The most recent addition is our Wellbeing Resource List compiled by our SAC team. Find it here – <https://apmonline.org/trainees-committee/>

Article in focus: OOPE as an Education Fellow

Good quality education moments have kept me going through the long and tricky years as a junior doctor. These have ranged from inspiring conferences describing new developments, to ordinary moments on the ward with a senior who spent some time and effort to explain something basic. These moments made me interested in medical education and how this can be delivered effectively in the pressurised NHS systems we all work in. Teaching opportunities are nearly everywhere, and particularly in palliative medicine with its multidisciplinary ethos.

I heard about the opportunity to become a “clinical education fellow” at the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) through another palliative medicine registrar who had previously done the job as an out of programme experience (OOPE). It is an unusual OOPE job as there is no clinical component and you work alongside many non-clinicians outside of an NHS organisation. The job is based in the education directorate of the college who run education courses and projects for all the physician specialties. There is a huge variety in the role: I taught on RCP led courses, became an examiner for the physician associate national OSCE exam, hosted a podcast, managed a revision question bank and co-created a new postgraduate certificate module about the medical needs of adults with a learning disability. Day-to-day, this meant self-directed working and often working from home with regular online meetings. This took some adjustment but has improved my prioritising skills and management of my email inbox considerably. I also ate many good pastries.

There are numerous highlights I could write about, but the most rewarding aspects were seeing my projects come to life and take shape in a national context, enjoying some travel around the country for teaching or conferences, and meeting some exceptionally inspirational people who work at the college. It is a truly unique year, and everyone’s experience of the role has been different according to their projects and interests. Understanding the college and how decisions surrounding medical training are made was also enlightening. There are drawbacks to consider such as delaying the end of your training, a drop in pay and I struggled to see all my projects through in one year. I would recommend this opportunity to anyone in the latter stages of their registrar training with an interest in postgraduate medical education. You would also need to be based near London or Liverpool (the two RCP offices) but I worked from home several days per week. Vacancies are usually advertised around February and March for autumn starts and it is best to keep an eye on the job vacancies section of the RCP website (<https://jobs.rcplondon.ac.uk/Vacancy.aspx>). I am also happy to be contacted if anyone has a query about the role - my email address is lauragordge@nhs.net.

Upcoming Events

Evidence Based Medicine and Management

We have a fantastic panel of speakers who are covering topics ranging from management, portfolio careers, getting the most from medical journals and how to use research findings to influence clinical practice. There will be an interactive management session facilitated by Professor Rob George and Dr Amy Proffitt. They will cover a range of topics relating to management in NHS and independent hospices. The programme has been designed to help meet the curriculum competencies relating to research, evidence-based medicine and management.

Tuesday 17th January

Virtual

<https://apmeducationhub.org/events/national-trainees-study-day/>

Wednesday Workshop: Speaking with and writing for the media: How to be heard

Speakers: Dr Rachel Clarke and Professor Mark Taubert

Wednesday 15th March 2023

Venue: EICC Edinburgh

<https://apmeducationhub.org/events/workshop-speaking-with-and-writing-for-the-media-how-to-be-heard/>

Palliative Care Congress 2023

Annual event with delegates from around the world. This year's theme is "Sustaining each other, growing together".

Thursday 16th March 2023

Friday 17th March 2023

Venue: Edinburgh International Conference Centre

<https://pccongress.org.uk/>

The APM & PCRS Research Course - Understanding and Applying Research Methods in Practice

A joint APM and PCRS course on Understanding and Applying Research Methods in Practice, has been developed by the APM Research & Ethics Committee and the PCRS Executive Committee. The course will be facilitated by national leaders in Palliative and End of Life Care Research, and be held over 3 weeks, with pre-work being issued in Week 1, a virtual day held in Week 2 and an in-person day to finish the course. The course has been designed to support all clinicians seeking to begin their journey in palliative care research, with the programme constructed to address the research competencies for Palliative Medicine Trainees.

Thursday 27th April

Venue: Virtual

Thursday 11th May Venue: University of Leeds

Healthcare use and healthcare costs for patients with advanced cancer; the international ACTION cluster-randomised trial on advance care planning

Korfage IJ, Polinder S, Preston N, et al. Healthcare use and healthcare costs for patients with advanced cancer; the international ACTION cluster-randomised trial on advance care planning. *Palliative Medicine*. 2022;0(0). doi:10.1177/02692163221142950

Background:

ACP has been found to be associated with reduced healthcare use and costs but studies are scarce.

Two studies have explored this in patients with cancer; one found an association with reduced healthcare use and costs, the other found no effect.

Aim:

To determine the impact on healthcare use and costs of an ACP intervention across six European countries.

Design:

Cluster-randomised trial, of ACP conversations supported by certified facilitators.

Setting/participants:

Patients with advanced lung or colorectal cancer from 23 hospitals in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia and the UK. Data on healthcare use were collected from hospital medical files during 12 months after inclusion.

Results:

Patients with a good performance status were underrepresented in the intervention group ($p < 0.001$). Intervention and control patients spent on average 9 versus 8 days in hospital ($p = 0.07$) and the average number of X-rays was 1.9 in both groups. Fewer intervention than control patients received systemic cancer treatment; 79% versus 89%, respectively ($p < 0.001$). Total average costs of hospital care during 12 months follow-up were €32,700 for intervention versus €40,700 for control patients ($p = 0.04$ with bootstrap analyses). Multivariable multilevel models showed that lower average costs of care in the intervention group related to differences between study groups in country, religion and WHO-status. No effect of the intervention on differences in costs between study groups was observed ($p = 0.3$).

Conclusions:

Lower healthcare use and costs in the intervention group were significantly associated with patient characteristics such as country of residence and worse performance status. A definite impact of the intervention itself could not be established.

When a dying patient is asked to participate in a double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial on symptom control: The decision-making process and experiences of relatives

van Esch HJ, Stoppelenburg A, van Zuylen L, van der Rijt CC, van der Heide A. When a dying patient is asked to participate in a double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial on symptom control: The decision-making process and experiences of relatives. *Palliative Medicine*. 2022;36(10):1552-1558. doi:10.1177/02692163221127557

Background:

At the EOL, most patients and relatives are willing to participate in research.

Placebo-controlled trials can provide evidence to inform EOLC, but it is contested whether asking dying patients to participate in such trials is morally justifiable. To investigate the experiences of these patients is complex. Therefore, proxy assessments by relatives can be a good alternative. There are no prior studies on the experiences of relatives when their dying loved one is asked to participate in a randomised placebo-controlled clinical trial.

Aim:

To explore the experience of participating in a placebo-controlled trial at the end of life from the perspective of bereaved relatives.

Design:

Mixed-method study (questionnaires and interviews).

Setting/participants:

The SILENCE study was a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial on the efficacy of scopolamine butylbromide to prevent death rattle. The study was performed in 6 inpatient hospice facilities. Patients were asked to participate at admission in the hospice. 3 months after the death of the patient, bereaved relatives were invited to fill in a questionnaire and to participate in an interview. 104 questionnaires were completed and 17 relatives were interviewed.

Results:

14% of the relatives participating in the questionnaire study considered the participation of their loved one in research a bit burdensome and 10% considered it a bit stressful.

17% thought that it was a bit burdensome for the patient.

83% considered participation in this type of research (very) valuable. The in-depth interviews showed that patients and relatives jointly decided about participation in this double-blind placebo-controlled medication trial. Relatives generally respected and felt proud about patients' decision to participate.

Conclusion:

The large majority of bereaved relatives experienced the participation of their dying loved one in this RCT as acceptable and valuable.

Knowledge Hub

SCE Revision Flashcards – <http://www.pallmedpro.com/sce-flashcards.html>

The APM offers a full discount on purchases of the Pallmedpro SCE revision flashcards. Full details including how to claim reimbursement can be found on the APM website (<https://apmonline.org/trainees-committee/>).

Journal Access

The following journals can be accessed by members via 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>

APM Study Days (follow @APM_hub) – <https://apmonline.org/apm-events-courses/>

- National Study Day – *Research, why bother?*
17th January 2023
- Virtual Ethics Course
January 2023
- Palliative Care Congress – <https://pccongress.org.uk/>
16th – 17th March 2023

Palliative Care Formulary Online

Full APM members (including reduced subscription) have access to the PCF Online through MedicinesComplete.

Access is via the APM website – <https://apmonline.org/>

Log in and click PCF via the Learning and Information tab.

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 at the bottom of the homepage – <https://apmonline.org/>

Meet the Committee – Clinical Quality Representative

Hello, my name is Anna and I work within the Northern Deanery as an ST4 in Palliative Medicine. When not working, I enjoy exploring the beaches of Northumberland with an obligatory cream tea pit stop! I very much look forward to representing the APM trainees on the Clinical Quality Committee.



Committee Vacancies

Regional Representative Co-Ordinator

We are looking for a Regional Representatives co-ordinator to join the APM trainees committee. This role is an opportunity to represent trainees nationally and develop management and leadership experience.

If you would like to apply, please download the nomination form and return to the APM Secretariat "Office", office@compleat-online.co.uk, with a short statement of no more than 300 words.

Your statement should describe what skills, experience and interest you would bring to the role. You can also ask for further information about the role if desired. Please send any queries to l.ison@nhs.net.

Closing date: Friday 13th January 2023 at 09:00

[Download nomination form](#)

To apply, please return your completed nomination form and statement to office@compleat-online.co.uk.

BMA Junior Doctors Liaison

We are looking for a BMA Junior Doctors Liaison to join the APM trainees committee. This role is an opportunity to represent trainees nationally and develop management and leadership experience.

If you would like to apply, please download the nomination form and return to the APM Secretariat "Office", office@compleat-online.co.uk, with a short statement of no more than 300 words. Your statement should describe what skills, experience and interest you would bring to the role. You can also ask for further information about the role if desired. Please send any queries to l.ison@nhs.net.

Closing date: Friday 13 January 2023 at 09:00

[Download nomination form](#)

To apply, please return your completed nomination form and statement to office@compleat-online.co.uk.

Contact the Committee

We're here to support trainees and our development.

Contact us:

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



The APM is the world's largest representative body for doctors practicing or interested in palliative medicine. If you are not already a member join today! <https://apmonline.org/join-pages/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

This newsletter is for trainees by trainees. We want to hear from you, allow trainees to connect nationally and have a platform to feature your contributions in the upcoming newsletters.

Please contact us at apmtraineescommittee@gmail.com to contribute with a feature article, a journal summary or trainee reflection.