

## UK Bursary Report

As an undergraduate diagnostic radiography student, I have been privileged to be able to shadow an inspiring team of mammographers at Tameside District General Hospital in Manchester. The team really sparked an interest in me to pursue a career in mammography, particularly within a symptomatic setting.

This initial experience led to me seeking further clinical experience within various mammography departments to include screening clinics and through further self-directed study I came across information regarding Symposium Mammographicum and have been extremely fortunate to be granted a bursary to attend.

Attending the conference has been of great value to my personal learning in the field of mammography as the content has given greater depth and understanding to topics covered on the BSc(Hons) undergraduate course at Salford University. The workshop delivered by SCoR on advanced practice gave me valuable insight into what constitutes the professional standards of an advanced practitioner, something which I aspire to be in the future yet is only briefly discussed on the undergraduate course. This event also made me appreciate how lucky we are in the UK to be able to have this career progression, something that is not available to radiographers working outside of the UK.

It was great to see hear the speakers on research and how they managed to become involved in projects as I feel that upon leaving academia and entering work in the clinical environment this could become a daunting task. In the main, their involvement is a credit to their own individual determination and drive, but it was also inspiring to hear of the support these radiographers received from their colleagues and peers to undertake work which would increase the quality of patient care delivered consequently adding value to the departments involved.

The poster sessions were a good testament to the amount of varied research being undertaken by breast imaging teams within the UK and beyond, indicating the current issues and improvements needed within the sector. Of particular interest to me were the studies on clip migration, patient comfort and breast density.

Breast density and its risk factors along with the developments in imaging modalities (CE mammography, MRI, tomosynthesis) for imaging breast lesions were part of my biggest learning curve whilst at the conference. I found the advancement of knowledge in these areas along with the future possibilities to provide personalised, risk related screening to be a positive movement, one that also has the prospect to reduce harm by minimising overdiagnosis and overtreatment.

The topic of artificial intelligence was also thought provoking. Research was disseminated looking into the use of AI in the identification of an individual's breast density using the BI-RADS scoring system, its worth in the role of providing personalised care, and its use within reporting to reduce the patients waiting time for results thus reducing scanxiety.

Interval cancers undoubtedly came up in 'Stay on the right side of the law'. As a student the gravity and responsibility of mammographers particularly in a reporting role struck hard. I learnt the importance of openness and transparency with patients when this occurs, along with the necessity of symptomatic teams not initiating discussion with the patient about the possibility of missed pathology on the screening mammograms. As a future practitioner it helped to see the statistics that clear misses are a small percentage of interval cancers and that some

patients with interval cancers have the BRCA gene where a lesions growth rate far exceeds that of one found in a patient without the gene.

The 'Sir John Stebbings Lecture: Increasing demands at work for everyone – can we still be happy?' presented by Andy Cope was extremely welcome as it was uplifting and stimulating and a good reminder that we are in control of our own happiness and that our own thinking and ability to view any circumstance from different perspectives can help to deal with work demands.

Overall the conference enabled me to gain a broader view of the role of NHS and its endeavour in implementing strategies to improve the nation's health, and the part that the radiographer plays within the greater team.

Whilst I originally attended the conference with the notion that I would gain knowledge and inspiration within the field of mammography what I actually got was an experience. Entertainment from the fantastic Aberystwyth Tenovus Choir and mouth-wateringly good food. I received a great deal of motivation and encouragement from practicing mammographers met at the conference working within the NHS and also some prestigious private hospitals, and of course wonderful hospitality provided by Andrew Tillbrook and the wider team.

Thank you for honouring me with the bursary to attend the conference.

Yours sincerely,

Lucinda Gray.