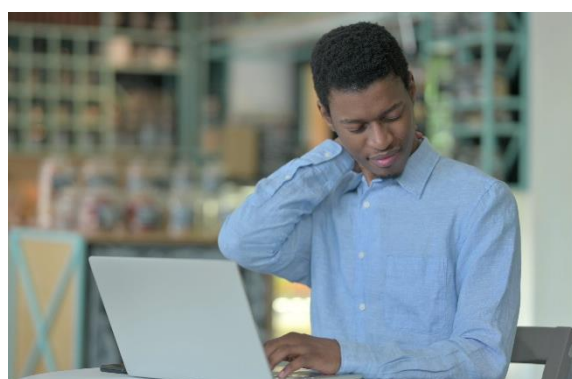


SPRING MAGAZINE ■ 2022



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New SOM Patron - Lord Popat



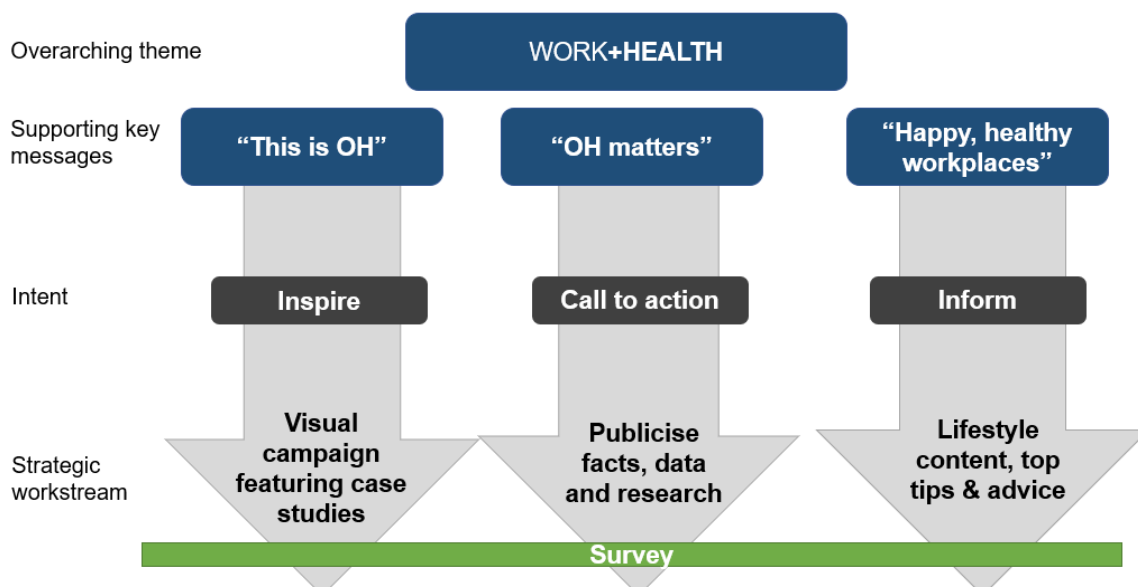
SOM welcomes Lord Popat as its new Patron alongside Lord Blunkett, Sir Norman Lamb, and Dame Carol Black. A Conservative Peer, Lord Popat was made a Peer by Prime Minister David Cameron in 2010 for his services to small businesses. His interests in the House of Lords are promoting the Commonwealth, SMEs, increasing Britain's exports and trade relations with India and Africa.

Lord Popat has served five Conservative Prime Ministers: Margaret Thatcher, John Major, David Cameron, Theresa May, and Boris Johnson.

Lord Popat was born in Uganda and first came to the UK as a refugee in 1971. Having trained as an accountant, Lord Popat later set up his own business specialising in business and corporate finance and had a successful 30-year career in healthcare and hospitality.

Lord Popat has always been passionate about healthcare and recently published a report on what more the community and government can do to support a growing, elderly population. The report had a particular focus on ethnic minority communities and has been used by many to help better cater for the needs of elderly people.

Occupational Health Awareness Week 19th - 24th June 2022. Get Involved!



Want to get involved? Contact ann.caluori@som.org.uk

New SOM Scholarships

The new SOM scholarships support places on UK accredited occupational health and medicine courses for regulated health professionals who wish to move into occupational health and would not otherwise be able to re-train in occupational health. Courses may include an undergraduate degree, a diploma or advanced diploma or a masters. The Scholarship is aligned with the SOM's charitable purpose to promote education in occupational health.

Amount:

- Tuition fees up to £9,250 for one year, or two years if part time.
- Total amount available for all scholarships: £50k.

See <https://www.som.org.uk/som-occupational-health-and-medicine-scholarships>

Occupational Health: The Value Proposition - Launch

Occupational Health: The Value Proposition reports were launched in March in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK. The direct link to the UK report is [here](#).

The Value Proposition discusses the three broad reasons (legal, moral, and financial) why employers provide workers with access to occupational health services and summarises the best available and most recent evidence from around the world for different health interventions in the workplace. This evidence establishes that occupational health services enhance employee health, workforce productivity, business performance and the economy.

A first edition was published in 2017 in the UK by the SOM. The Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine (ANZSOM) together with the Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM) decided to commission a local version. Dr Paul Nicholson, author of the UK report and a past president of SOM said he was "delighted to have been approached by ANZSOM and accelerate the UK update; publishing through a Creative Commons license so ANZSOM and any other organisations could distribute, adapt, and build upon the material for their own use".

Lord Blunkett, SOM Patron, said: "Employers who invest in employee health and wellbeing stand to reap many benefits such as from reduced sickness absence, increased productivity and recruitment and retention. However, not all workers have access to occupational health services and people with disabilities and long-term health conditions continue to be disadvantaged regarding gaining and maintaining employment. As this report proposes, occupational health services enhance employee health, workforce productivity, business performance and the economy."

Dr Mary Obele, Consultant Occupational and Environmental Physician, and Fellow of the Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM) said: "Occupational health professionals in Australia and New Zealand do their best to promote good work, safe workplaces and healthy workers. Getting ourselves recognised and understood is one of our first challenges. This collaboration helps highlight what we can achieve together."

Dr Jayne Moore, SOM President, said: "This report draws together brilliantly the evidence base to help workplaces remain healthy and safe."

Recording of the launch [here](#). Survey to hear your views on use of the report and associated leaflets [here](#).



New SOM guide: Evaluating and supporting Neurodifferences at work

SOM has launched a useful new guide 'Evaluating and supporting Neurodifferences at work', which can be downloaded [here](#).

The guide's recommendations are informed by research evidence, the latest guidance from regulatory bodies, current practice, and case law.

OH professionals appreciate the shift in discourse regarding neurodiversity, the need to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about neurological differences, and embrace new avenues for practice that address practical concerns regarding education, training, work, and inclusion. The neurodiversity employment picture presents a high percentage of exclusion, juxtaposed against a narrative of talent. Understanding the importance of nomenclature, sensory sensitivity, and the lasting psychological effect of social exclusion is key for clinicians wanting to interact confidently and positively with neurominorities.

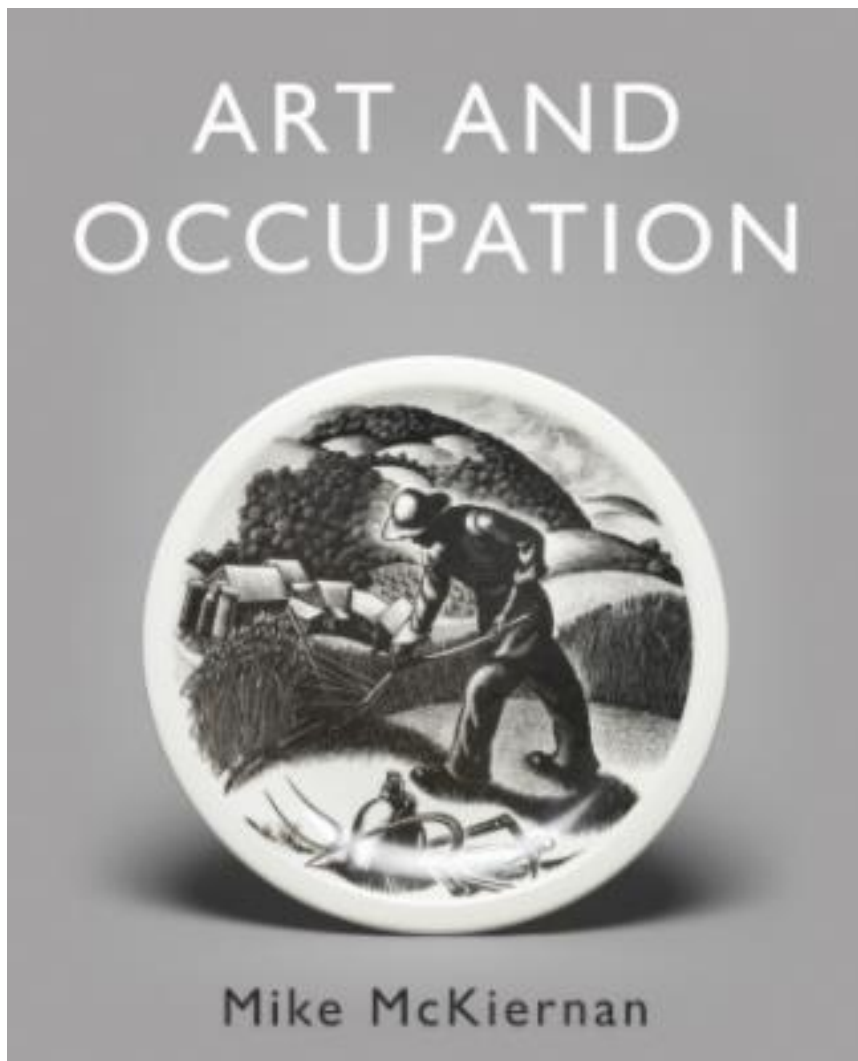
A biopsychosocial model allows us to provide therapeutic intervention (medical model) and recommend structural accommodation (legislative obligation), without pathologization (social model). Adaptations, adjustments, and flexible thinking will enable a truly diverse workforce that can ensure rich and inclusive talent, adding real value. The neurodiversity phenomenon is coming of age and will begin to translate into public policy and education as well as employment. Occupational health is uniquely placed to help support an inclusion agenda.

Dr Sarah Porter
Chair, SOM Northern Ireland Group

Art and Occupation: Book Launch

Mike McKiernan, along with SOM, has launched a book on *Art and Occupation*.

The book critically analyses an eclectic selection of art pieces to reflect broadly on labour, revealing both its dignity and toll on workers, whilst elucidating the challenges facing occupational health professionals today.



Read a review of the book by Anthony Seaton [here](#).

Antony Seaton is Emeritus Professor of Environmental and Occupational Medicine at Aberdeen University and Senior Consultant to the Edinburgh Institute of Occupational Medicine.

Order at <https://www.troubador.co.uk/bookshop/media-the-arts/art-and-occupation-hb/>

The book is available to purchase at a **40% discount** for SOM members.

Useful Acas guidance

Small business mental health guidance [here](#) and framework for positive mental health at work [here](#).

Updated guidance on time off for bereavement at work [here](#).



When crisis hits, who'll look after the doctors?

Are you working with a doctor who is struggling financially because of illness, injury, disability, or bereavement? The Royal Medical Benevolent Fund (RMBF) may be able to help. Occupational health professionals are being urged to look out for doctors among their patients, and to signpost them to the charity.

Support available includes financial help with the day-to-day cost of living, and back to work awards for retraining and professional fees.

Doctors seeking help should contact help@rmbf.org to talk to the RMBF Casework team in confidence. For more information, visit rmbf.org.

Workforce burnout and resilience in the NHS and social care

The Government has published its response to the Committee's June 2021 Report, Workforce burnout and resilience in the NHS and social care [here](#).

New NICE guidance

New NICE mental health at work guidance can be found [here](#).

Avoiding legal problems in workplaces

Top ten tips for avoiding legal problems in happy and healthy workplaces by Professor Diana Kloss [here](#).



Come to the SOM/FOM Conference

Occupational Health 2022

RESEARCH, PRACTICE and POLICY

22nd-24th June

Register now!

Join us at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh 22nd-24th June for the SOM/FOM joint annual scientific meeting - for all occupational health professionals.

Meet old friends and new to gather again in-person (COVID protocols will be in place according to the latest Government guidance).

The programme, details of social events and online registration are [here](#).

Come to upcoming SOM Regional Group meetings

East Midlands - Thursday 7th July 6.30pm (online), Thursday 22nd September (face-to-face)

North East - Thursday 15th September (TBC), Thursday 17th November 6pm (online)

Northern Ireland - Monday 23rd May 5pm (online)

Scotland - Tuesday 24th May 6pm (online), Thursday 3rd November (TBC)

South Wales and West of England - End of June/Early July – Site visit (TBC), Early October – Site visit (TBC), Friday 2nd December (face-to-face)

West Midlands - Monday 29th June 6pm (online), Wednesday 20th July 6pm (online)

Regional Group meetings are a benefit of SOM membership. To find out about becoming a member, [visit our website](#). Non-members can attend a meeting as a 'taster' – if interested, please email Natasha.Sethna@som.org.uk

SOM peer support



SOM trained a group of SOM members to provide peer support to fellow SOM members who request it. Peer support offers many benefits to both parties, for example: increased self-confidence in dealing with a specific situation, the value of helping others for those providing the peer support, and shared development of skills and knowledge including information and signposting.

The support is for SOM members who perhaps are just starting out, are experiencing a transition in their career, or coming to the end of their career. Peer support can occur over the phone, via Skype or face to face.

This is for each party to decide together, mindful that no cost support is provided by SOM.

Interested in hosting a doctor observer in your clinic?

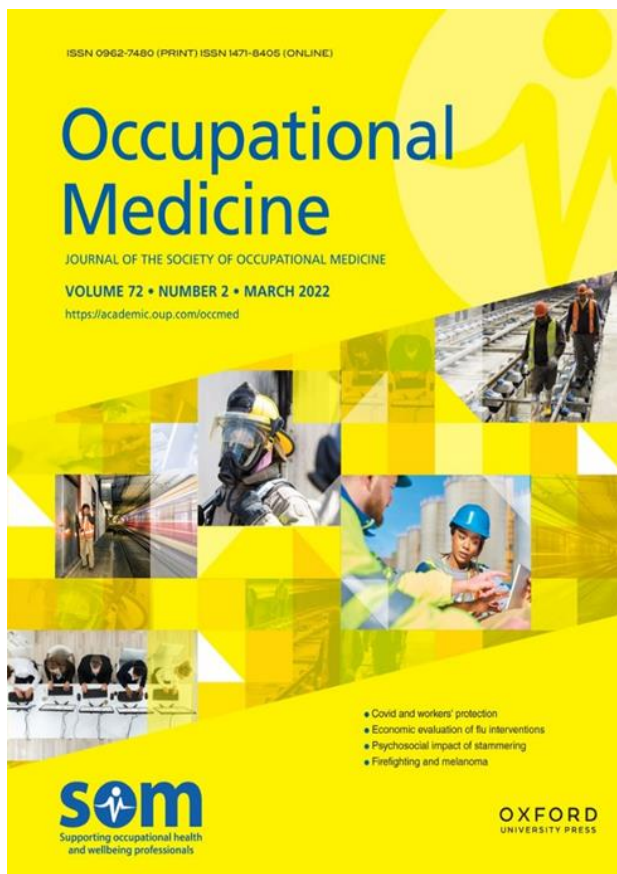
"I would like to form a network of occupational health (OH) services across the country that would be willing to host doctors to sit in and observe clinics. As the director for a Diploma course, I have been informally introducing delegates to OH services across the country. Some of these services have subsequently recruited the doctor to work with them. The contact details will be held by FOM, SOM and NHS Health at Work Network. If you are willing to be part of this network, please send me the details of the person within your organisation who will be the point of contact for the doctor."

Email shritipattani@nhs.net.

Dr Shriti Pattani



The Journal of *Occupational Medicine*



The Journal of *Occupational Medicine* is a benefit of SOM membership.

To find out more about the journal, visit the website [here](https://academic.oup.com/occmed).

Q&A with David Snashall

How did you get into occupational health?

Looking back, I had always had an interest in travel and environmental physiology, nurtured by various mountaineering expeditions. I was lucky enough, in the 70s, to be appointed as one of two expatriate doctors on the Majes project in Peru, a vast irrigation scheme involving the construction of many dams and tunnels through the Andes.

This was an introduction to high-altitude studies, to health care delivery in remote areas and to social anthropology – as well as occupational health. It was a steep learning curve. I later trained in occupational and tropical medicine at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.



Occupational health hero?

I was much supported and influenced by Griffith Pugh, the physiologist who designed the oxygen supply for the 1953 Everest expedition, but my real occupational medicine mentors were Richard Schilling, Corbett McDonald, and Bob Murray.

Dream dinner party guests (4 allowed)?

Humphrey Lyttelton, Wade Davis, Toni Morrison, Sebastiao Salgado.

Best occupational health book?

It's very much out of date now but there's nothing quite like it and it's a great read: "Diseases of Occupation", the first edition by Donald Hunter. For a more contemporary overview of the subject that remains surprisingly popular, "ABC of Occupational and Environmental Medicine" by Snashall and Patel!

Tell us a joke...

Barry Cryer, who died recently, always had a great stock:

A man driving along a country road runs over a cockerel.

He stops at the nearby farmhouse, knocks, and is confronted by the farmer's wife.

Says to her, "I'm so terribly sorry but there's been an accident and I've killed your cockerel. You deserve some recompense and I'd like to replace him."

Farmer's wife: "Suit yourself, the hens are out the back."

David Snashall is Professor of Occupational Medicine, King's College London, and Honorary Consultant & Clinical Director, Occupational Health and Safety Services, Guy's, and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust.

SOM Special Interest Group meetings

- Occupational Psychology – Monday 23rd May, 12.30-1.30pm
- CESR Support Group – Monday 30th May, 5-6pm
- Commercial Providers Group – Tuesday 7th June, 4-5pm
- Pensions – Wednesday 29th June, 3-4.30pm
- Mental Health - Special Health Group – Friday 1st July, 1-2pm
- Construction – Tuesday 5th July, 12-1pm
- OH Technicians – Monday 11th July, 3.30-4.30pm
- HAVS – Wednesday 20th July, 4-5pm

Special interest group (SIG) meetings occur on other issues too – details [here](#).
If you are a SOM member and wish to join a SIG, contact Nick.Pahl@som.org.uk

About the SOM

The Society of Occupational Medicine (SOM) is the largest and oldest national professional organisation of individuals with an interest in occupational health (OH).

Membership is for anyone working in and with an interest in OH. It demonstrates a commitment to improving health at work, supports professional development and improves future employability enhancing our members' reputation and employability.

Members are part of a multidisciplinary community – including doctors, technicians, nurses, health specialists and other professionals – with access to the information, expertise and learning needed to keep at the forefront of their role. Members benefit from career development opportunities alongside practical, day-to-day support and guidance, through local and national networks that are open to all.

Through its collective voice, SOM advances knowledge, increases awareness and seeks to positively influence the future of OH.

Join us – at www.som.org.uk