

Membership statistics

Total Membership

Total membership at the end of March 2022, was 3,465 in 543 active groups managed by the PBSGL Scotland programme. This represents a 1% decrease in membership when compared to the same point 12 months ago (was 3,505 members), and an increase of 7.6% in the number of groups (was 522 groups).

These numbers include (with comparison against 12 months ago):

- GP members: 1,737 (-0.6%)
- GPST members: 1,105 (+11.4%)
- Nursing members: 337 (-8.7%)
- Pharmacy members: 272 (-24%)

These figures are encouraging because since the pandemic began in March 2020, the membership figures have been steadily dropping. A low of 3,234 active members was recorded in July 2021 (which would have been a -7.8% decrease at that point in the year), but since then a steady increase has taken place. The admin team has reported a trend of lapsed members returning to PBSGL, citing a number of reasons, including covid, for their break. A marked increase specifically in GP and GPST memberships can be seen over the last few months.

Facilitators

There were 784 active facilitators at 31st March 2022 which is a decrease of 5.2% compared to the same period 12 months ago.

Demographics

The following demonstrates the proportion of our membership identifying as:

- female (78.7%)
- male (21.1%)
- transgender (0.2%)

As a comparison, approximately 60% of Scotland's GP workforce is female, with that figure being between 70 - 80% for pharmacists and 98% for GPNs.

Module Production

A total of 7 modules have been published since the last annual report: in the twelve months since February 2021:

1. Thyroid problems in adults – Published March 2021
2. Tick-borne Diseases in the UK – Published April 2021
3. Hormone Replacement Therapy – Published May 2021
4. Acute emergencies in the community – Published June 2021
5. Chronic Kidney Disease - Published July 2021
6. Managing Abnormal Haematology - Published January 2022
7. Infant Feeding - Published March 2022

The following modules are in various stages of production (please note that some may be working titles):

1. Wellbeing in Primary Care
2. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
3. Musculoskeletal Short Cases
4. Short cases in diet
5. Dizziness in adults
6. Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis
7. Type 2 Diabetes

We have undertaken our annual survey of the wishes of our membership in relation to module production for 2022/23. The pandemic has continued to create challenges to module production, including increased clinical commitments of our writing team and the competing responsibilities of work and self-isolation for example. However, the team feel that there is capacity in 2022/23 to increase production to 9 new modules (listed below) with a reserve list that can be reviewed if capacity increases further.

The modules agreed for production in 2021/22 are:

1. Climate Change in Primary Care
2. Abnormal Biochemistry
3. Short cases in Paediatrics
4. Diagnosis and management of frailty
5. Dermatology short cases- including nail and scalp problems
6. Dementia and cognitive decline
7. Chronic pelvic pain including endometriosis
8. Multimorbidity and Polypharmacy
9. Health anxiety – diagnosis and treatment.

Facilitator Training

118 new facilitators were trained during 2021-22, an increase of 31% on the previous 12 months. Training continues to be delivered using blended methods which include completion of a bespoke e-learning module followed by attendance at an online training session with approximately five prospective facilitators. At this session, delegates have the opportunity to practise facilitation skills with a peer group and receive personalised feedback.

Research

We had two peer-reviewed publications in 2021. One described the use of PBSGL by two groups of first contact physiotherapists (FCPs) in NHS Highland. FCPs have been recruited to various NHS boards in Scotland and in other countries in the UK. In the past, physiotherapists worked in primary health care settings, but patients would need to be referred to them by a GP or GP nurse. Recent changes have meant that patients can make contact with a FCP and consult without referral. This has resulted in various learning needs for FCPs as they are seeing untriaged and undifferentiated patients in the context of primary care. The pilot study was evaluated using qualitative means and published in *Education for Primary Care*.

Cunningham DE, Heron C and Taylor E [First contact physiotherapists' perceptions and experiences of practice-based small group learning in NHS Scotland: a qualitative study](#) *Education for Primary Care* (online edition)

A second research manuscript was submitted to *BMJ Open* and accepted for publication. It relates to the preferred learning methods and learning resources of recently-qualified GPs in NHS Scotland. This group has been called First5s by the Royal College of General Practitioners. PBSGL featured considerably in this work and the Scottish PBSGL programme was well received by recently-qualified GPs. Note that three of the authors of this publication were First5 GPs at the time of submission.

Cunningham DE, Ward C, Kyle J and Yeoman L [Learning needs, preferred learning methods and learning challenges of first five general practitioners in NHS Scotland: a qualitative study](#) *BMJ Open*

Professional Development for the Module Production Team

To support and develop the existing module production team (editors and writers), and foster a greater sense of community, a new professional development programme was set up. This took the form of a series of workshops run throughout the year covering topics relevant to module production. The team had the opportunity to actively contribute to topic selection and content. Areas covered included:

- Communication styles
- Literature searching – delivered by Alan Gilles, NES Knowledge Manager
- Writing a module – Delivered by Dr David Cunningham, Assistant Director of GP Education
- Editing a module – Delivered by Dr David Cunningham
- Formatting a Module and using MS Teams – Delivered by Theresa Budge, Senior Administrator
- The Art of Conveying the Science – inspirational session delivered by guest speaker, acclaimed author, Dr Gavin Francis

These were well received and a subsequent “keeping in touch” session followed. This was an informal session which gave an opportunity to share resources about writing, or everyday work in healthcare, as well as an interactive session on facilitating focus groups and on using MS teams with Dr Leon Zlotos, Principal Lead - Educational Development, NES Pharmacy.

Three of the writing team have trained to become editors (in addition to their author roles) and the team has been further strengthened by a new writer. One of the writing team has also taken the lead on a new PBSGL Podcast pilot project. The aim is to provide opportunities on an ongoing basis for writers and editors to grow in their role and foster the development of this community of practice.

Miscellaneous

1. The Scottish Government have continued to invest in CPD for GPNs and GPs in the first five years of their career (First5s) on a non-recurring basis. A significant portion of both funding streams was used to support increased involvement in PBSGL for these professional groups.
2. We have continued to work with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) to support their roll out of PBSGL.
3. We remain committed to a collaborative approach consistent with NES’ values (Our Way) and to the history and practice of PBSGL in Scotland through the leadership of the inter-professional PBSGL senior team.