

Chair/Vice Chair Persons Report 2024

Angie Perrin



Many of you may be wondering why I am writing a Chair/Vice Chairperson Report for 2024 –Andrew (Bird) has recently stepped back from playing an active role in ASCN UK Committee to take some time for himself, therefore I have taken on the role of Acting Chairperson until Andrew feels able to resume this activity. All of the ASCN UK Committee strongly support Andrew and wish him a speedy recovery to full health.

Something that has commanded a great deal of my time in recent months is the planning and co-ordination of the ASCN UK and WCET Collaborative conference 2024. In collaboration with Jennie Burch who heads the Scientific Committee for WCET we have pulled together a very varied and informative programme with some inspiring speakers for this year conference. We were delighted with the huge number of abstracts we received, hence we have almost 200 posters included at this Year's conference. Obviously, this year's conference will be a little different to previous ASCN UK conferences as we are hosting three, sometimes four concurrent sessions exploring wound, continence, research innovation as well as a stoma care speciality.

This year saw Emma Vernon resign as Education Officer due to her career pathway changing direction, which then opened the door for not one, but two Education Officers! The role of education is vast especially given the growing needs for evidenced based clinical guidelines, pathways and on-going education required for our professional development, therefore ASCN UK decided to split the role with Maddie taking the lead on clinical practice development and Mandy looking at the delivery of education.

Our Stoma Care speciality has been the focus politically again in two different projects, one set by Department of Health and Social Care who are undertaking a consultation to review Part IV of drug tariff. The Proposals for updating Part IX of the Drug Tariff - Medical Devices available for prescribing in Primary Care is now publicly available. ASCN UK responded to this initial document on behalf of Stoma Care Nurses in January 2024 – having a voice within the political arena is so important to ensure our role as the expert in stoma care is recognised to safeguard future care and services for people living with a stoma.

Alongside this review there has also been a project by NICE - Late-stage assessment, One-piece closed colostomy bags for people with a stoma. ASCN UK are registered as a Stakeholder for this project and do represent the views of our members and the patients we care for, however due to many of us being employed by commercial companies we have been excluded from some key aspects of this project. It is important for all Specialist Stoma Care Nurses (SSCN) to take an interest in these government led projects, and having an awareness of them is vital, as they will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the care we are able to provide to patients in future.

As many of you will be aware as of January this year ASCN UK changed secretariat and are now managed by Delegant. ASCN UK had been managed by the same organising company (secretariat) since it was launched in 2013, so it was necessary to go through a tender process with various companies to ensure the organising company was providing value for money and high-quality services for ASCN UK as a charitable organisation. It has been a huge learning curve for all of us, the Delegant team and ASCN UK Committee; introducing a new secretariat to our stoma care speciality and for us learning different methods and processes that can be implemented to manage our organisation.

ASCN UK have also been instrumental in two projects:

1. Exercise and Physical Activity after Stoma Surgery - <https://ascnuk.org/ascn-uk-projects-expass>
2. Advancing Stoma Care Services - <https://ascnuk.org/ascn-uk-projects-advancing-stoma-care-services>

Both projects have an individual lead from the committee, so I will not go into detail of the projects as you will be able to read a synopsis from Wendy and Natasha Reports, alternatively there is a projects page on the ASCN UK website where you can access further information.

I continue to represent ASCN UK and work collaboratively with colleagues from the British Health and Trades Association (BHTA) on various issues, attending some of the BHTA's quarterly meetings offering a nursing voice & representing ASCN UK. ASCN UK also have a quarterly meeting with the Chairperson of the BHTA and Kevin Hodges (Membership Engagement Manager) to ensure good two-way communication between the 2 groups.

ASCN UK have also been using our voice as an Association to support our members with various issues and are happy to continue to provide help and support wherever possible.

Thank you to those of you who have taken the time to complete our questionnaire last year, however further information is required. Please I can I implore all specialist nurses to engage with audits and questionnaires as we will need to provide even more data and evidenced statements as these projects progress. Thank you for all of those who completed the State of Nation questionnaire that went out recently.

Throughout the year, I have attended the ASCN UK quarterly area representative meetings, which offer a great insight as to what is happening in each of the areas throughout the UK. These meetings are both informative and enjoyable.

ASCN UK continues to provide high quality, beneficial resources for its members and for our specialism. Sitting on the ASCN committee is rewarding, as well as at times a little challenging, but I think it does widen your vision and offers the opportunity to look at our specialism from many different perspectives – it's an extremely worthwhile venture, so I would urge anyone to strongly consider applying for future committee roles.

Finally, I would like to say a huge Thank you to all the other ASCN UK Committee members, Trustees.

Angie Perrin