

American Academy of Dermatology Meeting - Report
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As soon as I was aware that the American Academy of Dermatology would be going to San Francisco in 2015, I put it in my diary. I was delighted when I secured a travel fellowship from the BAD and once my leave was approved I was all set. I couldn't believe the number of sessions available to attend and spent many an hour trying to work out a timetable to attend sessions I had an increased interest in, ones that may help with sitting the SCE in Dermatology as well as those that may help filling gaps in my curriculum competences.

My first day's timetable started early with a session on 'When, why and how to use hydroxychloroquine' and the session updated my knowledge on both retinal and myopathy screening associated with this commonly prescribed drug. This was followed by presentation of my posters entitled 'Bullous Pemphigoid presenting in association with Porphyria Cutanea Tarda' and 'Variation in sun protection advice provided to those on immunosuppressants'. An afternoon at the 'High yield power hour for residents' sessions left me feeling a little daunted given the amount covered in such a short period of time yet it certainly helped direct my studying.

The following day, I targeted cosmetic sessions given the lack of experience gained through the NHS and the prominence of this aspect of Dermatology within the United States. It was not surprising to hear speakers mention choosing treatments to ensure you 'keep your customers' and performing techniques in a certain way to ensure you get 'good online reviews'. Some sessions were not particularly helpful however others opened my eyes to the way in which faces age and the use of 'cosmetic treatments' for medical conditions, such as Bells Palsy or morphea. A session called 'Boards blitz' had been recommended by other registrars as good exam preparation. This session gave me confidence that my studying was on track and that actually I had retained some of the information gained at the 'power hour' the preceding day, despite jetlag!

Furthermore, having been involved with a research group through the UK Dermatology Clinical Trials Network looking into the optimal treatment of adult morphea, I contacted Professor Kari Connolly, who is based in San Francisco and has an interest in this field, to arrange a meeting. Following on from a morning session on sclerosing skin conditions, at which she was speaking, I met with her and the other speakers who are part of the Morphea Research Alliance. This allowed us to discuss current treatment regimes in the United States as well as recent and future areas of research with which we are involved.

I truly enjoyed my experience at the American Academy of Dermatology. I hadn't quite realised the size of event it would be and I thrived in being a part of it. The sessions I attended either confounded some of my knowledge or gleaned new insight and certainly helped me attain increased competence in aspects of the curriculum. Although the differences between the healthcare systems were at times obvious during the cosmetic sessions, I was gladly surprised at the lack of differences in the other sessions I attended. An additional bonus was being able to meet with the Morphea Research Alliance team during my attendance. This has increased my motivation in my current research and feedback on this meeting to the rest of my research group should help drive our project forward, with the possibility of future collaboration.