

BAD/DC Travel Fellowship – Winter 2019

The 24th World Congress of Dermatology May 2019 – Milan, Italy

Dr Michael Lavery



I am very grateful to the British Association of Dermatology and Dowling Club for awarding me the BAD/DC Travel Fellowship award to attend the 24th World Congress of Dermatology (WCD) in Milan, Italy, held from 10-15th June 2019. The first WCD conference was held in 1889 in Paris and, despite a 94-year hiatus after the second meeting, continues to meet on a 4-yearly basis. The congress meetings are always well attended, with this year having over 16,000 registered delegates, spanning a multitude of countries, including more than 500 from the United Kingdom.

The main theme of this conference was personalised medicine. Professor Christopher Griffiths alluded to this at the start of the meeting, and the theme continued throughout subsequent lectures. It was commented that patients are already experiencing this through thiopurine methyl transferase (TPMT), glucose-6 phosphatase (G6PD) and HLA B5701 testing before commencing azathioprine, dapsone and abacovir respectively. However translational research used in the clinical arena is already providing insights into patient-centred care. An example demonstrated was through the measurement of the HLA-C*06:02 allele. Patients with a negative result demonstrate clinical improvement in their psoriasis when treated with adalimumab as compared to ustekinumab. Conversely HLA-C*06:02 positivity in biologic-naïve patients with no psoriatic arthritis demonstrate a poor clinical outcome when treated with adalimumab. Ongoing studies and research including through consortiums such as PSORT (Psoriasis Stratification to Optimise Relevant Therapy) and studies such as BSTOP (Biomarkers of Systemic Treatment Outcomes in Psoriasis) will continue to garner fresh insights into the stratification of psoriasis treatments.

A myriad of topics were covered including paediatric and genodermatology, cosmetic and surgical dermatology, psychodermatology, dermatopathology, inflammatory dermatoses and novel therapies. On the 1st day there were many interesting lectures. The session 'what's new in paediatric dermatology' covered psoriasis, eczema, infantile haemangioma, genetic diseases and vascular anomalies. A 'relatively' new condition CARD-14 associated papulosquamous eruption (CAPE) was discussed which covers a clinical spectrum of pityriasis rubra pilaris, and psoriasis, which appear to be recalcitrant to conventional therapies and respond best to ustekinumab. Other lectures discussed in this paediatric session included therapies in the pipeline for use in the paediatric patient cohort including apremilast and biologics (e.g. ixekizumab, guselkumab, brodalumab) for psoriasis and topical PDE4 inhibitors, JAK inhibitors and interleukin inhibitors for atopic eczema.

Other lectures on day 1 included Stevens Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis review, with experts discussing investigation and management strategies, with an emphasis on successful treatment regimes e.g. Ciclosporin combined with Etanercept.

Other informative sessions throughout the week included paraneoplastic disorders (e.g. paraneoplastic pemphigus, dermatomyositis, hair/nail paraneoplastic disorders), the common malignancies associated and different management strategies for treating these paraneoplasias. Dr Emma Guttman delivered an excellent session on novel atopic dermatitis treatments. Therapies

discussed included IL-13, IL-31, IL-22 and JAK inhibitors. The eczema treatment armamentarium will soon be bolstered with the array of treatments, which are showing promising results in clinical trials.

The session on neutrophilic dermatoses provided a detailed insight into the array of management options for pyoderma gangrenosum, Sweet's syndrome, neutrophilic dermatoses in childhood, autoinflammatory conditions and pustular psoriasis, for which treatments targeting IL-36 receptor have shown promise in a Phase 1 clinical trial.

In addition to attending lectures delivered by worldwide experts I was also able to enjoy exploring Milan, a city known for its history, art and fashion. I joined a walking tour of Milan and was able to enter the magnificent Duomo cathedral and see the infamous 15th century Last Supper painting by Leonardo Da Vinci.

In summary the 24th World Congress of Dermatology was an excellent educational meeting. I thank the BAD and Dowling club for awarding this fellowship grant to me. The conference has improved my knowledge on core conditions as well as provided insight into novel therapies showing promise in clinical trials.