

**NIHR / BAD Travel Bursary Report  
International Investigative Dermatology, Orlando, Florida  
May 16-19, 2018**

*Dr Richard Watchorn*

I am indebted to the BAD and NIHR for generously supporting my attendance of the 2018 International Investigative Dermatology conference in Orlando, Florida.

My research was undertaken under the supervision of Professor Christopher Bunker and was focused on investigating the role of the microbiome in the pathogenesis of male genital lichen sclerosus.

International Investigative Dermatology is the quinquennial combined conference of the Society for Investigative Dermatology, European Society for Dermatological Research and Japanese Society for Investigate Dermatology and represents an unparalleled high-impact forum in which to present research findings.

The 2018 programme was highly diverse and well planned; innovative sessions such as mini symposia and selected ePoster discussions made it effortless to gain the most out of the conference and facilitated easy engagement with the speakers.

Highlights included plenary session lectures by distinguished speakers such as Professor Rob Knight, who has enhanced our understanding of the relationship between the microbiome and diseases such as obesity and inflammatory bowel disease and has also advanced our ability to investigate the role of microbiome in disease by developing software tools and laboratory techniques that have streamlined microbiome profiling.

As a clinician, it was highly stimulating to learn about emerging therapeutics in diseases as diverse as pemphigus and cutaneous T-cell lymphoma, and about manipulation of the microbiome using targeted topical bacteriotherapies as a strategy to treat atopic dermatitis.

Of particular value, several researchers provided ideas and inspiration that will allow me to develop further on the findings of my own research.

On a personal level, I enjoyed the opportunity to catch up friends and colleagues and meet new investigators from all around the world.

The weather in Florida was hot and humid, with a mixture of sunny spells, heavy rain and lightning. However the weather remained clear for the social event that was a trip to the Harry Potter theme park, a memorable and enjoyable experience.

The IID was an excellent opportunity to learn about emerging therapeutics, state-of-the-art skin research, and listen to leading researchers from all around the globe and I am honoured and grateful to have been awarded the BAD/NIHR travel bursary to attend.