

October 2019

Dear BDIAP,

I would like to thank you for supporting my attendance to the 20<sup>th</sup> world congress on gestational trophoblastic disease (GTD) in Toronto organised by the International Society for Studies of Trophoblastic Disease (ISSTD). Below are my account of the trip and photos.

Earlier this year, I started working with Dr Baljeet Kaur on a project focusing on the histological aspect of GTD. Attending the congress offered me the chance to refine my presentation skills and network with doctors and researchers from around the world. It was an invaluable experience delivering results of the project to an audience of expert specialists.

ISSTD hold a conference every two years in different cities for healthcare professionals and scientists. The four-day conference this year comprised of foundation lectures and sessions for oral and poster presentations, providing a platform to share knowledge of this rare disease. The content of the congress was diverse, with focuses on clinical management, genetics and public health. The multidisciplinary nature of the disease management meant that the event was well attended by specialists in obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G), oncology as well as pathology.

I particularly enjoyed the oral presentations and the following question and answer time. Experts from Europe, North and South America, Asia and Australia openly shared ideas to expand their projects. These sessions also highlighted the differences in the working environment for clinicians and scientists alike, affected by funding availability. Many North American speakers mentioned regular use of molecular genotyping in clinical practice. This can be compared to the UK where the technique is less commonly used, mainly due to limitations in time and resources. Dr Philip Tonui, an O&G specialist from Kenya, delivered an eye-opening talk as he described

the lack of support to carry out simple tests, such as measuring serum hCG. Dr Tonui worked to improve this by collaborating with North American associations. It was insightful to listen to presentations and be a part of discussions that will contribute towards an improvement in care for patients with molar pregnancy worldwide.

Attending the 20<sup>th</sup> world congress on GTD in Toronto was one of the most unique experiences during my time at medical school. As a final year student, I am grateful to have received such a generous travel grant.



Photo of myself presenting at ISSTD 20<sup>th</sup> world congress on GTD



Photo with Dr Baljeet Kaur, my project supervisor. Behind is the plenary for the second day of the conference.



Photo of the delegates on the last day of the conference

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