

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

Adaptable Primary Care: embracing new approaches and adjusting to diverse needs

Officers' Report to Members

Chairs' Report:

Another 12 months has passed in the blink of an eye, and with that comes the end of our term as co-chairs of SAPC. It has been a privilege and a joy to work in this role alongside some incredible colleagues in order to support the academic primary care community in the UK. The last year has seen academic primary care face a number of challenges around the world, including the financial crisis affecting the higher education sector in the UK. SAPC continues strong in its mission to champion and nurture expertise in academic primary care to support the development of evidence to drive improvements in the delivery of care to the diverse communities primary care serves. This is in the context of rising pressures on the healthcare service, decreasing patient satisfaction, and workforce challenges affecting capacity within the system. In order to optimise productivity, we made a conscious switch from all online, to mostly face-to-face (with a bit of hybrid) meetings for our Executive committee. Whilst challenging to synchronise availability, we found this move to be incredibly valuable, and it enabled us to drive significant change with the help of our excellent secretariat support provided by the team at The Association Management Company. This has been complemented by regular additional virtual meetings between key folk, and the other organisations that we maintain healthy collaborative relationships, such as the RCGP. An update on key areas of discussion and activity is outlined for our members below:

Operations: You may recall from last year's update that SAPC became an Incorporated Organisation, which affords our members protection from liability. In order to become registered as such, we had to develop new Articles of Association, drawing on the advice and expertise of folk within the Association Management Company, to whom we are very grateful. Being an Incorporated Organisation prompted a review of various assumptions that we had been operating under, including our liability for VAT. Looking into this matter was more complex than we could have imagined, and necessitated that we commission specialist advice from a Tax Advisor within a financial consultancy. This has enabled us to ensure the accounts, which are submitted to HMRC annually, are accurate in their detail and clear in what happens to our financial arrangements. We continue to work on our re-application for Charitable Incorporated Organisation status, which will be submitted once our public facing materials (e.g. website) are revised, refreshed and updated to better showcase our work and how it is aligned to our charitable aims (otherwise known as 'objects') which are stated in our Articles of Association as *"to carry on activities which benefit the community and in particular (without limitation) to promote excellence in primary care research and education for the furtherance of clinical practice and service provision to the benefit of patients and the public"*.

As we have continued to operate as an Incorporated Organisation, we have learned that our Articles of Association require further amendment in order to support optimal functioning, including the details of quoracy for our Executive Committee, and the voting rights of the co-opted chairs of the Heads of Department and Heads of Teaching groups (note – discussions

are ongoing about the naming of these groups at the time of writing). These points of departure have been amended in the draft Special Resolutions circulated for this AGM, and we will later be seeking feedback and approval to adopt these.

We have six General and one Treasurer position on the Executive Committee for which we received 12 nominations, which we were very encouraged by. In addition to these posts, we have created two new roles on the committee that people will be sought to support: the lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and the Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement lead. These roles represent important foci that we as an academic community wish to value and develop, and we hope that the creation of these posts will support how we make SAPC, our work, and the work that our members undertake, as accessible, relevant and impactful as possible. All those who have put themselves forward demonstrate incredible expertise and enthusiasm in their statements, and we are incredibly encouraged to see such a high level of interest, and the opportunity to bring new people and fresh perspectives into the Executive.

You may have recently seen that we have sent out a [link](#) to a survey, seeking input from those in the academic primary care community who are, as well as those who are not yet members of SAPC. Through conducting this survey, we hope to ascertain the views of folk working in academic primary care across the UK as to what they feel we should be doing as an organisation, and how we can best support our community and, through doing so, support and promote excellence in patient care in the primary care world. We are extremely grateful to Dr Jess Drinkwater and the SAPC Ambassadors team who led the development of this. The survey closed in the middle of June and we hope to have some results and insights ready to share in due course. If you didn't get the opportunity to complete it, but wish to share your thoughts – do please get in touch with the secretariat team via office@sapc.org.uk.

Online presence: In the last year we have established a presence on LinkedIn and BlueSky, thanks to our communications lead, Dr Victoria Tzortziou Brown. The provider for our website has discontinued support for the content management system that our pages operate on, and as such we made the decision that we would commission a new website which we hope will future-proof the SAPC web pages for many years to come and enable improved functionality for members. To support this process, we have engaged Justin from J Norton Interactive Design Ltd who will design the new website for us. We are very grateful to James Drinkwater who designed and maintained the current SAPC website for many years, and advised us on the changes needed going forward.

SAPC Prizes and Awards: We were impressed to receive an incredible range of submissions for the various prizes we award. We consider this a vital part of our activity, as it gives us the opportunity to celebrate the amazing work that our colleagues do that contributes to the central aim of driving improvements in primary care. This year, congratulations go to:

- Shirin Sadat Massroor, SAPC Medical Student Prize
- Lily Taylor, SAPC Doctoral Prize
- Lauren Griffiths, RCGP/SAPC Elective Prize
- Jienchi Dorward, SAPC/RCGP Award for Outstanding Early Career Researcher – Academic GP

- Kelly Birtwell, SAPC/RCGP Award for Outstanding Early Career Researcher – Primary Care Scientist
- Brian McMillan, John Fry Award
- Mark Ebell, North American Primary Care Research Group
- Leanne Hall, Australasian Association for Academic Primary Care
- Rachel Johnson, SAPC Principal Investigator or Principal Medical Educator of the Year Prize

SAPC Regional Winners:

- Aisha Yahaya, Mirza Lalani, SAPC Southeast
- Lynsay Crawford, NADEGS (affiliated meeting in Scotland)
- Hilary Shepherd, SAPC North

SAPC ASM 2024 awards:

- Miriam Santer, NAPCRG/SAPC Senior Investigator Researcher Award
- David Blane, AAAPC/SAPC Senior Investigator Researcher Award
- Eleanor Barry, SAPC Junior Investigator Researcher Award
- Helen Edwards, SAPC Education Prize
- Suzanne Scott, SAPC Best Poster Prize
- Sam Merriel, SAPC Distinguished Paper Prize
- Georgette Eaton, SAPC Distinguished Paper Prize
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The future of Academic Primary Care feels secure with such wonderful people contributing such excellent work to better care for our communities.

Special Interest Groups: Our community continues to address issues affecting the access to high quality primary care that our diverse communities need, and this is reflected in the diverse range of special interest groups, numbering 26 strong, that focus on issues such as Inclusion Health, Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation, and Women’s Health to name but a few. These groups hold regular meetings that provide a space to develop collaborations, support research and advance national conversations affecting key areas of clinical practice in primary care. Our special interest groups are supported by Dr Rachel Spencer, who is the SAPC SIG lead, and are able to apply for financial support in the form of a bursary from SAPC to contribute towards hosting events.

Regional meetings: As well as our Annual Scientific Meeting, we continue our programme of energising regional events run throughout the country throughout the year. These conferences have enhanced accessibility for colleagues outside central hubs and continue to foster rich local engagement. They provide a wonderful opportunity to network, forge collaborative links, showcase work in all stages of development, and share research findings with a friendly audience. This year has seen conferences that have been run by:

- The North Region hosted by University of Liverpool, November 2024
- The Southeast Region, hosted by Kings College London, January 2025
- NADEGS, hosted by University of Dundee, January 2025
- The Southwest Region, hosted by University of Oxford, April 2025

We continue to receive feedback that our regional events are especially supportive for people in the earlier stages of their career, and would encourage all to attend.

In reflecting on our final year as co-chairs of SAPC, we are struck by the commitment our colleagues have made to address the issues that affect contemporary clinical practice in primary care, and factors that differentially affect the health of our diverse communities. We are deeply proud of and grateful to our members for striving to advance conversation and practice nationally, and see the relevance of this relatively young academic discipline growing in the context of the current sociopolitical climate. Finally, we owe a debt of thanks to Katie Trace and Juliet Baldwin from the Association Management Company, who provide our able (and very patient) secretariat support, and we are incredibly grateful to Prof. Gary Abel (Exeter) who we are handing over to as chair of SAPC. Gary is a highly experienced professor of medical statistics and health services research, and we see a strong and bright 3 years ahead for SAPC with him leading an incredibly dedicated and enthusiastic Executive Committee.

Announcements and Congratulations:

Continuing our custom of sharing announcements at the SAPC AGM pertinent to the national academic primary care community, we would like to take the time to congratulate colleagues who have had their incredible work and achievements recognised.

A number of individuals have been promoted to professor in the last year, strengthening the academic primary care community, including:

- Prof. Ben Jackson, professor of clinical education and primary care (Sheffield)
- Prof. Ingrid Muller, professor of behavioural medicine (Southampton)
- Prof. Sanjiv Ahluwalia, professor of primary care (Anglia Ruskin)

As well as promotions to Chair, we have seen some colleagues be appointed to senior leadership roles, including:

- Dr Roohi Singh-Bhagat, appointed to Head of GP Teaching (University of East Anglia)
- Prof. Tracey Sach and Prof. Helen Atherton, appointed to Head of Department (Southampton)
- Prof. Miriam Santer (Southampton), Prof. Tracey Sach (Southampton), Carolyn Chew-Graham (Keele), Prof. Ian Maidment (Aston), Prof. Rafael Perera (Oxford), Prof. Alastair Hay (Bristol) and Prof. Azeem Majeed (Imperial), were appointed or reappointed as NIHR Senior Investigators.

Prof. Liam Smeeth, an academic GP at LSHTM, was awarded a CBE for services to Public Health and Education, in this year's Birthday Honours list. And Prof. Clare Wilkinson (Emeritus Professor of General Practice, Bangor) was awarded an MBE in the King's New Year Honour's list in January 2025, as were Prof. Jaspal Taggar (Professor of Primary Care and Medical Education, Nottingham) and Prof. Louise Dubras (Dean of the School of Medicine, Ulster) in the summer's Honour's list.

Our heartfelt congratulations go out to all those listed above, with apologies to any colleagues we have unintentionally omitted. It is a wonderful testament to your continued hard work to drive positive change in primary care practice for the ultimate benefit of patients.

With a final farewell, thanks and best wishes

Prof. Rupert Payne & Dr Dunx Shrewsbury (outgoing Co-Chairs)