I am truly grateful to PMG for offering me the chance to attend The Conference 2016. It has been an amazing experience, a real source of information and networking opportunities. As a physiotherapist trained abroad, I embrace any chance I get to expand my knowledge and learn from other people’s experience.

I have been working as a physiotherapist for over 10 years, but it is only recently that I have accepted a new challenge and I have become a clinician working with one of the wheelchair services in Scotland. I am lucky enough to be part of a small team of clinicians with vast experience and a lot of patience, always there to support me and to offer advice.

I had only just started this job when my team leader advised me to join PMG. She then encouraged me to apply for a bursary and believed in my chances to get accepted, sometimes more than I did myself.

Looking back and trying to summarise my experience is not easy: there was excitement, high expectations and I would admit that there was a bit of fear too. Attending an event of this scale is a bit daunting.

In my opinion, PMG couldn’t have chosen a better speaker to open the Conference than Ade Adepitan. His story was hugely inspiring and he is the living proof that nothing is impossible. Believing in yourself and having the right attitude can make the difference between failure and success. It is true that not everyone will become an Olympic medallist or a TV star, but we all have own challenges to face and the most important thing is to strive and thrive beyond them all.

A very helpful session was the one about pressure ulcers. Both presentations were extremely informative and helped me develop a better understanding of the subject in terms of risk factors, causes and types of pressure that can lead to the development of pressure ulcers.

I dare to say that many of my patients complain of being uncomfortable and, although sometimes few alterations to their wheelchairs might help, far too many times poor positioning and poor management of sitting are directly responsible for complications that could easily be prevented. I strongly believe that educating carers and patients alike could help reduce the risk of developing pressure ulcers in a lot of cases. With the risk of sometimes offending my patients, care staff and healthcare professionals, I always make sure that they understand the risk people are exposed to when spending too much time without changing position, even when a high risk cushion is used.

Another interesting session was ‘Making life better: postural management and surgery for the child and adult with complex disability’. I must admit that, as a physiotherapist I have this bad habit of trying to ‘fix’ people, but soon after becoming a wheelchair clinician I have realised that sometimes it might not be practicable nor beneficial for the patient for such intervention. Our patients are special, unique and although we are the sitting specialists, sometimes we have to trust their judgement in order to help them fulfil their potential.

I would like to thank PMG for all their efforts to make this year’s conference an unforgettable experience and to encourage people to attend future events.

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon!