



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am writing this message for the newsletter from the Sunshine Coast, where I have just attended my first conference in person since COVID! It has been such a wonderful experience to catch up with old colleagues and meet new ones after such a long break from in-person conferences. This networking was enhanced by my discovery that while it might have seemed that the world has been holding its breath over the last couple of years, an amazing amount of very good research and clinical innovation has been taking place in areas outside of COVID. It's been fascinating seeing how some research areas have flourished, and other areas have emerged.

So, I can't wait now for our own ASPOG conference in February 2023! I am excited to see and hear all about world of psychosocial obstetrics and gynaecology from many different disciplinary perspectives, to meet old colleagues and to make new ones. I'd like to encourage all of you to join us in Adelaide for this special event! The call for abstracts is in this newsletter and we extend a warm welcome to those who will be first time presenters. For those who would like to combine work and holiday, the Adelaide Writers Festival starts the weekend after our conference, followed by WOMAD, the World Music Festival, so the ASPOG conference will be kicking off a fabulous few weeks for South Australia!!!

Our COVID webinars over the last couple of years have been such a great success, but it will be special to see people in person. I am so looking meeting those of you who can attend!

In the meantime, I hope that you are managing to keep free of all the winter diseases, and for those who haven't, I wish you a speedy recovery.

- Meredith Temple-Smith

September 2022

ASPOG News & Updates

2023 Conference - 24-26 February, Adelaide

Exploring the Tapestry of Psychosocial Obstetrics & Gynaecology

We are excited to announce that in 2023 we will be having a face-to-face conference! Join us in Adelaide in February. The theme is all about exploring the diversity – looking at all the threads that are woven together to make up the big picture in psychosocial obstetrics and gynaecology.

Call for Abstracts - <https://aspog.org.au/call-for-papers>

Abstract submission deadline: Friday 28th October 2022

ASPOG offers three prizes for papers presented at the annual meeting:

- ASPOG New Researcher Prize,
- Roger Wurm Award, and
- Suzanne Abraham Clinical Presentation Award

For more information:

Visit our website: www.aspog.org.au

Email us: admin@aspog.org.au

Membership 2022

A reminder that ASPOG membership provides you with reduced conference registration fees (amongst other things: <https://aspog.org.au/membership>), so if you haven't renewed for 2022 (due in June) you can do so [here](#). If you have any questions please contact Lesley Woods at admin@aspog.org.au - 0418870057

In the spotlight:



The "Gender Medicare Gap"



Australian Society for
Psychosocial Obstetrics
& Gynaecology

There was a recent article in "Women's Agenda" that reports on how women are paying more health services than men. In this article, the focus is on ultrasound services, where ultrasounds are used to examine lumps in the testicles and breasts (with similar complexity) yet scrotum ultrasounds attract a higher government rebate than breast ultrasounds. This imbalance is also seen with pelvic ultrasounds, which are more complex than a scrotum ultrasound but this also received less. As such, women will pay more for their ultrasound. This gap is compounded when complex conditions that require a specialist service.

Read more here: <https://womensagenda.com.au/latest/the-gender-medicare-gap-is-seeing-women-pay-more-for-ultrasounds-and-other-health-services/>



ASPOG 2022 WEBINAR SERIES

Perinatal Mental Health: Supporting Transitions, Fostering Compassion - 6th September 2022

Making Sense of the Unseen: A grounded theory study of women's experiences of suicidality during pregnancy and the following year

Speaker: *Dr Laura Biggs*, midwife and Research Fellow in the Refugee and Migrant Health Research Program Intergenerational Health Group, Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

Laura shared findings from a recent grounded theory study with 139 women which sought to explain how suicidality evolves during pregnancy and the following year.

The developed theory holds shame as a core concept. Origins and contexts of shame reflect current epidemiological understandings of risk for perinatal suicide, including experiences of gender-based violence, adverse childhood experiences, and a history of mental health difficulties. When women feel that they are defective, unworthy of love and belonging, and do not possess what it takes to be a good mother, they can conclude that their family is better off without them. In contrast, pathways beyond shame can be facilitated by compassionate and rehumanising experiences of care and support from family, friends, and care providers.

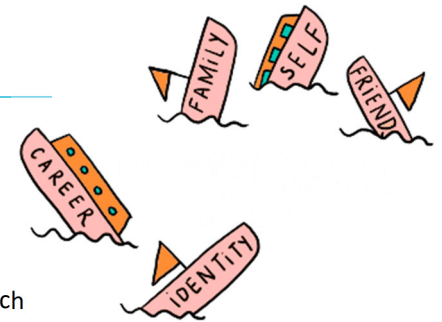
The study helps to address an urgent need to generate deeper understandings of suicidality during pregnancy and the following year, including how recognised risk factors for suicide operate within women's lives and within health care interactions.

Speaker: *Clare Bellhouse*, Dept of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne.

Clare's spoke about how the transition to parenthood requires significant psychological, social, cognitive and biological adaptation. Successfully navigating this period is critical for maternal mental health, infant development and the development of the parent-infant attachment relationship. Her project examines the complex transition and the experiences of this for mothers at a high-risk of experiencing difficulties. Understanding the experience of women at risk in this transition can assist in identifying women who may require intervention in pregnancy to assist in trying to prevent disturbances in the parent-infant relationship. It includes a novel psychological intervention, the Supporting Transitions, Attachment and Relationships (STAR Mums) program, a psychodynamic attachment-based group intervention, for pregnant women with risk factors for attachment difficulties. The STAR Mums program aims to provide intervention during pregnancy to assist women identified as having risk factors in the transition to parenthood with the desired outcome to support a healthy transition to parenthood and to reduce some of these risk factors.

Participants and facilitators reported high acceptability with high levels of engagement and participation. The group helped them to feel less isolated and also provided a model for reflecting on the baby and the significant changes required to adapt to the parenthood role. Participants spoke about subjective reductions in their anxiety levels and finding the mindfulness exercises helpful in connecting with their babies and managing their anxieties in the longer-term once the group finished. Overall, the findings suggest the program appears acceptable and facilitates reflection for participants. This work provides an important first step in developing an intervention which provides an opportunity for women at risk to begin to work through issues which may impact their relationship with their infants before they are born, a true form of early intervention.

Members can watch (or re-watch) any past webinars on the ASPOG website: <https://aspog.org.au/webinars-2021>



Previous webinar: Understanding Reproductive Coercion and Abuse

10th May 2022

Reproductive coercion is a form of violence against women, involving fear and control. A lot of women don't realise they are in a reproductive coercion and abuse situation.

Speakers: *A/Prof Laura Tarzia*, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne; *Molly Wellington*, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne; *Desireé LaGrappe*, Sexual Health Victoria



MEMBER NEWS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Egg Freezing in the media.

Member Dr Karin Hammarberg wrote a fabulous piece for The Conversation recently. Titled: "[Thinking about freezing your eggs to have a baby later? Here are 3 numbers to help you decide](#)". Definitely worth a read (click on the title to be directed to the article).

Dr Michelle Peate has also been interviewed on the topic on RRR's [Radiotherapy](#) with Dr Mal Practice and EpiPen and Triple J's the [Hack](#) (with Dr Molly Johnston).



WHATS NEW IN...

ADOLESCENT HEALTH

Tait RJ, Ivers R, Marino JL, Doherty D, Graham PL, Cunich M, Sanci L, Steinbeck K, Straker L, Skinner SR. [Mental health and behavioral factors involved in road traffic crashes by young adults: Analysis of the Raine Study](#). Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health 2022; 76:556-62.

Berger MN, Taba M, Marino JL, Lim MSC, Skinner SR. [Social media use and health and wellbeing of LGBTQ youth: A systematic review](#). Journal of Medical Internet Research 2022.

Marino JL, Tait RJ, Straker LM, Schofield DJ, Doherty DA, Ivers RQ, Graham PL, Steinbeck K, Lymer S, Sanci LA, Patton GC, Liu B, Brooks FM, Kang MS, Hickey M, Cunich M, Bista S, Skinner SR. [Health, social and economic implications of adolescent risk behaviours/ states: Protocol for Raine Study Gen2 cohort data linkage study](#). Longitudinal and Life Course Studies 2021.

MENSTRUAL HEALTH

Ryan S, Ussher JM, Hawkey A. [Mapping the object: Women's embodied experiences of premenstrual body dissatisfaction through body-mapping](#). Feminism and Psychology 2022; 32:2.

Ryan S, Ussher JM, Hawkey A. [Managing the premenstrual body: a body mapping study of women's negotiation of premenstrual food cravings and exercise](#). Journal of Eating Disorders 2021; 9:125.

COVID-19

Bittelton H, Goller J, Temple-Smith M, Hocking J, Coombe J. [Telehealth for sexual and reproductive health issues: a qualitative study of experiences of accessing care during COVID-19](#). Sexual Health 2022.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Slater A, Lew R, Peate M. [Age-related fertility decline and elective oocyte cryopreservation: Knowledge, attitudes and practices in a pilot study of general practitioners](#). Australian Journal of General Practice 2022; 51(8):611-9.

Liu W, Lim MSY, Williams H, Temple-Smith M. [Contraceptive decision making among Chinese international students in Melbourne: findings from a qualitative investigation](#). Culture, Health & Sexuality 2022.

Tuteja A, Riggs E, Sanci L, Mascarenhas L, Van Vliet D, Sangster K, McGuinness K, Temple-Smith M. [Developing a Sexual Health Consent Strategy for Refugees: A Qualitative Approach](#). Qualitative Health Report 2022; 27(2):509-538.

Yu A, Temple-Smith M, Bilardi JE. [Healthcare support: How can we do better in supporting those impacted by miscarriage?](#) Australian Journal of Primary Health 2022.

Perich T, Fraser I, Ussher J. ["Extreme emotions" - the impact of reproductive life events for women living with bipolar disorder](#). Health Care for Women International 2021; 42(12):1379-92.

Perich T, Ussher J, Fraser I, Perz J. [Quality of life and psychological symptoms for women with bipolar disorder – a comparison between reproductive, menopause transition and post-menopause phases](#). Maturitas 2021;143:72-7.

Hawkey, A. Ussher, JM, Perz, J. [What do women want? Understanding barriers and facilitators to sexual and reproductive healthcare among migrant and refugee women](#). Ethnicity and Health 2021; 26:1-19.



CANCER & PREVENTION

Febrina F, Triyoga I, White M, Marino JL, Peate M. [Efficacy of Interventions to Manage Sexual Dysfunction in Women with Cancer: A Systematic Review](#). Menopause 2022; 29(5):609-626.

Power R, Ussher JM, Hawkey A, Missiakos O, Perz J, Ogunsi O, Zonjic N, Kwok C, McBride K. and Monteiro M. [Co-designed, culturally tailored cervical screening education with migrant and refugee women in Australia: A feasibility study](#). BMC Pilot and Feasibility Studies 2022; 22:353.

Ussher JM, Allison K, Perz, J, Power R and The Out with Cancer Study Team. [LGBTQI Cancer Patients' Quality of Life and Distress: A Comparison by Gender, Sexuality, Age and Cancer Type and geographical remoteness](#). Frontiers in Oncology 2022; 12: 873642.

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SEXUAL HEALTH

Hayes J, Temple-Smith M. [New context, new content – rethinking genital anatomy in textbooks](#). Anatomical Sciences Education 2022.

Phillips TR, Medland N, Chow EPF, Maddaford K, Wigan R, Fairley C, Bilardi JE, Ong J. [Newly arrived Asian-born gay men in Australia: Exploring men's HIV knowledge, attitudes, prevention strategies and facilitators toward safer sexual practices](#). BMC Infectious Diseases 2022. 22(1): 209.

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Ogunsi O, Ussher J. [Beyond illegality: Primary healthcare providers' perspectives on elimination of female genital mutilation/cutting](#). Journal of Clinical Nursing 2021; 30(9-10), 1253-62.

PREGNANCY & MOTHERHOOD

Bellhouse C, Bilardi J, Temple-Smith M, Newman L. [Subjective experiences and acceptability study of the Supporting Transitions, Attachment and Relationships \(STAR Mums\) program, a psychological group intervention for high-risk pregnant women](#). SSM Mental Health 2022; 2: 1-9.

Collie E, Lew R, Peate M. [Merging Motherhood and Medicine: A Qualitative Study Exploring Barriers and Enablers to Motherhood Among Female Doctors in Australia](#). Women's Health 2022; 8:1-12.

Akin-Odanye E, Peate M, Asuzu C, Brown B, Henry M. ['I won't kill myself, but I will do my best': Perceptions of concerns among parents/caregivers of pediatric cancer patients](#). Journal of Psychosocial Oncology Research and Practice 2022; 4(3)

Stafford L, Sinclair M, Gerber K, Saunders C, Ives A, Peate M, Lippey J, Umstad MP, Little R. [Experiences of health professionals treating women diagnosed with cancer during pregnancy and proposals for service improvement](#). The Breast 2022; 10:71-76.

Parton C, Ussher JM, Perz J. [Mothers' experiences of wellbeing and coping while living with rheumatoid arthritis: a qualitative study](#). BMC Women's Health 2022, 22(1): 185.



TRANS REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH

Charter R, Ussher JM, Perz J, Robinson K. [Transgender Parents: Negotiating 'Coming Out' and Gender Affirmation with Children and Co-Parents](#). Journal of Homosexuality 2022; 3: 1-23.

Ussher JM, Hawkey A, Sekar J, Marjadi B, Liamputtong P, Perz J, Schmied V, Dune TA, Brook E. [Crossing Boundaries and Fetishisation: Experiences of Sexual Violence for Trans Women of Colour](#). Journal of Interpersonal Violence 2022; 37(5-6): NP3552-NP3584.

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MENOPAUSE

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Lan Q, Hickey M, Peate M, Marino JL. Priorities for alleviating menopausal symptoms after cancer. Menopause 2022.

Donohoe F, O'Meara Y, Roberts A, Comerford L, Kelly CM, Walshe J, Peate M, Hickey M, Brennan DJ. [The menopause after cancer study \(MACS\) - a multimodal technology assisted intervention for the management of menopause after cancer - trial protocol of a phase II study](#). Contemporary Clinical Trials 2021; 24:100865



ISPOG has produced a statement on the war in Ukraine: <https://ispog.org/latest-news-1/>

The next ISPOG conference will be held from April 3, 2025 – April 5, 2025 in Korea. <https://ispog.org/agenda/21st-ispog-conference/>

CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) Annual Scientific Meeting 2022

When: 2-4 November 2022

Where: Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre

Theme: Gender, identity, culture, geography, and disease should not matter

<https://www.cosaasm.org.au/>

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) GP22

When: 25-27 November 2022

Where: Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

<https://www.racgp.org.au/gp22/gp22-home>

Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Inc. (ACSPRI) Conference will host the 8th Biennial Social Science Methodology Conference 2022

When: 23 - 24 November 2022

Where: online via Zoom

<https://www.acspri.org.au/conference2022>



Health Service Research Conference 2022

When: 30 November - 2 December 2022

Where: University of Sydney, Sydney

Theme: Resilience, innovation and value through research

<https://eventstudio.eventsair.com/hsr-2022>

Biennial Congress of the Pacific Society for Reproductive Medicine 2023

When: 12 – 14 March 2023

Where: Hilton Hotel, Sydney

<https://www.psr2023.com/>

Fertility Society of Australia and New Zealand Annual Conference (FSANZ) Conference 2023

When: 3 - 7 June 2023

Where: Gold Coast Exhibition and Convention Centre, Broadbeach, Queensland

<https://www.fertilitysociety.com.au/training-events/#events>

European Society of human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) Annual Meeting 2023

When: 25 – 28 June 2023

Where: Copenhagen, Denmark

<https://www.eshre.eu/ESHRE2023>

International Conference on Maternal and Child Health (ICMCH) Conference 2023

When: 17-18 July 2023

Where: Rome, Italy

<https://waset.org/maternal-and-child-health-conference-in-july-2023-in-rome>

International Psycho-Oncology Society World Congress 2023

When: 31 August – 2 September 2023

Where: Milan, Italy

Theme: Championing our Patients' Future Through Collaboration and Innovation in Psycho-Oncology.

<https://www.ipos2023.org/>

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) - World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA) Conference 2023.

When: 26-29 October 2023

Where: Sydney.

Theme: Recovery, reconnection and revival - a celebration of primary care.

<https://www.racgp.org.au/wonca-2023/home>



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And Twitter: @ASPOGau



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

We invite contributions from our membership. If you have read or seen something that you think others would be interested in or have a recent publication you would like to share with the ASPOG community please submit to <https://aspog.org.au/newsletter-content-submission>