



SYMPOSIUM MAMMOGRAPHICUM
29 JUNE – 1 JULY 2014
BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE (UK)

This international two day conference held at the Bournemouth International Centre was organised and hosted by the Organising Committee and Trustees of the charity Symposium Mammographicum. The program offered many diverse and stimulating topics for a cross section of healthcare professionals delivered by national and international keynote speakers. It covered many interesting topics relating to the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer and took a multidisciplinary approach throughout. There were over thirty five exhibitors present, offering comprehensive information on the latest technical equipment, products and services related to diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. There were over fifty poster presentations with some very interesting and thought provoking topics covered.

Both the welcome reception and in particular the 'Great Gatsby' Inspired Symposium Dinner' were great social events allowing not only for great entertainment but also enabled me to network with past colleagues as well as peers currently 'in the field'.

Networking meant that I could engage in some interesting discussions with peers from the UK. I was really interested to learn about the structured career pathways of the 'four tier system' that has been implemented within the profession of radiography in the UK over the last ten or more years.

From assistant practitioner, radiographer, advanced practitioner to consultant breast radiographer, I learnt about the opportunities available and the different roles, responsibilities and scopes of clinical practice that each level has to offer. Unfortunately these opportunities are currently not available to radiographers in Australia however I do know there has already been some discussion around introducing assistant practitioners into the workforce.

Over the two days, I attended many stimulating presentations covering many aspects of diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer aimed at the various disciplines. Some presentations I found to be of particular relevance to my role as a Radiographer working in BreastScreen Queensland.

Below I have mentioned my personal 'highlights' of the conference.

- Siemens Imaging the dense breast – technological advances
- Mammographic Fundamentals - A call for the development of QA standards for breast compression force - for practitioner standardisation and client consistency
- Imaging the Augmented Breast
- UK 'LORIS' low risk DCIS trial – initial experience
Enhancing informed and educated consent for the LORIS trial

- Tomosynthesis
- Reader Performance study – order of reads
- Optimising radiological investigation of the axilla

The Benefits of attending this Conference

- Given me the opportunity to explore the latest and advanced technologies with regards to breast imaging. At the exhibition I was able to look at and evaluate the latest generation mammography and ultrasound machines, tools, accessories, products and services to aid diagnosis and treatment.
- Provided me with evidence of continued professional development and competency.
- Allowed me to network with colleagues from other BreastScreen services in the UK which may have some benefits both from a service and personal perspective.
- Allowed me to 'visit' interesting and thought provoking areas around the subject of breast cancer diagnosis and care by attending lectures presented by other allied health professionals.
- Personally it was a rewarding experience that has given me renewed vigour and enthusiasm for the job that I do.
- Provided me with the latest information and recommendations that has benefitted me personally and the service in terms of improved knowledge, performance and best practice.

The Impact on my Role

- Updated my current knowledge and expertise with regards to the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer.
- Enabled me to stay current and fulfil the requirements of continuing my professional development as well as demonstrating commitment to my profession.
- Allowed me to think about my own current practice and reflect on how I might do things differently next time.
- Provided me with a wealth of knowledge that I am able to share with my colleagues in the hope that it will be of benefit to the screening and assessment service that we provide.

- Hopefully allowed me to achieve some recognition within my workplace. In the future I hope this will aid me in reaching my goal of advanced practice, in particular, undertaking training to become a breast sonographer which I am very keen to pursue.

To summarise my attendance at this conference, it was a fantastic experience both educationally and socially and I would definitely recommend others to attend in the future. My sincerest thanks go to the Trustees and Organisers of The Symposium Mammographicum for allowing me this valued opportunity to attend such an informative and stimulating conference.

I would like to express my gratitude to Andrew Tillbrook for his time and assistance in helping me organise my visit. I would also like to say a big thank you to Zebby Rees who made me feel very welcome at the conference and who provided me with an interesting insight into the role of a breast consultant radiographer. It was a pleasure and a privilege to meet you both.

Leesa Keast - Radiographer | BreastScreen Queensland