**Bursary Report for the British Association of Hand Therapists**

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**IFSSH, IFSHT & FESSH combined conference**

**London, 6-10 June 2022**

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| **Introduction:**  (100 words max; include details of who you are, why you applied for this bursary and your experience of the event)  I graduated from Athens School of Physiotherapy in 2009 and completed my Masters in University of Athens Medical School. I am specialized in Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy and a ECHT certified Hand Therapist. I work as a senior hand therapist in St. George’s Hospital London while concurrently working for my PhD in Hand Therapy.  Attending this conference was a unique opportunity to interact with the international community and this bursary was necessary so I can attend. This conference worked as a springboard for my research and inspire me as a clinician. |
| **Topic:**  (500 words +/- 10%; this will be uploaded onto the BAHT website and may be included in an e-bulletin. The topic of this report will be agreed in negation with the Director of Bursaries. The report should not contain any comments that are potentially damaging or libellous.)  We are privileged that the conference was held on home soil here in London. Participating in this conference was a once in a lifetime opportunity. As a local, it gave me a sense of responsibility to show our guests London at its best.  At a social level, for many participants it was the first large scale professional event post pandemic. I couldn’t stop noticing the excitement in their eyes, as well as the festive feeling among organizers. I had the pleasure to meet in person for the purposes of my PhD, various old and new friends from the world of hand therapy and surgery and compare clinical standards across the globe.  It gave me the sense of belonging into something larger than a clinic -- a global community.  The element of technology made the difference in this conference. The FESSH application, the ability of accessing the recorded sessions online, the silent auction: all these offered a more personalized and environmentally sustainable experience.  The program was comprehensive and gave the freedom to choose the most suitable sessions for each participant.  From the opening ceremony, to the talk of Marc Garcia-Elias about Abu, to the great lecture of Elisabeth Hagert to the musicians hand lectures, I found it all very educational and inspirational. Clinically the conference made me appreciate in a different level the role of fascia and made it my next teaching goal.  The university challenge was an extremely smart concept which raised a healthy competition among consultants and fellows. Interestingly, it served as a self-quiz for the attendants and gave me the idea to introduce a similar game to our service.  The session that especially stood out for me was the leadership and career development in Hand Therapy. As a senior clinician and supervisor my aim is to expand the boundaries and assist on professional growth for my team. This session gave me structure for forming a business plan and using it for the career development of them. It taught me about involvement in joint service reviews with multi-disciplinary team and made me put together the clinical skills needed for a new role, to provide consultancy across service and expand professional boundaries. The talk from Sturt Palma especially made me understand what actions need to be planned to develop a role, and also estimating how time consuming it can be. It came at the right time since recently in my team we discussed the potential of a new role for an extended scope practitioner in an injection therapy clinic.  My recommendation for improvement would be from organizing level on the participants, to get personalized information which includes with all the meetings and bookings they have across the duration of the conference: a personalized agenda would be a great addition.  Overall, attending made me compare our clinical approaches with the world, and see clearly how UK is a world leader in our field. My strongest impression I took from this conference was the sense of celebration and joy from finally being able to participate in person again. For learning and progressing, improving our techniques, getting curious or rejecting approaches, sharing the same passion - Hand Therapy. |