PMG conference doesn’t disappoint,again!
Unlike most bursars, I am neither recently qualified nor am new to the wheelchair or posture or mobility services. I have been working in various wheelchair services as a locum physiotherapist over several years. But being a locum rarely gives you access to the in-house training and product demonstrations. Attending a conference such as PMG in most cases needs to be self-funded which can also in some cases be a financial deterrent.

I had the privilege of attending a PMG conference several years ago. I remember it being the single most informative, educational and interesting event that I had attended where I was exposed to a plethora of equipment, research and highly skilled professionals all in one place. So, when I was offered this bursary, I set out looking for the opportunity do the same or maybe better. I must say that I am not the least bit disappointed.

It was a great start to the conference by Chris Rattenbury where he captivated the audience with his life story. I have since encouraged some of our young service users to sign up to PMG if possible and look at the podcasts such as this, which will help them derive inspiration from such uplifting stories.

Amongst the presentations, the experimental approach of *‘one child one chair’* by Caroline Desjardins & Susanne Ziegler and their team caught my particular attention. Many professionals that I worked with in the past have come up with similar concepts which could never proceed to experimental stages due to barriers around funding and logistics. So, congratulations to their team for overcoming those barriers. It would be interesting to get updates from this team as to their outcomes over a longer period. Should their strategy be found to be beneficial to all involved over a longer term, this could have a positive financial impact on health and social care services.

Very informative parallel session ’Show me the money’ by Dave Punt and Dave long which gave insights into obtaining funding for small scale research while also touching upon how to make impact when presenting your research. The presentation outlining to the mobile app technology by Lorna Tasker, ABMU Health Board, being used in pressure ulcer monitoring and prevention, and presentation on smart wheelchairs by Chinemelu Ezeh, University College London, highlighted how we are keeping up with technological advances and how we can make realistic impact to our users.

Most of my colleagues would agree that one of the greatest challenges faced by clinicians when training clients/carers on the use of cushions such as Roho and Starlock is to help them to understand and gauge how much air to let out and when to lock the air valves. So, it was exciting to see a number of manufacturers using digitised transducers and this was nicely backed up by the trainee clinical scientist Benjamin Lee from Kings College London. This tied up nicely with new findings about the physiology of pressure ulcer incidence and role played by the deformation of tissue and how we could be using technology such as doppler and ultrasound to understand pressure ulcers more in future.

The most striking thing about the exhibition hall was that I noticed the manufacturers going to great lengths to present their products. Some of the supplier stalls had an air of high end motor shows. I took every opportunity to get hands on with the available equipment and the new products.

To sum it all up, the conference and the exhibition was everything I was hoping for and more. The best way to describe it is that I feel that I underwent a *‘reboot’*. I cannot think of a better platform for professionals interested wheelchairs, posture and pressure management. The networking opportunities were endless for me. It was great to speak with so many professionals who dedicated their entire careers to the field. I am certain I would apply most of the knowledge gained from this conference in every day practice. The one exception could be use of horse hair in seat covers which was introduced to us all Hans Candeborn in his delightful presentation, simply because it could be so difficult to get hold of !!!