**2019 Pathological Society Joint Winter Meeting with Royal Society of Medicine, London**

I am currently a fourth-year medical student in Belfast who undertook an intercalated Masters of Research degree last year in Translational Medicine which included a 9-month research project in the field of molecular oncology, testing a new targeted therapy for breast cancer. I was encouraged to submit an abstract of my work to the Pathological Society’s next meeting as my research suited this year’s conference title of ‘Let’s Talk Precision Pathology’ perfectly. After my abstract was accepted, the Pathological Society awarded me the ‘Meeting Bursary for Undergraduates’, a travel bursary enabling me to attend and present my work at a national conference.

The conference itself was held in the impressive Royal Society of Medicine headquarters in London in January 2019 and ran across two days packed full of interesting and stimulating presentations and discussions. The range of topics explored was extensive including current research in the new field of circulating tumour DNA for ‘liquid biopsies’, technology that has been developed to improve breast cancer survival in the developing world and the recent changes to molecular classification in neuropathology. One presentation which I found very interesting and grabbed the attention of many of the pathologists in attendance was regarding sexual dimorphism in cancer and why it should be included in clinical decision making.

During day one of the conference, time was allocated to allow viewing of all the posters being presented. It was a great experience to present my work and to discuss it with other pathologists, giving me the opportunity to reflect on my own work and its research questions as well as observe the progressive research currently underway by other pathologists. It was clear from the outset that the society is keen to include students in their work, with a dedicated pathology trainee as our point of contact throughout the conference as well as awarding bursaries to students to enable them to attend such large conferences. This is greatly appreciated by students like myself who do not live in England where most conferences are held. The society’s great attitude towards students was reflected in the number that were in attendance, all with the goal of improving their knowledge and skills.

Overall, I would like to extend my thanks to the Pathological Society for giving me the opportunity to attend and present at such a great conference and for their kind travel bursary which made my attendance possible. It has encouraged me to continue my interest in research and to attend more conferences in the future!

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