

IFOMPT 2016 conference report

Blimey, I'm going! Having applied for an MACP Bursary to attend IFOMPT 2016 more in hope than expectation, I was delighted to hear I had been supported.

I flew to a rather damp Scotland in something resembling a rickshaw with wings. Glasgow and the Conference Centre alone were well worth the trip. Even through the driving rain, it was apparent that this was going to be venue par excellence. So, what was the impact on me?

It was reassuring to hear that there is an evidence-led role for both Manual Therapy and "hands off" strategies in the management of many conditions. That these concepts can be used in combination, and that Manual Therapy is unlikely to promote maladaptive beliefs and behaviours; so long as Patients are carefully selected, and the right messages effectively communicated, has affected in my day to day practice.

Many speakers emphasised the importance of effective communication. Of particular significance, was the impact a Patient's expectations may have on their prognosis, and of our influence over this. On reflection, my messages may have previously pushed expectations lower than necessary. I still avoid promoting unrealistic expectations, but I do give a more positive emphasis, and have noted an improvement in engagement and outcomes.

Would anything have made it better? Well, an umbrella would have been a bonus! On a more serious note, there was discussion about the gap between Research findings and Clinical Practice. I work within the NHS. Like many, I have to manage hugely complex Patients in just a few half-hour appointments. Researchers described wonderful results from their Studies. Of course, I can learn from them, but I was left thinking; how can I replicate that protocol? Perhaps, we need more pragmatic Research, evaluating interventions delivered in timescales replicating daily reality. If no one else will do this, perhaps I should.

I learnt a lot, and had much fun over the five days of IFOMPT 2016. I am extremely grateful to the MACP for their support.

Did I mention the rain?

David Sweeting