

Affiliated Groups

Are you ready for the digital era?



Carol Stonham Vice Chair and Affiliated Groups and **Tricia Bryant**, PCRS Operations Director discuss how digital technology can support affiliated groups

A growing number of organisations and companies are embracing modern technology to communicate and streamline their operations. Video-meetings, teleconferences, mobile phone apps such as WhatsApp, online message groups, social media and other types of virtual communication are growing in popularity to help facilitate communication, engagement and reduce costs.

Innovative apps and video chat services can help teams to share files, hold online meetings, engage in projects and collaborate on-the-go with geography no longer a barrier to participation and engagement.

Of course, there is still nothing like the personal touch of a face-to-face meeting where colleagues and peers can get together in a friendly environment which has dedicated time allocated; but there are occasions where it is not possible – for example, due to lack of funding, geography, time restrictions – to be able to meet in person. This is where technology can really help. Setting up a virtual meeting is much easier, less time-consuming and could be an opportunity for your members to receive updates on important topics in between face-to-face meetings and to support local learning.

Online collaboration platforms, for example Slack.com also help users to share information without additional email burden and collaborate on projects. Many of these platforms offer a free version that would be more than suitable for affiliated groups and some also offer free calls using VOIP technology. All that users

require to participate is an internet connection and access to the app being used.

For videoconferencing, all participants require to be able to join in with video conferences is a computer connected to the internet along with webcam and speakers. Additionally it may be necessary to register on the video conference software (e.g. Skype, Zoom, eVoice etc).

PCRS is embracing the digital path and has already invested in new technology to support the PCRS website, online collaboration platforms and video-conferencing and as members you will have the opportunity to share these experiences and new services.

Using this technology may help existing affiliated groups to increase their activity and member engagement without increasing substantially the costs of the group. Anyone wanting to discuss how to go about using the technology please give us a call and we can share our experiences.

It's important with any new technology to practise before you 'go live'. Make sure you get used to the systems and their functionality before you share more widely with your group and provide simple instructions to the group when sharing the technology. You may experience some teething problems at the beginning but if you persevere you will find that the technology can really help you to sustain your groups and keep them engaged.

For those PCRS members who do not have a local PCRS affiliated group (check if you have a group near you at <https://www.pcrs-uk.org/affiliated-groups-map>) we are planning to establish the first PCRS virtual affiliated group with our first videoconference later in the Summer when we plan to invite an expert to discuss a topical clinical issue (for example, 'Managing conflicting COPD guidance – the PCRS approach' or 'Managing tobacco dependency in primary care'). Each virtual meeting will last one hour and participants will receive a copy of the slides to share locally as well as hearing from the expert.

If you'd like to sign up to a videoconference please email us at info@pcrs-uk.org providing your email address and any suggestions for clinical topics you would like covered at the virtual meeting.



Affiliated Groups

Working together to make a real difference
in respiratory care

PCRS Affiliated Groups connect colleagues who are passionate about developing respiratory care together in your local area. If there isn't a group near you, why not create your own?



PCRS is here to help you with

- **Support and resources** to help you get started and develop a new group.
- **An affiliation scheme** offering enhanced credibility and support for your group from a national network.
- **A regular newsletter**, packed with ideas to help support your group.
- **An annual meeting** for Group Leaders to support personal and collective respiratory development in your area.
- **Free PCRS membership** for leaders of an affiliated local group.

Be part of a thriving respiratory care network

We're here to help you with improving respiratory care for patients. We know it can be daunting and frustrating – especially when facing budget cuts, juggling workloads and trying to keep up with the latest developments.

PCRS has around 50 affiliated local groups in the UK, including nursing groups, primary care groups sharing knowledge about clinical developments and multi-disciplinary communities of practice driving service improvement in a local area.

Affiliated Group Leaders Networking Event

19th September 2019, The International Centre, Telford

Find out about our affiliated groups by visiting
<https://pcrs-uk.org/affiliated-groups>

