

European Haematology Association Congress 2025 – Milan, Italy

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I am deeply grateful to the UK Myeloma Society (UKMS) for enabling me to attend the 2024 European Haematology Association (EHA) congress in Madrid. As an early-career post-doctoral researcher working abroad, this financial support allowed me to present work from my postdoctoral project for the first time.

The EHA congress was an outstanding meeting, offering clinically impactful talks alongside cutting-edge basic and translational research. My personal highlights began on Thursday morning with a session chaired by Prof. Lonial on next-generation therapies for relapsed/refractory MM (RRMM), where Dr. Pawlyn's presentation on novel protein-degradation pathways was particularly insightful. The EHA-IMS joint session on the new IMS/IMWG high-risk (HR) guidelines, chaired by Prof. Sonneveld and Prof. Moreau, was especially valuable for my work. Talks by Prof. Kaiser and Prof. Lentzsch outlined recent advances and remaining unmet needs in diagnostics and treatment landscape of MM. Lively debates on risk stratification in these sessions set the stage perfectly for my own poster discussion on Friday evening and underscored the clinical relevance of our study.

My poster presentation, supervised by Prof. Martin Kaiser, challenged the concept of functional high-risk (FHR) MM, which is defined by unexpected early relapse (ER) despite no HR molecular or clinical features at diagnosis. By combining the 2025 updated IMS/IMWG HR classification with gene-expression profiling (GEP), true FHR MM was uncommon (< 2%) in the 135 comprehensively molecularly profiled Myeloma-XI trial patients. Notably, GEP adds substantial value, detecting around 10% of HR patients who would otherwise be missed by IMS/IMWG alone. The subgroup classified as HR by both IMS/IMWG and GEP demonstrated worst progression-free and overall survival.

Over the following days, EHA continued to offer a rich mix of educational lectures, such as the AL-amyloidosis session chaired by Prof. Palladini and Prof. Manwani, and cutting-edge clinical discussions. I also enjoyed learning more about emerging immunotherapies in the MM field. In the abstract plenary session Prof. Popat presented phase 1 data of a next-generation tri-specific antibody for RRMM and the evolving CAR-T-cell landscape was spotlighted in the EHA-EBMT joint symposium chaired by Prof. Sureda and Prof. Döhner. My conference highlights concluded with Monday's late-breaking abstract session, where Prof. Kumar presented data from the phase II RedirecTT-1 trial combining Talquetamab with Teclistamab in RRMM. Finally, Prof. San Miguel received the EHA Lifetime Achievement Award for his lifelong mission to cure MM, and his inspiring speech is what stuck with me from my first EHA congress. Many thanks once again to the UKMS for enabling my participation.