

Richard Hughes Travel Bursary May 2019 - Dr Carolynne Doherty report for attendance at the Association of British Neurologist's Meeting, Edinburgh 21-23 May 2019

I am very grateful to the British Peripheral Nerve Society for supporting my attendance at the ABN Annual Meeting held in the Edinburgh International Conference Centre.

I had the opportunity to make a poster presentation titled "SLC25A46 mutations cause a spectrum of disorders including CMT2 with optic atrophy," describing a patient with compound heterozygous mutations in a mitochondrial solute carrier which are associated with a spectrum of neurological phenotypes, the core feature of which is optic atrophy. I am currently working as a Clinical Fellow in Peripheral Neuropathy at the Centre for Neuromuscular diseases and gained a great deal from the presentations by Dr Menelaos Pipis, Dr Andrea Cortese and Dr Viroica Chelban during the 'Phenotypes and Genotypes' Parallel session. I enjoyed the discussing the study for which I am now recruiting 'Muscle MRI in CMT,' during networking opportunities, meeting clinicians, allied health professionals and researchers and catching up with neurology colleagues from Northern Ireland.

There were two neuromuscular highlights at the meeting: the ABN Medallist lecture was given by Professor Pamela Shaw "Translational neuroscience to improve outcomes for motor neurone disease: the blessings and challenges of the journey;" and the Gordon Holmes Lecture given by Professor Charles Thornton "Prospects for developing treatment for Myotonic Dystrophy." The common thread between the two lectures is the distance we have travelled in the study of and management of these disorders. The focus on research driven toward gene therapy, neuroprotective strategies and high-quality care was evident across the neuromuscular, epilepsy and movement disorders plenary sessions as well as others and was notable throughout the meeting.

The meeting was not without ethically challenging discussions: delegates considered ethics within the management of functional disorders, in prescribing sodium valproate to women of childbearing age, and in session covering the modern dilemma of assisted dying. In the quality session, presentations considered the geographical variation in experience of neurology training, and geographical variation in service provision including in acute neurology services – which are important to acknowledge.

The Practical Neurology Lecture was delivered by Professor Robin Ferner, who has not changed since my undergraduate training at the University of Birmingham Medical School. He discussed 'Harm from Medicine,' sharing his experiences and reminding us of our biases so that we might avoid error. The 'Pause for thought,' session covered some core clinical knowledge, and was shortly followed by the Clinicopathological Conference, with the discussant Dr Ed Newman correctly deducing the diagnosis of IgG4 vasculitis.

In conclusion, as a Clinical Fellow working toward a PhD, the opportunity to attend the ABN meeting was invaluable from an educational, research and reflective viewpoint, and I am very grateful to the BPNS for their support.