

Report: regarding BACCN Conference 2021 and what I have gained from the experience.

Sarah Martin (Practice Development Lead Nurse GITU SBUHB)

The BACCN conference took part virtually on the 13th and 14th September 2021 this was due to ongoing COVID-19 Restrictions across Great Britain. COVID-19 and the government restrictions being something that has impacted all of us in critical care dramatically over the course of the last year and a half. It was understandable that the conference not only be affected by the COVID restrictions but pay heavy attention to them also.

This is something that personally I found great value in. The solidarity of struggle and triumph. It has seemed so often over the last year or so that we have been working in our own silos of logistical and emotional challenges. It was humbling to hear and feel that we were not alone. Although this is something I have intellectually known it is not something that I had previously felt. What was even more encouraging was that so many critical care nurses have been able to achieve great things despite the pandemic and continued to develop and progress patient care within the face of this adversity.

I found value in the session by Le'Asha Gabriel-Richards from Manchester Royal Infirmary entitled 'Ethnic Hair and Skin Care'. Hair care in ventilated and sedated patients is something that we have experienced challenges within my unit over the past year, especially with additional inexperienced staff. The difference in patients required care due to ethnicity is something I feel is often absent in nursing literature. This I feel is something that really needs to change in our nursing culture, not least as we are such a diverse multi-ethnic group of professionals. Understanding how simple observations, such as for example: skin colour changes due to cyanosis differentiate depending on ethnicity. Is crucially important to providing good quality patient care to all. The session by Le'Asha Gabriel-Richards really highlighted for me my understanding that equality in the clinical setting is not treating everyone the same but is treating everyone with the same level of consideration and respect.

The 'Dealing with Major trauma within our ICU - a simulation' session given by North Bristol NHS Trust. Was a valuable overview of simulation and how this can be used in the education of critical care nurses. Having recently reformatted a few of our training programmes to include a more simulation-based focus. It was reassuring to see that the module we use is very similar and to hear of the success with the use of simulation in North Bristol NHS Trust was encouraging.

The opportunity for my team and I in collaboration with the ITU Outreach Team from SBUHB was a great honour. Together we achieved an almost impossible task of educating noncritical care nurses to work in ITU for the pandemic in both the first and 2nd waves. To not only have achieved that but to have gained valuable insight to our method of education delivery and develop that into a presentation for the BACCN 2021 conference was very rewarding and professionally fulfilling. Giving us structure and guidance of how best to take our education programmes forward.

Lastly, I'd like to reflect upon the power and emotionally provocative photography exhibition from within critical care. This was humbling and powerful to see and read. Again, resonating so much with my personal experiences of critical care nursing over the COVID-19 pandemic. This amalgamation of science and art to express the emotions of our pandemic experience was a really wonderful tribute to all we as critical care nurses have been through and a cathartic way to reflect on the experiences.