

Report from the International Myeloma Society Annual Meeting 2022.

By leuan Walker

Firstly I would like to thank the UK Myeloma Forum and BMS Celgene for awarding me a travel grant to attend this conference.

This was my first trip back to a scientific conference since COVID19, and what a brilliant one it was to attend!

I was fortunate enough to be selected for an oral presentation to present my Abstract: "From CARDAMON to CoMMpass: A mutational signature that predicts carfilzomib-specific outcomes in myeloma". This was an exciting piece of work combining the success of the UK led CARDAMON trial together with the computational biology experience of the University of Cambridge. This talk was well received and my attendance at the conference facilitated further discussions and collaborations around my project.

The IMS 2022 was packed with fascinating work from around the world. For me, the strongest message of the conference was that we are now very much in the era of Bi-specific antibodies for therapy in myeloma. The LocoMMotion trial showed fantastic response rates to tesclistamab. However, these responses come at a cost, and the rate of infections the patients saw was high. These bispecific antibodies aren't available in the UK yet, but learning from our American and European colleagues' experience of this exciting new class of drugs was invaluable as we hope that they will be available in the UK in due course.

Additionally the take home message from Alissa Visram's talk showed how even in socialist healthcare systems such as Canada socioeconomic status still impacts patient's time to treatment and outcomes. Again, a salient message and one that we should be careful to investigate in the UK.

Large international collaboration remains a cornerstone of myeloma research. The Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation's CoMMpass trial was featured in more than 15 abstracts (including my own). Access to the data these large trials have is invaluable and would not have been possible without the vision of the MMRF and the collaboration from so many hospitals around the world – together with the generosity of our patients for donating their precious time to help support such great trials.

Lastly in a patient perspective session led by Tiffany Williams she repeated the words told to her by her physician when she was first diagnosed with myeloma: "there is hope", and with all the new drugs we have to treat myeloma I can see why.

It was a brilliant conference and I felt extremely privileged to attend. To be fully immersed in all the exciting clinical trials and research going on was inspiring.

Thank you very much the UKMF!

