

Thank You to SRS

Firstly, I would like to thank the SRS for generously supporting my attendance at the 25th European Congress of Radiology in Vienna, 2019. This has been an excellent opportunity for me to develop my own learning, has contributed to my professional development, and has given me an opportunity to present research. This SRS bursary is something that all radiology trainees should consider.

My Conference Experience

As a final year trainee, this was the first time I have attended a conference of this size and the scale was extremely impressive. The conference was attended by over 30,000 delegates from 133 countries, comprising 14,602 attendees, 7,020 live viewers and 8,637 industry representatives from over 300 exhibiting companies. It is interesting to note that UK radiologists had both the highest number of live-view attendances of any country at 524 and also the highest proportion when compared with congress attendance at 827 (the fourth highest overall).

As a paediatric radiology trainee, I was impressed that there was a full programme of paediatric material, ranging from: refresher sessions (perfect for the paediatric trainee or for consultants who have an interest in paediatrics); expert sessions with up-to-date, evidence based teaching on complex pathology; to scientific sessions with new research pushing the boundaries of knowledge in the field. Each session was relevant and I learnt a lot.

Furthermore, at the end of my radiology training, attendance at ECR and the award of the SRS bursary proved invaluable for my CV and for use at consultant interview; as I was able to present my own research, which in turn resulted in offers for publication. In addition, I had recent experience in learning about areas of radiological innovation and other hot topics which was fresh in my memory. It was also great to gain experience in meeting exhibiting companies and networking with other radiology department staff from the UK and around Europe, helping me develop a wider understanding of radiology.

Vienna is a lovely city with easy links between the airport and city centre. The conference takes place in the Austria Centre Vienna, north of the river Danube and this is easy to access via the metro. It is also located next to Kaisermühlen park and garden which offers some green space for walking. The city centre is beautiful and has many restaurants for quick meals or for dining out.

My Oral Presentation

I presented research performed at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh, undertaken by myself, Dr S. McGurk, Dr A. J. Quigley and Dr J. Jones. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of prone positioning on the degree of atelectasis encountered when performing CT examinations under general anaesthetic. We found that the overall degree of atelectasis was unchanged between prone and supine positioning but our evidence suggested that the atelectasis 'moved' to the more dependant part of the lung in each position. As a result, we are likely to stick with the status-quo of supine positioning for the majority of our examinations but we are now likely to use prone positioning where we are investigating a posterior lung lesion or where the evaluation of the posterior lung has been suboptimal on a previous scan due to atelectasis.

Technology at ECR

ECR is the first event in the diary for many technology companies, each presenting their most up-to-date models and innovative techniques. For the tech-minded trainee, the exhibition hall was a great place to explore and learn about the new technologies that will change the way we acquire and report images going forward.

I was particularly impressed by the ECR app, written by crowdcompass.com and the ECR '19 website. This was a great example of a well designed piece of tech making such a large scale conference possible. The app contained a searchable and filterable programme, where interesting sessions could be added to a personalised list. It was then possible to subscribe to this calendar, even allowing export to a smartwatch for easy planning of meetings. Furthermore, the app contained a robust method for feedback for each session and also for real time audience voting on SBA type questions. Overall, the investment in quality technology benefitted the delegate and also the ESR, underpinning an excellent congress. I believe that much of the positive feedback for a meeting like this will be, in large part, due to the quality of technology used by the delegate.

Take Home Messages

Whilst each session provided a great platform for my own professional development and learning, almost all sessions generated an interesting topic to take home to my department for wider discussion. Of particular interest were technical aspects in the use of RF ablation of bone tumours, and different approaches to biopsy in different kinds of paediatric tumours. Another interesting area was an evidence-based session on paediatric emergencies, exploring techniques for the diagnosis and treatment of ileo-colic intussusception, techniques for CT in paediatric trauma and learning points in the use of ultrasound in the diagnosis of neonatal necrotising enterocolitis.

Summary

I found that attending this congress was a fantastic experience both for my own learning and for offering opportunities for professional development. I found that attending ECR in my final year of training, just prior to interview was an excellent time to do this. The travel bursary offered by the SRS should be something that all trainees think about applying for.