**PMG Exhibition 2018**

This year the PMG conference was held at the Convention Centre in Manchester which provided a superb setting for the conference as a whole as well as the exhibition.

Entering the exhibition hall was like opening a big box of chocolates with something for everyone. There were big displays by established suppliers and sponsors to small stands for niche companies specializing in a single product such as headrests or cushions.

From a personal perspective, being a relatively new wheelchair therapist, the exhibition gave me an opportunity to browse and see equipment I had never even heard of. I was also able to speak to the suppliers of the equipment we issue regularly and I was even able to schedule a short ad-hoc training session on a buggy I was unfamiliar with.

Many of the delegates were using the opportunity to problem solve specific problems and challenges they might have; for example a very tall patient (over 6’5”) needing a power chair. The exhibition allowed them to discuss options with a number of suppliers in a short period of time and to problem solve with them.

A new feature this year was the ability for suppliers to scan the barcode on your conference allowing them to send you product and service information via email after the conference. I saw a number of delegates using this system and have received useful product information on my return to work.

As well as gathering information and product knowledge the exhibition had a couple of other very busy stands: one was the NHS England stand promoting Personal Wheelchair Budgets. This was a well-attended stand as many Trusts are working towards implementing these budgets. Regular presentations were held throughout the day and there were people available to give advice and answer questions. Another crowded area was the Poster Presentation section with delegates collecting copies of the posters and taking the opportunity to talk to the presenters.

Another feature of the conference that I found useful was the link between the presentations, breakout sessions and plenary sessions and the stands in the exhibition hall. One of the presentations in the main hall was Pitch Your Product which gave presenters two minutes to sell their products. I thought was a very novel way to highlight new developments and to direct delegates to specific stands which they might have bypassed otherwise.

 I found the conference as a whole an extremely useful and educational three days and the exhibition hall provided a hub for me to supplement my learning, ask detailed questions and gather information and make contacts to help me in the future.