

American Association of Critical Care Nurses Conference 2019

By Jonathan Downham

Wow! What a trip.

Orlando and the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Conference 2019 was one I will not forget. But before I tell you more let me provide some context.

I have been to several medical conferences over the last 6-7 years helping me to keep abreast of changes in critical care as well as to network with others whilst I am there. Whilst doing so I have also expanded my reach using the power of social media and podcasting.

Because of this I have become involved with the Intensive Care Society State of the Art annual conference, the International Fluid Academy conference, the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Respiratory Care conference and also the British Association of Critical Care Nurses conference.

At all of these I have tried to Tweet, Livestream and podcast to both help myself and my audience understand some of the issues being discussed.

Indeed, it is because of Twitter that I was able to even think about attending this conference. I made contact, via Twitter, with one of the American critical care nurses who had the resources, and the enthusiasm, to help get me out there along with some much needed help also from the BACCN.

So- the conference. Let me tell you more.

8,500 nurses with over 275 concurrent sessions, Mastery sessions, pre-conference workshops and over 400 exhibitors all over 5 days. The 'Super Sessions' were on the main stage and over eight thousand nurses can make a lot of noise at these!

Whilst there I spent most of my time hidden in a room making podcasts and managed to get fifteen done whilst there.

I met Megan Brunson (@nursenoodles1) who is the incoming Board President. She is also a night shift supervisor in the cardiovascular ICU (CVICU) at Medical City Dallas Hospital. She spoke of her passion for critical care nursing and her excitement of playing such an important part in the upcoming year. **After discussion with her, she has also agreed to be one of the keynote speakers for next years BACCN conference via a remote link!**

Bryan Boling (@bryanboling) is an American critical care practitioner who also produces episodes on my podcast channel. He spoke with Daniel Arellano and Brandi McCall about some of the complexities of caring for the patient in the Liver critical care unit.

I took the opportunity to speak with Nicole Kupchik (@nicchik90) who is a Clinical Nurse Specialist for the last 10 years in critical care. I had already spoken to her for my podcast the previous year but could now do so face to face. Nicole gave a very interesting and entertaining presentation about the top trials from the past year that would influence how we care for our patients.

One of the podcasts I enjoyed recording the most was with Jason Kirchick (@JasonKirchick). He is a newly qualified nurse who wanted to become a critical care nurse after he became very unwell and was admitted to critical care with severe sepsis. He went through all the interventions we offer and also suffered many of the consequences to his mental well-being for a time- this all inspired him to work in critical care. Some fascinating insights.

There was some much learning on offer, that I cannot possibly cover it all. Needless to say I had a fabulous time and returned home exhausted but happy.

Thanks to the BACCN for helping me out with some of the costs to help make this possible.

