

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

**Hayley Smith**

**Federation of European Societies for Surgery of the Hand / International  
Bursary**

**[13-16<sup>th</sup> June 2018]**

## **Introduction:**

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

I am an Extended Scope Practitioner within the NHS. I have completed my MSC research project using Jamar dynamometry to update normative data in the UK using 5 positions of testing and investigating the impact of other factors on maximum grip strength. I submitted this to FESSH for the 2018 conference in Copenhagen and I was accepted to present the results at the FESSH conference 2018 in Copenhagen. To attend this was a real honour but relatively expensive when factoring in flights, accommodation, conference fee etc. I applied for a BAHT bursary to help me facilitate attending.

## **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 negotiation with the Director of Bursaries. The report should not contain any comments that are potentially damaging or libellous.)

Copenhagen was a beautiful city that I was very lucky to have visited and was a wonderful setting for a conference. Overall the congress was very well organised with a variety of sessions appropriate for both therapy and surgical attendants, even though it was a surgeons conference, providing an amazing array of educational lectures as well as free papers and related workshops by both surgeons and therapists across Europe. The accompanying app and hard back course book was a great addition and meant I didn't have to frantically write down all of the information I heard and all of my department have enjoyed and benefitted from it as a resource. I personally got a lot from some

of the surgeon's sessions to address topics at a deeper level and improve the depth of my knowledge.

Presenting in front of so many renowned surgeons and therapists was a very nerve racking experience for me but one that I actually enjoyed once it had been completed. It was nice to think that I was putting my team and my department in the spotlight for all of their continued hard work as well as presenting a piece of work that took up a considerable amount of time. After presenting in front of so many people it has actually improved my confidence with regard to presenting in general.

Overall the conference was full of ideas to consider and/ or implement in our everyday practice. This course has already given me the confidence to commence discussions with consultants about their surgical procedures and the subsequent rehabilitation guidelines. Before this course I would have probably been less confident to do this but discussing rehab and listening to many differing opinions I am now more confident to have these discussions and make changes to our therapy guidelines. I would say as a department we have always been influenced by the larger hand therapy units across the country but hopefully now we can be confident making changes more on research and current research.

As a result, I have come away inspired as a clinician and as a presenter and I am keen to complete further research in the near future. I intend to make changes within my own practice to hopefully achieve better outcomes for my patients. I am currently trying to condense my dissertation into a research paper in order to submit for publication in the British Journal of Hand Therapy so that others will be able to use my results in practice and also working with a Hand Surgeon with a medicolegal special interest and using the data to compare to normative data for the injured hand as well as testing a predictive formula that I have developed using my data predicting grip strength using patient information.

I would like to thank BAHT and BSSH for their kind award.