

# UK Kidney Week 2016: innovation for better care

This year's annual British Renal Society conference was held in collaboration with the Renal Association to mark UK Kidney Week. Quality improvement in kidney care was a major theme of the agenda, which covered a range of topics, from recommendations for buttonhole needling to psychosocial support for renal patients. Maarten Taal reflects on the most memorable sessions.

■ nephrology ■ quality improvement ■ patient care ■ patient participation

**T**he UK Kidney Week (UKKW) conference was held at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham on 7–10 June 2016. Several exciting initiatives to improve kidney care were showcased, as well as the latest developments across the full spectrum of research.

The meeting was attended by over 1200 delegates and highlighted the many strengths of the kidney care community. This month's British Renal Society (BRS) column presents a brief summary of some of the highlights to provide an overview of recent developments, and perhaps entice readers who were unable to attend to consider doing so in future years.

## Quality improvement

Quality improvement was at the heart of UKKW 2016. The opening speaker, Sir Muir Gray, delivered a typically unconventional lecture that challenged health professionals to see the future of the NHS as something that they have to build with quality improvement at its core, rather than something they merely aspire to. This was followed by the Mallick Lecture, delivered this year by Richard Fluck, who spoke about the important quality improvements being developed through the Think

Kidneys programme ([www.thinkkidneys.nhs.uk](http://www.thinkkidneys.nhs.uk)), with focus on acute kidney injury, patient activation and the Kidney Quality Improvement Partnership (KQuIP). KQuIP is a collaborative project with strong support across the renal community and representation from all professions, as well as patients, with the aim of improving the quality of kidney care in the UK through six workstreams:

- Leadership
- Measurement
- Supporting networks
- Communications
- Projects
- Education.

During the meeting, KQuIP also held a very successful session to launch the initiative and delegates can look forward to inspiring updates at future meetings.

## UK Renal Research Strategy

After 2 years of consultation and collaboration, the UK Kidney Research Consortium (UKKRC) presented the first UK Renal Research Strategy in April 2016 (<http://tinyurl.com/hz5vp8b>). There is universal agreement that the renal community should ensure that it uses this strategy to achieve substantial development and expansion of renal research across the UK. To that end, a dedicated seminar was held with a discussion panel of representatives from a wide range of stakeholders, to launch the strategy and invite the audience to make suggestions regarding implementation.

Before the meeting, a joint gap analyses conducted by Kidney Research UK, the Renal Association and the BRS helped to

highlight areas that require early attention. The session was well-supported and active audience participation resulted in a number of excellent suggestions being made. These were recorded and discussed at a UKKRC meeting on 27 June to inform the initial phase of implementation of the strategy.

As a community, kidney care health professionals are all responsible for collaborating to implement the research strategy. It is anticipated that this will be an important theme in future meetings over the next few years.

## Multidisciplinary working

As with all kidney care conferences, there was a strong focus on multidisciplinary working to improve patient care. A particular highlight of the UKKW agenda was a number of presentations on the importance of psychosocial support for renal patients, which included an excellent review of guidelines, as well as several inspiring case studies, illustrating the significant improvement this can bring to people's quality of life. This was supplemented by a session hosted by the British Kidney Patient Association (BKPA) on the specific needs of young people with kidney disease and the importance of young adult workers in kidney care.

Also at the conference, the Renal Nutrition Group held a talk about health literacy and communication. The newly established vascular access special interest group presented a session that featured an excellent presentation on new recommendations for buttonhole needling, as well as several oral research presentations. Growing interest in the

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importance of exercise therapy was discussed at a symposium presented by the Renal Rehabilitation Network, which featured several excellent abstracts.

The importance of the multidisciplinary team in caring for people with diabetes and kidney disease was the topic of a further session, with particular attention paid to foot care and dietary counselling.

## Continuing professional development

To cater for the educational needs of delegates, the meeting featured a continuing professional development (CPD) programme. Topics included volume assessment and control, innovations in haemodialysis delivery and specialist nephrology. Popular workshops were held on important aspects of communication skills and care of people with dementia.

## Patient participation

This year saw a welcome increase in patient participation in UKKW. Not only did the BKPA host and sponsor several talks,

but also patients contributed as invited speakers throughout the programme to emphasise the importance of the patient perspective as central to all research and quality improvement.

A particular highlight was the first named lecture to be delivered by a patient. Fiona Loud was awarded the Jane Macdonald leadership lecture to acknowledge her valuable contribution to leadership in the renal community over many years. She presented an inspiring talk on leadership as a patient.

## Poster presentations

A unique feature of UKKW is the moderated poster sessions. Authors are given an opportunity to deliver a brief presentation on their poster to a small group of people with similar interests and an expert moderator. Many people find this less daunting than an oral presentation and it still gives investigators a chance to discuss their work with others interested in similar topics. This year, over 300 posters were presented on topics across the

full spectrum of research and quality improvement. This part of the conference was very well-supported and will remain an important part of future meetings.

## Future meetings

In 2017, the BRS will hold its annual conference from 26–28 April at the University of Nottingham. Next year's conference will include an enhanced and innovative CPD stream, as well as an emphasis on all aspects of multidisciplinary working. Sessions hosted by member organisations of the BRS will remain a central feature. In collaboration with the British Transplant Society, the BRS is planning a focus on improving access to renal transplantation. The deadline for abstract submission will be late December, so it is not too late to start planning those abstracts!

For 2018 and 2019, the BRS will again collaborate with the Renal Association to hold UKKW meetings and it looks forward to seeing these meetings build on the strengths of 2016's event. **JKC**

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A practical guide on how to achieve successful consultations

By Marilyn Edwards

By Marilyn Edwards

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