

Conference Report IFOMPT

I attended two days at the IFOMPT conference. The entire program was very well organised and packed full of exceptional speakers. One of the main things I got from going to the conference was the opportunity to network with a whole range of manual therapists from across the globe. This has given great opportunities to form future collaborations.

The key highlights for me were Lorimer Mosley's talk- he presented the idea of neurotags in a very dynamic manner. He made very complex neuro-anatomy understandable and related it back to the patients presentation.

I learnt that pain has a neurotag made of different brain cells. The brain cells are multi-taskers so can often have more than one role and be involved in other neurotags eg for proprioception, tactile sensation, back pain. The fact that pain has a very large neurotag, means that lots of cells are involved and therefore there is lots of opportunities for cross over. Therefore, this can explain why a specific movement can be linked with pain. I also found it fascinating that these neurotags can be linked with the space around the painful side of the back and this was linked to the idea of unilateral neglect.

I think bringing together all the experts in headaches gave us a fantastic opportunity to examine current research and practice from multiple backgrounds. The talks all complemented each other well.

The small group sessions with Brian Mulligan were fantastic, it was great to have something so clinically relevant to take away. All these techniques I have applied to patients since the conference, and I feel privileged to be able to say that I have seen them demonstrated by the actual creator of the Mulligan approach. Often this clinical relevance is what is lacking from conferences.

The conference also allowed me to critique conference presentation styles as well as the content, to learn how best to deliver future talks and lectures.

I also appreciated the opportunity to talk with the editors of manual therapy journals to hear exactly what they are looking for in their submissions. It was also a good opportunity to discuss some of the frustrations we have when trying to submit.

The app was highly sophisticated yet really easy to use. It was really useful to allow planning the day, and it meant that you didn't waste time trying to navigate a programme. Everything could be pre-planned and reminders set.

I think the venue was also ideal for the conference. I will definitely be recommending future IFOMPT conferences and making sure I attend Melbourne.

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to attend. I really appreciated the bursary as without it I would not have been able to afford the conference. Unfortunately as an NHS physiotherapist conferences are seen as an unaffordable luxury, and therefore are not financially supported.

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