I am an NHS OT working as part of an Independent Living Centre providing a specialist equipment service in Devon. We offer advice, information and assessments for anyone looking for equipment solutions and have involvement with selecting and authorising stock for our community equipment service as well as providing equipment training for staff.

Seating, positioning and pressure prevention are key aspects to our role and in order to remain evidence based we need to keep informed of new developments and research, so I was thrilled to be awarded a bursary to attend my first PMG conference.

The conference was an excellent opportunity to network, find out about new research and get ‘hands on’ with new equipment innovations. I have brought back valuable information and contacts that have already proved beneficial to Devon.

Michael Mandlestam’s insights into the legal aspects of equipment provision were helpful and having shared this with the team, we all feel more confident about applying eligibility criteria to provision of equipment.

The two Parallel sessions I attended were really useful, particularly the workshop with Nikki Stubbs from Leeds about pressure prevention being everybody’s business, which is the approach we are using in Devon. She gave useful advice about why it is so important to consider environmental factors and I have shared her findings with my Tissue viability colleagues in Devon. This will influence the way that we deliver pressure prevention training to staff.

Wendy Murphy gave an enlightening session on evidence based healthcare and it was helpful to have her advice on mixing the evidence with knowledge of the client, clinical experience and common sense. This approach has already proved helpful when discussing the merits of positioning aids with commissioners.

I was really interested in Sarah Jamieson’s poster showing a Posture management care plan, which Sarah has now emailed to me so that Devon can adopt a similar approach.

The chance to speak to the manufacturers at the equipment exhibition enabled me to make some very valuable contacts, with a joint visit planned next week with Smirthwaite, and I have been able to add new information to our equipment data base that is shared with Devon staff.

The conference was truly inspiring and the tone was set right at the beginning by Ade Adepitan who told us that nothing is more empowering than doing stuff that you didn’t think you could do.

Thank you to PMG for enabling me to attend!