

Report from the International Myeloma Society Annual Meeting 2025

(Toronto, Canada)

Jenna Tate – Lead Advanced Clinical Practitioner in Haematology and Oncology, Leeds Teaching Hospitals

I would like to thank both UKMS and Johnson & Johnson for supporting my attendance at the International Myeloma Society Congress, Toronto. I am very grateful to have been given such an incredible opportunity!

I am a registered nurse by background, currently working as an advanced clinical practitioner in myeloma at St James's University Hospital in Leeds. I was fortunate enough to attend IMS for the first time in Rio in 2024, with a poster presentation around the role of an advanced clinical practitioner in myeloma. This year I felt honoured to have my abstract 'Patient perceptions of frailty and its assessment in those living with myeloma' accepted for oral presentation in the nursing and allied health professionals symposium. This project was a smaller component of a larger piece of work we are undertaking around frailty and its assessment in Leeds. Having reviewed existing literature, it was very clear that the views of patients around frailty and how it is assessed are lacking. We held a small pilot focus group exploring patient perceptions of frailty in myeloma, views on how it is currently assessed and exploration of the possible use of medical technology in frailty assessment. The presentation stirred lots of interest, and provided a great opportunity to network and create collaborative working relationships with health professionals within this area of interest.

I am always very interested to learn how colleagues around the world approach myeloma treatment and overall patient care, and then to consider how this compares to treatment and care in the UK. Often there are quite significant differences between NHS treatment and private treatment we see internationally. From a nursing perspective, often the availability of specialist nurses and supportive MDT members seems to be significantly higher in these areas. Across many of the presentations, it was interesting to see the often vast MDT support available, making implementing various supportive services around frailty more feasible. I particularly enjoyed Margaret McNeely's session in the nursing and allied health professionals symposium on enhancing exercise support for people living with myeloma. Results indicated the positive impact exercise support can have on patients' overall condition, but in the UK funding for a project such as this would be very challenging, despite the positive outcomes for the patients. I also found Dr Perrot's plenary session in risk adaptation management on 'Age and fitness – who should get a

transplant' very interesting, perhaps because it highlights issues I raised within my own presentation around looking beyond age as a cut off to treatment and trials. The session highlighted a shift towards fitness rather than age, which highlights all the more the importance of accurate and non subjective assessment of frailty in our patient group.

Aside from the educational and networking opportunities provided in the congress, this was a great opportunity to see some of Toronto. This was my first time visiting Canada and as such my first time (now quite possibly addicted to) trying poutine and maple candy! We also managed a very quick trip to the amazing Niagara Falls.

Again thank you to UKMS and Johnson & Johnson, I am very grateful to have had this opportunity to learn and network with the leading figures in myeloma.