



## Post-course report form

**Name: Caryn Sharrock**

**Bursary applied for: BAHT conference 2025**

**Title of course attended or Project details: Joint BAHT BSSH annual conference 2025, Birmingham.**

**Date: 27-28 November 2025**

### **Introduction:**

Include details of who you are, why you applied for this bursary and your experience of the event (maximum 100 words)

I am a Hand Therapist working across different private clinic and hospital locations. My caseload is predominantly musculoskeletal and rheumatology. I treat patients following elective surgeries, with acquired conditions and after traumatic injuries. Although I have a good network of Hand Therapy colleagues and friends who support one another clinically, we work remotely when in clinic. I was motivated to attend the BAHT conference as many of the topics were relevant to my caseload. The knowledge I have gained from the diverse range of symposiums and workshops I attended has helped immensely to improve my confidence and application of Evidence-Based Practice in my work.

(Word count 104)

### **Title: "What have I learned and how will I put this into practice?"**

The report will be uploaded onto the BAHT website and may be included in an e-bulletin. It should not contain any confidential information or any comments that are potentially damaging or libellous. It should be 500 words +/- 10%.

Joint arthroplasty has always been a special interest of mine and I was inspired by the presentations on thumb CMC joint replacements (which is becoming a more popular surgical choice for patients with thumb OA), as well as ulnar head and DRUJ replacement procedures (with which I was less familiar). Given the diversity of post-operative rehab protocols following CMC arthroplasty, it was very beneficial to learn the basic agreed recommendations to empower me to be able to treat my patients more confidently and create evidence-based resources to advise patients on healing timeframes, exercise progression and safe phased return to hand function.

The Pain symposium was extremely thought-provoking and helped me to understand and empathise with many of my patients. I've always been cognisant of the subjective nature of pain, but when we unpacked the simple definition of pain being 'a response to a perceived threat' it all

made sense in interpreting why patients perceive pain so differently and helped to shed light on the journey from acute to *chronic persistent pain* which many of our patients experience. Once this can be understood then the models of 'pain wheel' and 'gain wheel' can be utilised to help patients make sense of and manage their pain. The real-life practical examples given during these presentations were brilliant and helped clarify our role as Hand Therapists to help *draw out* patients' experiences and the importance of avoiding potentially harmful medical language. Mostly I learnt that listening, and validating patients' experiences of pain is far more valuable than offering solutions. The suggestion of encouraging patients to 'draw' their pain was interesting and a technique I have since used.

Being a combined BAHT/BSSH conference provided a wonderful opportunity to network with and learn from our Hand Surgery colleagues. It was valuable for me to meet some of the consultants who refer to my clinics, thereby strengthening professional relationships. The symposium on 'Hand Fractures: Operative vs non-operative Treatment' was structured in a way that demonstrated there is often a debate to be had regarding best clinical management and there were interesting discussions between therapists and surgeons, emphasizing the importance of excellent clinical reasoning, tailored management plans and multidisciplinary decision making.

The Paediatric Symposium also provided valuable insight into the difference in fracture diagnosis and management between adults and children. I learnt about the types of fractures and Salter-Harris classifications, as well as risks related to unstable unicondylar fractures and the impact of growth plates when considering risks of trauma and infection. I have recently seen an increase in referrals for paediatric patients and attending the symposium has improved my confidence to engage in multidisciplinary discussions for this patient group and provided me with some useful tips on modifying my interactions and splinting methods in paediatrics.

My attendance at the conference has improved my Hand Therapy knowledge and confidence, as well as my motivation for engaging in service development and in-house training within my team. I am extremely grateful to BAHT for awarding me this bursary to attend the 2025 conference.

(Word count 503)