

Name: Dr Yu Zhi Zhang (Dennis)

Year bursary awarded: 2020

Trust: Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospitals, hosted by Guys and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Grade: ST2 (OOPR at time of registration)

Report

I am grateful to have received the trainee member bursary to attend the virtual joint IAP/ESP meeting during which I presented two platform presentations in relation to the diagnosis and classification of pleural mesothelioma.

The meeting highlight for me was that I was able to review all presentations and posters in my own time, which was otherwise not possible if this was a physical meeting (this was my 3rd ESP meeting). The major downside of a virtual meeting, as applicable to all major international conferences during COVID-19 pandemic, is the inevitable lack of interaction between presenters and audience, as well as the social functions. In my opinion this disadvantaged disproportionately the poster presenters because the poster sessions during ESP meetings were some of the most interactive, I come across, having attended multiple international pathology meetings over the past 5 years.

The virtual format literally removed the interactive component of it, albeit there is no easy fix. Furthermore, I was anticipating meeting in person with some of my friends and colleagues either working in Glasgow or abroad- we had no choice but to delay until this pandemic is truly over.