



Secretary Report – Carolyn Swash

Welcome to Harrogate International Conference Centre for the Association of Stoma Care Nurses UK Conference. Who would have thought back in 2019 that we would not be meeting in person again until 2022. This is my first year within the role of Honorary Secretary to the ASCN UK and it has been a busy year to say the least.

Firstly, I would like to extend my humble thanks to Jackie McPhail for the support and guidance as I transitioned into the role from her- she's going to be a difficult act to follow. My tenure commenced on January 1st 2022 and as I reflect back to that time it seems like another world away when I consider the covid measures that we had to all cope with both in our everyday life and within our work place. Conference planning is an all year round activity for members of the committee as well as our partners in Conference. Back in January we were discussing about whether an in person conference would become a reality and I am so pleased to see so many of you here.

Within my role I oversee the ASCN Area Representatives. They are an amazing group of stoma care nurses who's passion and drive for the profession is inspiring. This year we have met virtually for the March meeting and then for July we had a dual meeting were by some attended in person and others joined virtually. We have certainly acquired some new skills throughout the lockdown period. Through the meetings we have shared how we have coped and overcome new pressures as well as traditional pressures of working to ensure that services have been both delivered to high standards as well as developing new ways of working to meet patients needs. Sharing best practice is such a brilliant way for us all to learn. During the meeting in July, Kevin Hodges from BHTA attend the meeting to provide an update of activities within BHTA as well as a national update in regards the work of Chris Sterling.

Over the year we have had some changes to those who represent you in difference areas. Iris Williams who represented Mid/ South Wales, Liz Davies who represented the North East and Helen Woodcock who was one of the two area reps for South Yorkshire and Trent have all stepped down. I wish to thank them for all that they have contributed to ASCN UK over the years and send them best wishes for their future endeavours. It has also been a year to welcome two new members into the role of ASCN Area Representative. Mary Hugill, has now become the Area Rep for the North East and Meg Tremayne has become the Area Rep for Avon, Devon and Cornwall. We do at present have some areas of the UK that are not represented. This sadly means that we are not hearing what is happening within your areas and so sadly cannot support you as well as we would want to. I do understand that it may seem a little daunting to take on such a role but please do get in touch with me if you would like to find out more information about becoming an area rep. We are also able to accommodate dual area representatives if undertaking the role singularly may seem a little too much.

I would like to thank all the area reps for the support that they extend to conference. This year they are helping to mark the posters as well as the oral presentations. In addition they are helping to man the ASCN UK stand. They really do help make conference the success that it is. Prior to conference they have received



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training on how to mark the posters through the online reviewer portal. Fingers crossed that technology works or we may need to resume the old fashioned way of marking with pen and paper.

Within my role I have been able to represent ASCN UK virtually at the PIPs Meeting in March and the APPG for Bladder and Bowel Continence Care Meeting in April. It was my privilege to attend both these meetings on your behalf. In addition in August I was invited by British Journal of Nursing to an afternoon event to celebrate those winners of the BJN awards that occurred when we were not able to meet. I was lucky enough to meet Helen Coulter of Northern Ireland who was recognised for her work with improving the experience of those with a stoma who travel through airports through an education programme delivered to staff who work at the airport.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow committee members and In Conference for the welcome that they have given me as well as their support and guidance throughout the year.

I hope that you all have a great conference here in Harrogate- good luck to all those that have decided to participate in conference through either an oral presentation or presenting their work through a poster presentation. I am really looking forward to seeing and hearing all the great work that has been achieved.

Carolyn Swash, Secretary, ASCN UK