

Students can really benefit from seeking our conferences



I gained an interest in nursing people with respiratory conditions during an amazing eight-week general practice nursing placement in November last year. As a second-year student nurse ready to embark on my fourth placement in an acute respiratory ward, I was thrilled to be pointed in the direction of the ARNS 2018 conference.

I met patients in primary care with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and really enjoyed using different approaches to health promotion and education to meet the needs of the individual.

What became clear to me was that chronic respiratory conditions never come alone – this introduced me to the management of co-morbidities.

With an interest in respiratory nursing already well established, you can imagine my delight to discover that placement four will be on a secondary care respiratory ward.

As with any placement, preparation for practice is a must. Newly introduced to Twitter, I decided to share my placement opportunity, requesting any pre-reading and tips. When Katy Beckford suggested the ARNS conference, I was thrilled that such a specialist association was offering an exciting opportunity for keen student nurses.

Setting out on my journey to Reading, ready for the pre-conference symposium, I eagerly anticipated what I would learn and who I would meet, when the natural nerves kicked in.

To say I was well looked after over the three days at ARNS would be an understatement. Emma Vincent was incredible in welcoming me and introducing me to so many inspirational people and keeping me in-the-know with anything I wasn't sure on.

The heated debates on topical subjects made me think more critically about clinical practice and made me inquisitory to doing things a different way while keeping the patient at the centre of

everything. Breakout sessions were an opportunity to have theory and practical experience with expert professionals.

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After a crash course on type 1 and 2 respiratory failure, I had the opportunity to experience what it is like to be patient receiving non-invasive ventilation at home. Although it was not uncomfortable or painful, it was a surreal experience that will make me a lot more empathetic in my clinical practice.

To discover this conference opportunity had only recently been introduced to students was a surprise, as everyone I met was so engaging and eager to hear a student's perspective.

As students we don't always get a choice or say on what area we work in, so conferences are great safe environment to broaden knowledge and interest a particular area of nursing.

ARNS 2018 was a wonderful opportunity for me, venturing on my nursing leadership journey, to learn so much and meet individuals that inspire and have such an impact on the respiratory world every day.

Other students interested extra learning opportunities can really benefit from seeking out conferences that are engaging, thought-provoking and an enjoyable experience overall.

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