



**ISPOG**

International Society of Psychosomatic  
Obstetrics and Gynaecology

July 2017

# Newsletter

Newsletter Editor Dr Heather Rowe  
Logo based on painting by Omar Biscotti



## Welcome from the President

Dear ISPOG members,  
Welcome to our first 2017 newsletter that was announced for spring and reaches you now in summertime. Time passes quickly and our ExCo

meeting that was held during an inspiring congress in the lively city of Dublin dates almost three months back already.

In-between I had two additional opportunities to offer workshops such as the one on professional burnout given together with Carlos Damonte Khouri in Dublin. At the end of March Leroy Edozien organized a BSBOG Training Day at the RCOG in London including a workshop on communication skills for challenging consultations given by Marieke Paarlberg and me. Furthermore Leroy Edozien, Ernesto Gonzales Mesa, current president of the Spanish POG, and I were invited to contribute to an extraordinary EBCOG congress held in Antalya at the occasion of the annual congress of the Turkish Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology (TJOD). In collaboration with our Turkish colleagues Türker Cavas, Kamile Kukulcu and Recep Has we held two master classes on prenatal counselling and perinatal depression respectively. They were well attended and approved by our Turkish colleagues and showed once more that our interactive format is convincing. Our presence at this congress was another opportunity to deepen the collaboration with EBCOG, which is not restricted to our presence at their congresses. It also comprises our contribution to their attempts to develop a Pan-European training curriculum in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (PACT). The development of this curriculum is the task of the EBCOG Standing Committee on Training and Assessment (SCTA) and ISPOG can actively contribute by taking part

in the regular meetings of this committee. Thanks to the efforts of Marieke Paarlberg, who attended the last meeting, "Electives considering Bio-Psycho-Social Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Sexual Health" could be integrated in all elective parts of the curriculum.

In June I followed Ernesto Gonzales Mesa's invitation to contribute to one of the psychosomatic sessions at the annual congress of the Spanish Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. My talk and especially my efforts to give it in Spanish were well received and my visit in Oviedo was another good example of how important and fruitful the exchange between ISPOG and the national societies can be. Aside from me, all board members, as well as other actively engaged colleagues are happy to accept your invitations to attend and contribute to your national meetings and congresses!

Eventually at the end of June I had the opportunity to attend the handover of the Mirjam de Senarclens prize. You will be able to read more about the prize and its winner in this newsletter.

This issue of the newsletter is mainly dedicated to the updates provided by eight national societies. Furthermore we celebrate the launch of the POG textbook, give you an update on our social media presence and on our efforts in education. We close the newsletter with some notices and important information.

What is still missing and what we hope to provide you with at the end of this summer, is latest news on the progress of the organisation of our next congress in Seoul in 2019.

With best wishes to all of you and in the hope that we will meet your representative(s) next year in Budapest

Sibil Tschudin



## Around the World

Below is the result of our call for updates about activities of the national member societies. It is good for all of us to read about others' POG initiatives to gain ideas and to foster inter-country communication.

### Australia



**Australian Society for  
Psychosocial Obstetrics  
& Gynaecology**

The past 12 months has been a 'settling in time' for the new and dynamic committee who came on board at the AGM of the 2017 Annual Scientific meeting in Hobart. We attracted six new council members from both medical and social science disciplines who are already making their mark on the society and will shape the ASPOG of the future. In line with our policy of being a true National society the Annual Scientific Meeting this year will be in Brisbane in August in the State of Queensland, where sponsorship was denied because we were discussing abortion! ASPOG clearly still has a job to do in discussing difficult topics in an evidence based, professional and informed manner. We are finally engaging with Social Media and look forward to a productive 2017/18.

With best wishes to all ISPOG members worldwide.  
Susan Carr

### Germany

The national OBGYN congress (Stuttgart, October 2016) attracted more than 5000 Gynaecologists. The German Society of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynaecology had many opportunities to influence this general OBGYN congress, with seminars and workshops regarding infertility, delivery and bonding problems between mother and child, peripartur disturbances, chronic pelvic pain, psycho-oncology, female patients in migration, dealing with mistakes and communication, and sexual therapy. As a result we can state that psychosomatic OBGYN has a strong impact on the national OBGYN congress. The yearly psychosomatic OBGYN congress was held at Dresden March 1-4, 2017. The program was focussed on

"Das Eigene und das Fremde" (the self and the foreign world). More than 350 physicians, midwives and social workers attended the congress, which had a full program of lectures, guidelines, free communication and posters. All lecturers of free communications and posters at the yearly congress 2016 at Hamburg received a free copy of ISPOG's Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology. For the year 2017 20 journals for one year are distributed courtesy of the German Society. The congress website is at <http://www.dgpfg-kongress.de/>

Heribert Kentenich

### Hungary



Group from the University of Debrecen at the HSPOG Congress

The IXth Congress of the HSPOG (Szeged 2016) was organized by University of Szeged, Department of O-G and the HSPOG. Among the invited lectures Prof. Márta Csabai spoke on the subject of women's characteristics of the health-related behaviors, Zsuzsa Török on the negative effects of endometriosis on quality of life, Peter Szeverényi's presentation highlighted the important role of prenatal stress, and Gyula Mészáros spoke on sexuality during pregnancy. There were five sections: Perinatal mood changes, psychiatric diseases; psychological aspects of delivery and labor; failures connected with parenting: infertility, perinatal loss; strategies in the physician-patient relationship in the 21st Century; and gynecological psychosomatics; 89 people were registered, including 41 gynecologists, 15 midwives, 14 psychologists, 13 district nurses, 4 psychiatrists and 2 neonatologists.



Birth Week attracted 67 guests, 25% from surrounding towns and villages. A variety of interactive presentations included a baby video, breast-feeding, homeopathy, and cot drapes. Delivery room tours were conducted. Our professor and male gynecologists gained his own impressions associated with the „pregnant apron” – it absolutely changed his view about pregnancy. Four grandmothers and 14 husbands also took part in the open day.

World Prematurity Day 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2016 was the first year when the Department and Perinatal Intensive Care recognised this event. Professor György Balla's opening lecture was followed by Judit Kovács who presented about breast-feeding of preterm babies. Magdolna Riszter's lecture included informative photos about every-day-practice in PIC. Zsuzsa Török discussed the impact of preterm birth on the parents' psychological well-being, and underlined the importance of prevention and the essential elements of professional support work. A highlight of the day was the visit of Botond, a healthy one year old, who was born in the 24<sup>th</sup> gestational week, and his parents, and a 13 year old girl and her mother, who recalled the dedicated work of the staff when she gave birth prematurely to her daughter.

Zsuzsa Török

## Israel

העמותה לפסיכוסומטיקה במיילדות וניקולוגיה בישראל (נ"ר)  
Israeli Society of Psychosomatic Obstetrics & Gynecology  
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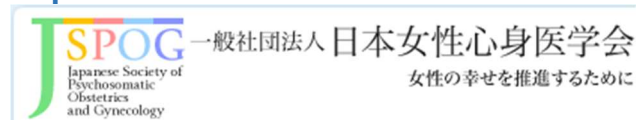
National Member Society of the International Society of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology (ISPOG)

Every year ISRAPOG presents a session in Post Graduate Courses for residents in Ob/Gyn, and lectures are also conducted in Israeli meetings of Ob/Gyn in various hospitals and medical centers. In March 21, 2016, an Annual Meeting of ISRAPOG took place at Rabin Medical Center with approximately 250 participants. The theme of the meeting was: "Psychosomatic Aspects of Fertility Preservation and Male Factor Infertility". Sibil Tschudin from Basel and Siladitya Bhattacharya from Aberdeen were Invited Speakers and spent several days with us in Israel. ISRAPOG was represented at ISPOG, Málaga May 2016 and IAWMH Dublin in March

2017 international meetings. Professor Yael Benyamini from Tel Aviv University, Head of the Research Committee of ISRAPOG, is conducting several projects on psychosomatic aspects in pregnancy, delivery and post-partum period. The committee is meeting every 3 months and reports to the Society Board on progress. Professor Miki Bloch, the Head of the Psychiatric Department at the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center, is conducting a Guidelines Protocol on psychiatric medications during pregnancy and lactation. This protocol will be submitted to the Israeli Ministry of Health for distribution of a Position Paper on the subject. During my participation in February 2017 in a meeting dedicated to Onco-Fertility, in Moscow, The Russian Society of Psychosomatics in Ob/Gyn was established. In May 2017, the annual meeting of the Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility Committee of FIGO took place in Dublin, organized by Prof Edgar Mucano, Rotunda Hospital and Medical School of Dublin University. Possible ways of collaboration between ISPOG and FIGO were discussed. In September, a Pre-Congress Course of FIGO at the conjoint meeting of the Russian Society of Reproductive Medicine (RAHR) and IFFS will be held. At this meeting the possible collaborations among the Russian Society of Psychosomatic Ob/Gyn, RAHR, IFFS, FIGO and ISPOG will be discussed.

Dov Feldberg

## Japan



We, the Japanese society of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology (JSPOG), have worked for improving female mental health for about thirty years. Recent activities are our annual meeting (Shiga in August 2016), and annual workshop (Tokyo in February 2017). We publish our journal triannually, and our text book, "Josei Shinshin Igaku", was renewed last year. We have an original certification system which qualifies specialists of women's mental health.





A current topic of interest in this field is how to manage perinatal mental health. The Japanese Association of Obstetrics and Gynecology, also Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, pay attention to prevent a suicide during perinatal period. Guidelines regarding perinatal mental health are going to be created. JSPOG also join this project. Additionally, we are planning a joint symposium with other societies for psychosomatic medicine in Japan.

Kiyoshi Takamatsu

## Netherlands



The Dutch Society have been active in education, congresses and science. Every year Dutch SPOG organises a two-day course on psychosomatic obstetrics and gynaecology for gynaecologists (to be), midwives and other interested colleagues. In 2016 the Dutch SPOG organized three symposia at ISPOG in Malaga, Spain, 2016: Cancer survivorship, trauma, fear and screening in obstetrics, and vaginal penetration disorders and the pelvic floor. The Dutch SPOG financially supports young investigators studying psychosomatic clinical questions. In 2016 the revision of national protocols on vulvodynia, PTSS after delivery and a study about use of antidepressive medication in pregnancy were supported by Dutch SPOG.

K. Marieke Paarlberg

## United Kingdom



The name of the Society has now changed from British Society of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynaecology to the British Society of Biopsychosocial Obstetrics and Gynaecology (BSBOG). The constitution was amended and a new logo produced. These changes reflect more accurately the mission of the Society. We have omitted the word 'andrology' as it is included in gynaecology.

Our aim is to encourage a better understanding and improved management of the psychosocial, emotional and biological problems associated with pregnancy, birth and disease of the reproductive organs in both women and men through education and training. The Society is producing a book on Biopsychosocial problems in obstetrics and gynaecology edited by our current Chair Leroy Edozien and previous Chair Professor Shaughn O'Brien. The book will be available in August 2017.

On 14th October 2016, we had another successful Annual Scientific Meeting in Sheffield, featuring presentations from varied eminent consultant obstetricians and gynaecologists, consultant midwives, consultant nurses, psychiatrists, specialist physicians in chronic pelvic pain and specialist registrars. As always, the feedback was exemplary. We ran the joint RCOG / BSBOG training day on the 31st March 2017 at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. The meeting attracted national and international speakers (K. Marieke Paarlberg and Sibyl Tschudin) who also ran interactive workshops. The title of the training day is "Skills and Resources of Delivering Person Centred Care". We will be running national training days for specialist trainees in different regions in the UK starting in Yorkshire and Humberside on the 1st October 2017, aiming to roll out the programme in different regions of the UK to meet the demand for training in this area. The next Annual Scientific Meeting and participation in the annual professional development (APD) in London and Manchester are being planned. We will also participate in the RCOG World Congress 2019, ExCeL, London Monday 17- Wednesday 19 June 2019. BSBOG has active collaborations with the British Societies for the Study of Vulval Disease and of Gynaecological Endoscopy, British Menopause Society and Institute of Psychosexual Medicine to run joint meetings in the future.

Remon Keriakos



# USA NASPOG

NASPOG was given the opportunity in 2016 to host a symposium at the Annual Clinical Meeting of the American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists. Drs. Teri Pearlstein, Jonathan Schaffir, and Beth Prairie led the symposium, which addressed the topic of "Hormones and Mood." Topics covered included premenstrual mood changes, menopause-induced mood changes, and mood effects of hormonal contraception. The event was successful enough that we have been invited back. NASPOG will be hosting a similar symposium at the meeting in San Diego, California, in May, with the title, "What's A Head in Women's Health? Hot Topics in Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology." Drs. Shari Lusskin (President NASPOG), Neill Epperson (President Elect NASPOG), and Jonathan Schaffir will be leading the discussion. Next month, our leadership will change. Dr C. Neill Epperson will be taking over as president from Dr Shari Lusskin. Dr Epperson will be organizing the next NASPOG meeting set to take place in April 2018 at her home institution, the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. We will forward to ISPOG further details about this meeting as they emerge.

Jonathan Schaffir

## JPOG 2016 Impact Factor has increased

The 2016 Impact Factors have just been released. JPOG's IF increased from 1.055 in 2015 to 1.165 in 2016.

These articles were highly cited for the 2016:

Depressive symptoms and proinflammatory cytokines across the perinatal period in African American women (9 citations)

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3109/0167482X.2013.868879>

Rates and risk factors associated with depressive symptoms during pregnancy and with postpartum onset (8 citations)

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3109/0167482X.2014.947953>

Anxiety and anxiety sensitivity as predictors of fear of childbirth: different patterns for nulliparous and parous women (5 citations)

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3109/0167482X.2013.866647>

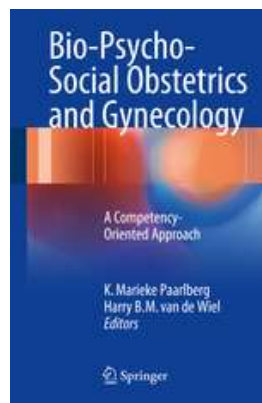
Group psychoeducation with relaxation for severe fear of childbirth improves maternal adjustment and childbirth experience - a randomised controlled trial (5 citations)

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3109/0167482X.2014.980722>

The journal has also increased in the rankings in both of its Web of Science categories:

The Psychiatry category rank is 99/142 (112/142 in 2015), and the rank in the Obstetrics and Gynecology category is 52/80 (68/80 in 2015).

## POG Text Book Launched



Marieke Paarberg, Past ISPOG President, and Harry van de Wiel, Past Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, are very proud to announce that the book **Bio-Psycho-Social Obstetrics and Gynecology: A Competency-Oriented Approach** finally is

published. The book has been written by 38 participating experts, many of whom are ISPOG members.



This book explains bio-psycho-social care provision through a problem-oriented and case-based approach; it emphasizes the role of effective communication and multidisciplinary collaboration and provides numerous tips of practical value to the busy clinician.



The book will assist the reader by providing individually tailored, high-quality bio-psycho-social care to patients with a wide range of problems within the fields of obstetrics, gynecology, fertility, oncology, and sexology. Each chapter addresses a particular theme, issue, or situation in a problem-oriented and case-based manner that emphasizes the differences between routine and bio-psycho-social care. Relevant facts and figures are presented, advice is provided regarding the medical, psychological, and caring process, and contextual aspects are discussed. The book offers practical tips and actions within the bio-psycho-social approach, and highlights important do's and don'ts. To avoid a strict somatic thinking pattern, the importance of communication, multidisciplinary collaboration, and creation of a working alliance with the patient is emphasized. The book follows a consistent format, designed to meet the needs of challenged clinicians.

The book can be bought in soft-cover and as E-book via the Springer website <http://www.springer.com/us/book/9783319404028> Individual chapters can also be purchased as E-chapters at the same website. ISBN 978-3-319-40404-2

## Social Media – ISPOG now has a presence

K. Marieke Paarlberg (Netherlands) and Clare Willocks (UK)

The first Facebook account was established by Levente Lázár, who sadly passed away in 2015. Since then it has been impossible to obtain the details of this account, which also had become inactive and unable to be used. In 2016 a new Facebook account was set up. The link to this new Facebook account is on the ISPOG website. There are two active administrators: Clare Willocks from Scotland and Marieke Paarlberg from the Netherlands. The ISPOG Secretary General, Heather Rowe and the ISPOG Secretariat Bianca Scarlett also have access to the account in case this is necessary.

The aim of the Facebook account is to inform ISPOG members and other interested readers about ISPOG activities on the one hand, and on the other hand to let ISPOG be an active member of the social media world with a more

ambassadorial view. Currently, there are 49 followers of this page.

Furthermore we have set up a Twitter account (@ISPOG\_org). This platform is more suitable for immediate Tweets at congresses and for participating in Twitter discussions on the web, where it concerns bio-psycho-social issues. Clare Willocks and Marieke Paarlberg also manage this account and the Secretary General and her secretary assistant also have access. Currently, there are 122 followers of this account.

Please use the @ispog\_org when posting about POG items of interest and use #ispog\_org when tweeting so that members and followers can join in the conversation.

## ISPOG partners with the Global Alliance for Maternal Mental Health (GAMMH)

The Global Alliance for Maternal Mental Health (GAMMH) is a coalition of international organisations committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of women and their children in pregnancy and the first postnatal year. The goal is to prevent the avoidable suffering experienced by women and their families, ensuring child development does not continue to be compromised by a global failure to provide appropriate support and services for mothers' mental health.

GAMMH is an international initiative arising from the UK Maternal Mental Health Alliance (<http://maternalmentalhealthalliance.org/about/>) led by Professor Alain Gregoire Consultant Psychiatrist, Southampton UK. The MMHA has successfully engaged multiple partners, raised awareness and promoted action in community, professional and policy spheres to improve services for perinatal mental health. The importance of the alliance was confirmed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists report (<https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/patients/information/maternalmental-healthwomens-voices.pdf>) released on International Women's Day 2016, which confirmed the poor state of support for mental health in the perinatal period in the UK.





The GAMMH is a fledgling international coalition. ISPOG was invited to join during the IAWMH meeting in Dublin in March. The invitation was approved by the society soon after. More details to follow in the next ISPOG newsletter.

## Education

Jonathan Schaffir USA

Viewers of the ISPOG website may notice some new additions to the Education section. In an effort to offer educational tools that may be of use to ISPOG's members, the site now includes some modules that cover basic information about psychosomatic issues related to women's health. These modules so far include brief primers on "What is POG?", "Communication Techniques", and "Breaking Bad News". Please visit the site here to take a look at the work so far (<http://www.ispog.org/education/educational-modules>)

We hope that in the coming months we will add more of these modules that cover basic aspects of communication and evaluation of psychosomatic concerns. The tools can be used for introducing professionals to the topics that are addressed by ISPOG, and for teaching trainees.

In addition, we hope to offer case-based discussions of specific psychosomatic problems and treatments that would be of use to practising providers of women's health.

These cases, with relevant questions and answers discussing aspects of care, will cover a wide range of concerns. An example of such a discussion is also included in the website, entitled "Hormonal Contraception and Mood."

We **invite** any interested members to submit similar modules in the format described. Case-based modules will be evaluated by a member of the Education Editorial Board with expertise in the topic that is described.

**Anyone interested in submitting a module for peer review and publication on the website should send an email to**

**[Jonathan.Schaffir@osumc.edu](mailto:Jonathan.Schaffir@osumc.edu).**

The email should include your idea for a topic, a brief (2-3 sentence) description of the module and your contact information. Dr

Schaffir will then be in contact with further instructions about the format and submission process. We hope that you enjoy visiting our website and learning more about psychosomatic ob/gyn!

## Myriam de Senarclens Prize



From left to right: Michal Yaron, Manuella Epiney, Johanna Czamanski-Cohen, Sibil Tschudin

We are happy to inform you that the MdS-Prize 2017 was presented to the winner at the occasion of the annual national congress of the Swiss Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the presence of the president of the MdS-foundation, Michal Yaron, the president of the Swiss Working Group of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology, Manuella Epiney and the president of ISPOG.

As you might know, Myriam de Senarclens was a pioneer in psychosomatic medicine and founder of the Swiss Society of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology, and of ISPOG. Before Myriam passed away, she decided to endow a foundation to grant the **Myriam de Senarclens prize**, with the aim of encouraging, supporting or rewarding a study, research project or an original work, which treats, from a psychosomatic perspective, a subject in gynecology or obstetrics. For more information please visit the website at [www.fdmnds.org](http://www.fdmnds.org) Until December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 a considerable number of innovative project proposals from Africa, Switzerland and Israel had been submitted. External experts and members of the scientific committee of the MdS foundation reviewed them.



This year's prize worth 20,000 Swiss francs goes to **Johanna Czamanski - Cohen** and her team from University of Haifa & Ben Gurion University from Israel for their work titled

**Cognitive behavioral and art-based stress reduction interventions: The reduction of Psychological stress and its physiological correlates in women undergoing in vitro fertilization (IVF).**

We congratulate the winner, wish her good success with her research project and encourage researchers in the field of psychosomatic obstetrics and gynecology to avail themselves of the opportunity to applying for the next MdS prize that will be due in 2021.

## NOTICES:

### Request for information about the Niles Newton award.

It recently came to our notice that the Niles Newton award has not been offered for the past several years. We have not been able to discover any information about it in the ISPOG archives.

**Do you know anything about the award? Can you help? If so please contact [admin@ispog.org](mailto:admin@ispog.org)**

### Please update the contact details of your society

We are aware that some of the contact details for national societies are out of date because national leadership and ISPOG representatives have changed.

**Please keep us informed of new contact people every year.** This is the only way we can stay in touch with you!

### ISPOG membership fees

We are pleased to report that the ISPOG Treasurer Vivian Pramataroff-Hamburger has implemented a number of improvements to the financial management of ISPOG. These include a new bank account and a new method of collecting ISPOG membership fees

for the annual membership fees, a form to collect information from national societies is now sent to people listed as national contacts. **Please complete and return the form so that we can update our records of the numbers of individual members, and send invoices to each national society for the correct number of members and amount of money due.**

### For your diary: ExCo-Meeting 2018

The ExCo meeting 2018 will be held at the occasion of the 15th ESC congress in Budapest. Our meeting and our contributions in Budapest are scheduled as follows:

#### Wednesday 9th May 2018 15:00 – 17:30:

Pre-congress workshop: How to prevent and minimise contraceptive failure - The psychosomatic perspective and approach (Heather Rowe and Sibil Tschudin)

#### Thursday 10th May 2018 12:15-13:45:

Joint ESC ISPOG Session: Good peri-abortion care from a bio-psycho-social perspective (Vivian Pramataroff and Sibil Tschudin)

- Peri-abortion care: When is it too much and when too little? (Sibil Tschudin)

- What are women's emotional needs? - Evidence and practice (Heather Rowe)

- Peri-abortion counselling and care in case of congenital anomalies and chromosomal abnormalities (Marieke Paarlberg)

#### 14:30-18:30: ExCo Meeting

#### 19:30 ExCo Dinner

#### For further information:

<http://www.escrih.eu/15th-esc-congress>

ESC

ESC2018

Family planning and contraception from adolescence to the menopause

SEE YOU IN BUDAPEST!  
9 - 12 MAY 2018

15TH CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF CONTRACEPTION AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

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