

BACCN 2024 Conference Grant Report

Liz Ellis

Despite attending BACCN conferences for many years, I still felt a sense of excitement at attending this year's conference in Aberdeen. Partly this was because I was lucky to be able to fund 5 colleagues to also attend., 2 of which were also successful in having abstracts to present posters.

The trip to Aberdeen was a journey in itself! Luckily research showed that there was a direct train from Wakefield to Aberdeen on the Sunday afternoon – and it only took 5 hr 50 mins! It meant having to miss the welcome reception but the opportunity not to have to change trains was too good to be missed.

Being able to look at the landscape whilst we travelled was great – though i didn't get the memo to be the travel guide for my colleagues. Pointing out favourite spots and my family home as we went past on the train made for an enjoyable journey. Arriving in Aberdeen at 9pm, little did I realise it would be another 45 minutes before we reached the hotel – if you fancy a new job Aberdeen seem to need more taxi drivers!

On to day 1 of the conference.

The theme of conference was Building Environments to Thrive and Professor Aisha Holloway's plenary session on Nursing Now Challenge and the art of possibility: just what the nurse ordered was a great start. Making a difference: delivering healthcare in a conflict/disaster zone followed and this gave me food for thought – we struggled to deliver care in the pandemic, but here they are providing care including operations/critical care in a war zone.

After coffee and a chance to browse the trade exhibition, I attended a session on staff movement and patient safety. Considering she was a first time speaker Maggie Wilson was fantastic. She was passionate about her experience and her experiences were very similar to those my colleagues experience.

A quick room change and the first of my staff to present a poster. For someone who doesn't like standing up in front of others Rachel's Gloves Off Campaign talk went down well. Lots of pertinent questions from the floor and catch ups over lunch.

The food at conference was amazing. You never know what to expect as mass produced food isn't always great but the P&J catering was spot on.

The afternoon was spent in a tracheostomy management workshop, followed by an inspirational talk by Sarah DiGregorio on Taking Care. Her book was ordered whilst she was still talking!

End of day one and time for us all to let our hair down. First stop was the regional committee members gathering for a drink. Good to see old friends in person and to meet new ones. Then on to conference dinner – this year's theme was all things Scottish. I'm always amazed how the organisers find such fab bands and this year's Ceilidh band was no exception. My colleagues used me as their personal dance teacher – i don't think I've ever danced so much at a conference dinner. The annual awards were distributed at the start of the evening and i was so proud to receive study day of the year on behalf of Northern region.

Day 2 and it started with the 4th of the keynote speakers, Carli Whittaker who discussed Paediatric Critical Care and what does it mean to the world of adult nursing. Her talk was definitely an eye opener of how things may develop.

Day 2 also brought about another poster presentation by one of my staff nurse's Bev- developing an assessment scoring system for central lines. Her session was interactive and drew lots of questions.

Throughout the conference there was plenty of opportunity to view the poster presentations – situating them within the exhibition centre meant they were easy to view, especially useful when the

poster session I wanted to go to clashed with something else I wanted to go to!

Following the end of conference, due to train times, myself and colleagues spent a night in Aberdeen city centre. We enjoyed some lovely pizza and beer – just the thing to relax after a busy few days at conference.

Once again, the BACCN conference has given me food for thought and inspired me to make some improvements in my unit.

Thank you BACCN for providing me with a grant to attend this year's conference. Travelling to Aberdeen for conference would have been . financially challenging If you are reading this and thinking about attending a future conference but unsure if you can afford it get that application in!!!

See you all in Blackpool ☺