IPS Spotlight

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Throughout 2015 we will be profiling the activity of each of the IPS branches and Special Interest Groups, and members of the IPS Board. In this issue the Ireland South branch describe how they came to be awarded Branch of the Year in 2013, and we have a report from the Yorkshire branch and from the Intravenous Forum. We also meet our newest IPS board member, Deborah Xuareb, who is from Malta and is our ‘Ordinary Member’.

IPS Ireland South – Branch of the Year in 2013

Cathy Barrett, IPS Ireland South Branch Co-ordinator

The Ireland South Branch is very active with approximately 150 members from all aspects of health care. There are approximately 54 acute hospitals, 96 community hospitals, numerous residential units and over 400 registered nursing homes in Ireland. Our members are at the frontline of all of these services. This diversity of experience brings great depth and richness to our branch meetings. One of our key tenets is to promote and facilitate robust discussion and sharing of opinions and ideas. As a result, our quarterly meetings are well attended, with many members travelling long distances and either taking days off or annual leave to attend. Our meetings are all day events and we try to give back and acknowledge this commitment by providing members with an educational update, an open floor session and a sponsored lunch to keep their strength up for the long journey home.

We were very pleased to take part in the video production promoting the work of the Infection Prevention Control Nurse, the IPS as an organisation, and our branch as well. Although initially camera-shy those members who did take part did the branch proud and represented Ireland South and our roles in a manner that was not only professional but heart-warming, compassionate and honest. Well done to all!

Over the last few years the branch has forged links with our national regulator the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA). Much work has already been done and we jointly hosted a workshop at our branch meeting on 18th

November to undertake a review of the National Standards for the Prevention of Healthcare Associated Infection. As a direct result of this liaison, Marie Kehoe O’Sullivan, Director of the Safety Quality Improvement Directorate within HIQA, is facilitating a session at the IPS Implementation Learning Laboratories launch event in Birmingham on 10 December. This is an important link for the Ireland South Branch as we successfully guide, promote and sustain national strategies in the prevention of healthcare associated infections

Currently, we are planning our IPS member only conference on 15 May 2015 in Galway. We hope to concentrate our efforts on the leadership and management elements of the IPS competencies, with topics covering presentation skills, business planning, being the legal expert in court and understanding research. We will be actively promoting the conference from the end of November this year and all IPS members both home and abroad are very welcome to attend.

Promoting research is also a key element of our business plan for 2015 with three projects being explored with our colleagues in our twinned branch of London South. We propose to look at the misuse/use of gloves, surgical site skin prep and risk perceptions of staff wearing uniform or work-wear home. There are many members who are actively undertaking research or who would like to become involved through a supported process and this is a perfect opportunity to promote this. Sometimes all you need is a helping hand to start the ball rolling. 2015 will be a very exciting time for both our branches.

On a final note we were all absolutely thrilled to have won Branch of the Year in 2013 and we celebrated with great pride and lots of cream filled gateaux. Winning this award did inspire and motivate us to keep up the great work that all our members do not only in their places of work but nationally and internationally. As IPS members we continue to strive to improve ourselves, our places of work and our branch. Moving forward we will continue to ensure that we are fit for purpose, dynamic and responsive to the needs of each other, our work colleagues, our branch and importantly our patients. So congratulations to the Scotland Branch on their success in 2014, but don’t be too surprised if you see another branch nomination from us in a few years ... we would love to win it again!!

IPS Yorkshire

*Donna Winter, IPS Yorkshire Branch
Co-ordinator*

The Yorkshire branch is a very dynamic, exciting and innovative branch to be part of. Gill Manojlovic, Sue Peckitt and myself are extremely honoured to be branch officers. We are lucky to be able to lead a branch which has such enthusiasm for participation. We hold our meetings at different venues around Yorkshire, with a mixture of day and evening meetings to appeal to all members. These are supported by company representatives and they welcome the change to have dialogue with our members. This has sparked some lively and informative discussions. We also continue to encourage corporate members to attend our meetings as delegates, and we are finding a real benefit from this stronger partnership-working and shared learning.

In Yorkshire we are extremely lucky to have many active retired members whose experience and knowledge are an invaluable resource to our branch and we thank them for the unquestioning support that they bring to officers and members. We also have a long tradition of encouraging Yorkshire members to take on board positions and this is continued with Gary Thirkell who has now taken up his post as Board Treasurer and we wish him luck.

We are extremely proud of the DVD we helped produce with the Scottish, Irish, Welsh and Trent branches this year and we hope you enjoyed watching this as much as we enjoyed filming it. This year we aim to continue with our twinning project with Wales and run a joint AMR project with them. We are currently working hard on guidance at a glance documents (GAGs). When completed, these are going to provide an invaluable resource for acute, primary care and care home staff on all aspects of IPC.

We also continue to build on our branch presence on Twitter, where we are one of the most active branches, and this is with great thanks to @pollygary, Yorkshire's very own prolific tweeter. As a branch we are very much looking forward to the future.

The Intravenous Forum

Carole Hallam, Co-ordinator

The IV Forum was re-established in 2011 and since then has gone from strength to strength with 103 members. The IV Forum has welcomed the opportunity to lead the Vessel Health and Preservation (VHP) project and established a working group with representation from the National Infusion and Vascular Access Society and the Royal College of Nursing to develop a VHP Framework. The concept of (VHP) came from the United States with the aim of preserving the vein by preventing complications such as thrombosis and infection. The VHP framework provides a

useful document to improve the safety and quality of vascular access for patients.

The VHP approach allows practitioners and organisations to select vascular access devices in both a timely and proactive way by the use of vessel assessment and evidence-base guidelines rather than the reactive process currently used in many UK hospitals. The device selection uses a scoring system to consider the quality of the vein and the suitability of drugs for peripheral infusion taking into account factors like pH, osmolarity, viscosity, volume of dilution, speed of infusion, and the size and fragility of the peripheral vein. Once the device is placed, the focus shifts to daily assessment using the central line bundle and assessment of the health of the patient's vessels as well as the continued necessity of the device. We are now moving into the second phase by undertaking an evaluation of the VHP framework in areas that have adopted it. Our work on VHP will be included in all 12 of the Spoke events for the IPS Implementation Learning Laboratories during February and March 2015.

In addition, the IV Forum is twinned with the London North branch and hopes to develop further projects to improve the safety and quality of vascular access. The IV Forum also hosts a popular annual IV Conference provided free for IPS members.

PROFILE: Deborah Xuereb, IPS Board 'Ordinary Member'

The role of Ordinary Member does not have a particular set of responsibilities but is intended to contribute to decision-making and represent wider views of the membership. Deborah represents an 'extraordinary' opportunity for the board as she lives and works as an infection control nurse in Malta.

Where are you currently working? I have worked as an infection control practitioner at the Mater Dei Hospital since 2006, and prior to that worked for seven years in intensive care. I have studied for a degree in general

nursing and a Masters in Health Services Management. The Mater Dei is the main hospital on the island, and it has 900 beds and specialist services including a 20-bed ICU and an NICU.

How do you think your experience will help you in the role of Ordinary Board Member? In many respects health care in Malta is very similar to the UK. The hospital is run along similar lines and many doctors undertake their training in the UK. However, we do have particular challenges in dealing with multidrug resistance, limited isolation facilities, bed pressures due to our hospital being the main acute care facility in Malta and also the recent periodic influx of war injured patients from North Africa. I think my experience is very similar to IPCNs in the UK and I am very familiar with

the UK situation as we draw on it to develop our own guidance. Infection control guidance written by our team at the Mater Dei is often adapted by the Maltese Health Department for the other hospitals on the island.

How do you feel about joining the IPS Board? I am both excited and a little nervous about taking on the role of Ordinary Board Member. As a small island we are used to looking outwards and so it does not seem so strange to be working with IPCNs in the UK. I think this is an important opportunity for IPS to develop stronger international networks and share learning with practitioners across the world who face the same challenges. I am really pleased to be able to make a contribution to the work of IPS.