

CPD/Educational Bursaries

MACP Bursary Award 2012.

I was lucky enough to receive the MACP Bursary to attend the British Elbow and Shoulder Society conference in Devon.

The conference had a packed programme divided into areas of specific interest such as pathology; surgery for the shoulder and elbow and advances in surgical approaches. The first part of the programme of interest to me as a physiotherapist was the AHP programme

Lori Michener from Virginia USA presented a lecture on the shoulder conditions she typically sees in her practice. She also talked about her experience and research on the connection between thoracic manipulation and shoulder pain and how useful it can be from a neurophysiological perspective to help painful shoulders.

Two case studies were presented, the first on facioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy (FSHD) by Jane Moser from Oxford and Duncan Stamp who presented a single case study of a case of suprascapular nerve pain which required surgery.

Carol Payne talked about Patient Related Outcome Measures (PROMS) and how they can be useful from a research perspective. This was useful to hear about the various outcome measures used in shoulder practice, their limitations and the notion of outcomes from patients perspectives.

Mike Smith from Cardiff gave a talk on the Cardiff Scapulothoracic Assessment System which is a multidisciplinary informed assessment system designed to help people standardized the approach to assessment of the scapula. In contrast to this Lori Michener and Cathy Barrett gave their scapula assessment approaches in a practical session the following day which was a more fluid dynamic approach of two highly experienced and knowledgeable physiotherapists.

The main programme went on to deliver research on the basic science of shoulder pathologies specifically around the rotator cuff; impingement syndromes and the cuff including surgical interventions; arthroscopic releases for stiff shoulders; injections and cuff repairs. The session on the elbow had a clear bias towards surgery and the distal tears of the biceps appeared to be flavour of the session. Elbow replacement surgery featured with studies looking at complications and outcomes associated with these interventions.

The final session was a miscellaneous collection of abstracts on conditions. Several sessions looked at the diagnostic accuracy of surgeons carrying out their own ultrasound scans for rotator cuff tears and a presentation on how they work towards competency was delivered. This process is also available to BESS AHP members working closely with surgeons who can cross check their ultrasound impressions with surgical findings to enhance reliability in detecting full thickness tears.

The final session was dedicated to trauma.

I found this conference extremely interesting as it condensed the world of shoulders and elbows under one roof. It also demonstrated what I think is an excellent example in orthopedics of a 'quid pro quo' relationship between the surgeon and the physiotherapist which I think is unique.

I also wondered about the volume of research that seemed to come from the shoulder and elbow medical / orthopedic community and whether the way in which their medical 'firms' are structured allowed them to do

research with apparently fewer barriers. I also felt inspired to get some of the long held questions I have had into some kind of research question and perhaps be up on that podium myself one day!

Matt Daly