

BACCN Conference 2024 Grant Report

Alison Schofield

I was fortunate to receive a grant to attend my first BACCN conference for which I am extremely grateful. Being able to attend, as also present, all as a first time, was a wonderful experience and great personal achievement.

There were many interesting sessions I attended and key highlights for me were spread across both days.

Day 1:

Keynote speaker Professor Aisha Holloway provided an inspiring presentation on the art of nursing, and pushing the opportunities to challenge within a stretched NHS and the provision of critical care.

David Wightwick, CEO of the humanitarian medical NGO, provided a humbling outline of their work in overseas disaster zones, often at very short notice. The leadership, expertise and provision of services, in an array of extreme situations provided us with an insight into their valuable work.

Maggie Wilson provided an excellent insight and reflection of her own personal experience of being redeployed from ICU to the ward for a shift. Using a reflection process, she highlighted to patient safety issues, explored and challenged the protocols and policies surrounding this area and suggested safer working ideas to ensure not only the safety of the patient, but the protection and comfort of the nurse being redeployed. She effectively used a negative experience to provide key points of our nursing practice that are often overlooked. Well done Maggie!

Day2:

Keynote speaker Carli Whittaker who is the current president of the Paediatric Critical Care Society – gave a thought-provoking presentation about the limited paediatric critical care services across the country, and the challenges we all face in accommodating the rising numbers of acute and chronically ill children that require critical care. Insightful and informative.

The ECMO presentation by the team from Aberdeen provided an excellent ‘hands-on’ workshop, putting the theory into practice. We don’t manage ECMO patients in our hospital, but this gave a real insight to approaches, treatments and cares involved by those retrieval teams coming to collect our most critically ill patients.

Dr Henrietta Hughes outlined her responsibilities as the country’s first Patient Safety Commissioner. She told us about her new role promoting patient safety in relation to medicines and medical devices and on promoting the patient voice. I have been lucky to be involved within the Martha’s Rule sprints, aimed at gathering information from across the country and providing guidance to those pilot sites who are investing in their critical care outreach services, commencing their Call 4 Concern services and creating their well-being questionnaires in the aim to give patients and their families more information and power towards their care in hospital. I presented our hospital’s experiences of setting up and running a Call 4 Concern service for the last fifteen years on Monday afternoon. Henrietta gave a powerful overview of the essential nature of patient safety, and involving patients and their families in their own care, and giving them a ‘voice’. Dr Aidin McKinney’s presentation outlining enablement of patients and their families to escalate deterioration in adult

ward settings, and giving information to families on soft signs of deterioration has clear provided the start of ground breaking work in Ireland for this patient safety initiative.

In summary, I thoroughly enjoyed my first BACCN conference! I wish I could have attended more of the concurrent sessions, all looked very interesting. I have made new friends, danced the night away, and left inspired that I could contribute to the ever-changing challenges of critical care.

Many thanks