

IMS 2026 report

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This year I was extremely grateful to receive the UKMS bursary meaning I was able to travel to Glasgow to attend the International Myeloma Society annual meeting. As a final year PhD student this was an invaluable opportunity to share my work and start to build networks and collaborations for the future.

I was fortunate that my work, entitled “Longitudinal analysis of TCR repertoire in smouldering multiple myeloma reveals relative expansion of shared-sequence TCR clusters compared to healthy donors”, was selected for poster presentation. Using longitudinal T cell receptor (TCR) sequencing, this study examined T-cell dynamics during progression from smouldering myeloma to multiple myeloma. We identified progression-associated T-cell clusters consistent with tumour-specific responses; however, these cells displayed a less cytotoxic phenotype at progression, suggesting ineffective tumour control that may contribute to disease progression. The poster session enabled me to have great discussion with other researchers about this work and the future directions of it.

My poster was presented on the first day of the meeting, which allowed me to fully engage with the remainder of the conference programme. A wide range of topics were covered, from translational research to clinical and trial-based studies, and exposure to such a breadth of work was a valuable reminder of how my own research fits into the wider myeloma landscape and, ultimately, how it can contribute to improving patient outcomes. One of the key themes of this year's conference, and one that I found particularly interesting, was the discussion around the possibility of curing myeloma and what this means from both clinical and patient perspectives. I found these discussions both fascinating and inspiring, particularly as the idea of discussing curative strategies for treating myeloma felt far less attainable when I began my PhD.

Overall, I am very grateful of UKMS's support to attend IMS in Glasgow this year, it was an invaluable opportunity to both present my own work as well as broaden my perspective and ideas around myeloma and this wouldn't have been possible without this bursary!