

BACCN Grant Report - Mel Duval
EfCCNa 10th Congress – Bologna 2025

I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to attend the 10th European Federation of Critical Care Nursing Associations (EfCCNa) Congress in Bologna this year, thanks to the generous support of the BACCN.

Not many people realise that as part of their BACCN membership, they are automatically members of EfCCNa as well, this was one of the first things I learned at the conference, and one of many valuable insights I brought home with me.

The EfCCNa conference was an amazing opportunity for learning, networking, and coming back to the UK full of ideas to enhance both critical care practice and the wellbeing of our critical care nursing workforce. It was incredibly inspiring listening to professionals from across Europe and beyond, as they presented their research and shared how they care for critically ill patients within their unique healthcare systems.

The main theme of the conference was **Sustainability**, a topic particularly close to my heart. I was delighted to attend Dr. Heather Baid's session, where she shared her latest work on sustainability in intensive care. This resonated deeply with me, and I left feeling that, as a Critical Care Course Lead, it's time to incorporate sustainability into the pre and post registration nursing curriculum. One key takeaway was realising that while recycling is important, it is just the tip of the iceberg, there is so much more we can do as critical care nurses to reduce the carbon footprint of our ICUs.

Another standout moment for me was listening to **Elena Conoscenti** discuss the importance of mouth care in ICU. Her talk was a powerful reminder of how evidence-based practice and small, consistent interventions can make a significant impact on our patients' outcomes and overall experience.

From our Norwegian colleagues, I was reminded of the importance of family involvement and patient-centred care. I particularly appreciated a scoping review on **thirst** in ICU patients. It was eye-opening to learn that, more than pain, thirst is reported as the most unpleasant experience by ICU patients, an insight that will undoubtedly influence my future practice and teaching.

Last but not least, the opportunity for networking was invaluable. Meeting inspiring colleagues from across Europe and reconnecting with familiar faces from back home made the experience even more meaningful. It was a pleasure to see **Nicole Lee** delivering a highly informative workshop on caring for patients with burns, showcasing the depth of knowledge and expertise within our community.

It was also a pleasure meeting **Roberta Decaro**, ICU nurse at Ospedale S. Orsola-Malpighi of Bologna and a member of ANIARTI (Italian association of Critical Care

Nurses), which was a lovely opportunity to connect with another critical care nurse passionate about Evidence Based Practice and Nursing Research.



I have returned to the UK full of energy and motivation, excited to share my learning and explore ways to implement new practices in my workplace.

The conference also reminded me of the importance of what we do as critical care nurses. It is vital that we continue to have our voices heard and ensure we are in the rooms where decisions are made. This is how we can truly improve patient care and advocate for our profession.

Thank you once again to the BACCN for supporting my attendance at this inspiring event. I look forward to sharing my learning with colleagues and contributing to positive change in critical care nursing.

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