

Report of ESDR Annual Meeting, Venice, 19th – 22nd September 2012

The ESDR Annual meeting was held at the Casino on the Venice Lido. The high density of Dermatology Researchers staying on the Lido for the week gave rise to the perfect conditions for developing collaborations outside of the venue; either during a swift espresso on the way to the meeting or as part of a post prandial discussion on the pros and cons of autophagy inhibition during melanoma therapy. The three or four collaborations thus developed will hopefully be one of the most important experiences I will have gained from my first ESDR meeting.

The poster hall at the venue was vast, with nearly 1000 posters being presented on every facet of dermatology. It would have been impossible to digest every relevant poster in the limited time available, but the use of “poster walks” meant that a thematically linked path could be attempted in a focused period of time. My poster was selected for the “melanoma poster walk”. I was fortunate enough to present my data to a portion of the delegates with a particular interest in melanoma, as well as fielding testing questions from Prof Dummer who led this particular walk. Some of the points raised in this way have been extremely useful during the preparation of manuscripts of this work for submission.

As always at such large events there was a range of seminars and sessions taking place concurrently throughout the venue and so targeted attendance was key. The European Association of Dermato-Oncology meeting was held on the Wednesday evening. The largest portion of this seminar was devoted to melanoma, with particular attention to genetic susceptibility to melanoma and up to date evaluations of BRAF inhibitor responses. There was also a nice balance of clinically useful lectures on non-melanoma skin cancer.

Bullous disorders were discussed on the Thursday morning with an update of the role of various antigens often overlooked in pemphigus/pemphigoid, as well as useful presentations on people’s experience with Rituximab in such conditions. The afternoon Postgraduate course was recommended and did not disappoint, with the very topical Clinical and Translational research session providing food for thought before canapés on the Casino terrace.

Guest lectures by Elaine Fuchs and Jonathon Barker were fascinating and inspiring highlights to the Thursday and Friday mornings, with my participation in the meeting being concluded with particular areas of interest, namely photobiology, pigmentation and melanoma.

Overall, the meeting was a fantastic opportunity to experience the current dermatology research taking place in Europe and further afield, as well as a great way to develop ongoing collaborations.