

## **IFOMPT 2016 Report – Matt Zasada**

The IFOMPT conference is the leading manual therapy conference in the world and it was a privilege to be able to attend with the support of a bursary awarded by the MACP. The biggest challenge in teaching on any physiotherapy course is keeping up to date with developments in the broad research base that underpins our practice. It was fabulous to see this broad research base being reflected in the content of IFOMPT 2016 with presentations from, and discussions with, some of the leading clinicians and academics in the world. It was great to hear about unpublished work as well as and their thoughts about the future direction of their research and how they feel this will impact on our clinical practice.

As one would expect from such an event there were areas of learning for all of us, however I was surprised that my greatest piece of learning was the extent to which the academic / clinical gap persists. It was disheartening to hear suggestions from leading clinicians, that universities are letting down the profession by not teaching manual therapy. This may be the case in other parts of the world, but I am not aware of this happening anywhere in the UK. Far from it, we spend a huge amount of time keeping up to date with current musculoskeletal research and practice. It is clear that we still have work to do in ensuring that the academic and clinical fraternities are engaged in each other's practice.

The realisation that this gap persists is in some ways the great opportunity of IFOMPT. Many academics are still involved in clinical practice but opportunities for clinicians and academics to mix and join the dots are limited. The IFOMPT conference offers us the opportunity to join the dots, between therapists in different parts of our profession, between different musculoskeletal disciplines and theoretical bases, and within the vast body of evidence that underpins our practice. Hopefully I will have another opportunity to join you all in joining the dots in 2020!