

## **BAD/DC Travel Fellowship - World Congress of Dermatology, Milan 2019**

### **Dr. Tashmeeta Ahad**

I am extremely grateful to have been awarded this fellowship to be able to attend the World Congress of Dermatology in Milan, which was one of the most inspiring and informative conferences I have ever attended. With 16000 delegates from all across the world and a plethora of enlightening scientific sessions, this certainly is a meeting 'dermatologists remember for the rest of their lives'.

The conference opened with an impressive performance by an Italian philharmonic orchestra followed by an inspiring speech by Professor Harvey Lui, President of the ILDS. Within his speech was the encouragement to speak to at least one new delegate from another part of the world each day and the meeting was an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and network with inspiring pioneers in dermatology.

I started my week with the pre-conference World Photodermatology Day, which encompassed insightful lectures from photodermatology societies from across the world with emerging techniques, including extending use of excimer lasers for vitiligo, visible blue light for inflammatory conditions, antimicrobial PDT, and lectures on the variety of cases and issues seen globally- ranging from Europe to Latin America. I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to present my research with Professor Lesley Rhodes on drug induced photosensitivity at this scientific session, allowing an interactive discussion with leaders in this field, including Professor Ibbotson.

There were excellent plenary sessions delivered by Professor Rox Anderson, on the future of dermatology and 'thinking outside the box'. He highlighted potential uses of high fluence Nd:Yag lasers to target BCCs via selective photothermolysis of arterioles, use of optoacoustic imaging for melanoma staging and optical coherence tomography as a form of optical skin biopsy. He highlighted how ablative fractional lasers could be used to enhance topical drug delivery or even delivery of cells and the immunomodulatory effects of light. Pioneering techniques under development are the selective photothermolysis of sweat glands for hyperhidrosis and sebaceous glands as a potential treatment for acne.

Dr. Harris's plenary session on vitiligo explored new insights into molecular pathophysiology of vitiligo and potentials for targeted therapy with biologics and Dr. Dlova gave a touching insight on the plight of HIV dermatoses. Several educational sessions allowed me to broaden my knowledge into latest developments on eczema research, laser, tropical dermatology, dermoscopy, optical coherence tomography and use of technology and cosmetic dermatology. In addition, plenary sessions on astrophysics and 'the beginning and end of the Universe' and Dr. Redmond's talk on 'Generational approaches' gave a non-dermatology flavour amongst the plethora of dermatology sessions making each day stimulating and enjoyable.

Overall, the World Congress of Dermatology provided several high quality sessions delivering clinical and research pearls on a variety of topics and the opportunity to observe role-models in the field was an enriching experience. I am grateful to the British Association of Dermatologists and Dowling Club for granting me this opportunity and I look forward to hopefully attending this meeting in Singapore in four years time.

