

Attendance Report: BACCN 39th Annual Conference, Aberdeen.

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Event Details: The 39th Annual BACCN Conference, themed *Building Environments to Thrive: Celebrating Personal and Professional Diversity in Critical Care Nursing*, took place from 7th-8th October at P&J Live, Aberdeen's state-of-the-art event complex. Known for its low-carbon energy centre, this venue underscored the conference's commitment to sustainability. Aberdeen, celebrated as Scotland's "Granite City," is a vibrant, coastal city known for its rich history, stunning architecture, and close ties to the energy sector, making it a fitting host for this milestone conference.

Welcome Reception: The conference unofficially kicked off with a warm welcome reception on the evening of the 6th. Here, I reconnected with both current and former colleagues, including my former lecturer, Ian Naldrett, who now chairs the BACCN. It was a rewarding experience to meet Ian in this leadership role and engage with other professionals in a relaxed, collegial setting.

Day 1 Highlights: The first day began with opening remarks from Karin, BACCN Conference Director, and Ian, BACCN Chair, who set an inspiring tone for the conference. This was followed by an energizing keynote address from Professor Aisha Holloway, titled *The Nursing Now Challenge and the Art of Possibility: Just What the Nurse Ordered*. Professor Holloway emphasised the power of nurses' personal stories as tools for advocacy, urging us to leverage our unique experiences to drive positive change in healthcare. Her words resonated with the theme of the conference, focusing on the strength of diversity within the nursing profession.

David Wightwick also delivered a memorable presentation, sharing UK-Med's impactful work in conflict and disaster zones. Moved by the organisation's dedication, I am now considering joining UK-Med as a volunteer to contribute to this mission. Another standout session was a virtual conversation with Sarah DiGregorio, author of *Taking Care: The Story of Nursing and Its Power to Change Our World*. Sarah, though not a nurse, eloquently captured the essence of nursing and highlighted the critical role nurses play in healthcare. Her powerful remark, "The devaluation of nursing is the devaluation of human lives," underscored the essential humanity of nursing.

Educational Sessions, Workshops, and Research Presentations: The conference offered a wealth of educational sessions, workshops, and research presentations. In addition to engaging talks, the event featured poster displays and exhibitions that provided a closer look at innovative research in critical care. A particular highlight was the presentation by my former colleague and mentor, Dr. Johnson, who shared his PhD research on the *Prevention and Management of Delirium in the ICU*. His insights were both practical and transformative, emphasising the importance of proactive management in critical care.

Gala Dinner and Ceilidh Dancing: The day concluded with a lively gala dinner and traditional Scottish ceilidh dancing, providing a perfect opportunity for delegates to connect, unwind, and enjoy Scottish culture.

Day 2 Highlights: Day 2 began with a captivating illustration of Day 1 by Julia Bakay, capturing key moments with artistry. A keynote by Carli Whittaker on the relationship between pediatric and adult critical care followed, bridging a crucial connection in healthcare. Dr. Hughes then presented an impactful keynote on Martha's Rule, advocating for patient and family rights in critical care. Throughout both days, refreshments were provided, contributing to an inviting and comfortable networking environment.

Key Takeaways and Looking Ahead: This conference equipped me with new strategies and knowledge to enhance patient care and support colleagues' well-being within our ICU. I left with valuable insights on leadership, patient-centred approaches, and innovative research in critical care nursing. I look forward to bringing these insights back to my team and am eagerly anticipating the next BACCN conference in Blackpool.

The BACCN 39th conference in Aberdeen proved to be a well-rounded and inspiring event, reinforcing the unique diversity and resilience of critical care nurses and empowering us to lead positive change in healthcare.