

Panos Dimitriadis: my experience of the CEORL-HNS

Many of us are invited to ENT conferences throughout the year and, as a trainee, it can sometimes be difficult to decide on which ones will be suitable for our stage in training. In this article, Amir Habeeb interviews Panos Dimitriadis, who attended CEORL-HNS Congress in Milan in 2022, as he shares what made this conference so memorable and useful for training.

My name is Amir Habeeb and I am a core surgical trainee with an interest in ENT surgery. I wanted to enquire about CEORL-HNS as a meeting for aspiring ENT surgeons and had the privilege of interviewing Mr Panos Dimitriadis. Mr Dimitriadis is a consultant ENT, head and neck surgeon at Lister Hospital, Stevenage. He was awarded an NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship and completed his higher specialty training in otolaryngology at Yorkshire and Humber HEE in 2021. Following that, he completed an RCS England-accredited, post-CCT fellowship in thyroid and parathyroid surgery at Lister Hospital. During his fellowship, he participated in the 6th CEORL-HNS Congress in Milan in 2022, where he presented his research work in indeterminate thyroid cytology.

What did you expect before attending the CEORL-HNS Congress?

I have been attending the CEORL-HNS meetings since my foundation years and I have always been impressed by the high standards of this conference. For the 6th congress in Milan, I was keen to explore new trends in otolaryngology, by attending informative sessions and workshops; to learn about the latest advancements, techniques and research in the field of otolaryngology. In this congress multiple parallel sessions are running, covering every ENT subspecialty. I was keen to gain insights into emerging trends and breakthroughs in the treatment and management of ENT and, more specifically, head and neck and thyroid disorders.

I expected to visit the stands of different companies, focusing on companies showcasing new products and innovations in head and neck surgery, and possibly participate in demonstrations or discussions about the latest technologies and surgical equipment.



CEORL-HNS 2022 Congress President Professor Piero Nicolai speaking at the opening ceremony in Milan.

This congress is a great opportunity to network and meet new people. I was keen to create connections with like-minded colleagues from all over Europe and the rest of the world. I regarded the congress as the best platform to exchange ideas, insights and experiences, and potentially form collaborations and partnerships.

I always try to explore the host city when congress sessions permit. I planned to visit museums and landmarks in Milan post conference to unwind and enrich the overall experience.

Finally, I aimed to reconnect with colleagues from the United Kingdom! During our training, most of us will work in many different places and have friends all over the country. This event was a perfect opportunity to catch up with colleagues who have travelled from various parts of the UK. As mentioned before, brainstorming during the coffee breaks is an excellent start to future collaborations or projects.

Overall, I aimed to maximise my conference experience not only by

gaining professional insights but also by enjoying the cultural offerings of Milan and connecting with peers.

What did you enjoy about the meeting?

Attending the conference in Milan was a truly remarkable experience filled with numerous highlights. The opening ceremony and welcome reception were a captivating start, featuring inspiring talks and excellent music that set the tone for the event. The conference's dinner was truly exceptional. It gave us an opportunity to unwind and have great discussions whilst enjoying some delicious food and drinks. The diverse scientific programme not only enriched my knowledge but also strengthened international relationships within the field. The chance to connect with ENT surgeons from around the world was a truly rewarding aspect of the conference. The formation of the Young Confederation of CEORL-HNS opened doors for multicentre research studies,

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The congress coffee and lunch breaks provided valuable networking opportunities with colleagues from around the world.

highlighted by a meta-analysis study, which is currently under review. Exploring stands from different companies gave me a glimpse into the exciting technological advancements available to thyroid, head and neck surgeons, enabling us to deliver exceptional patient care. For example, I was impressed with equipment helping us identify parathyroid glands during thyroid/parathyroid surgery, using probes or cameras to elicit a fluorescent response from these glands. I shall not go into more detail for obvious reasons.

Milan itself was a treasure, with the awe-inspiring Duomo Cathedral and its stunning views, the elegant Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, the magnificent Teatro alla Scala, and the enchanting Natural History Museum with its splendid magnolia garden. The city's architecture, efficient tram system, and vibrant nightlife, including the recommended Aperol bar near Duomo and N'Ombrade Vin in the San Marco area, made my visit even more enjoyable. Reconnecting with colleagues from across the UK and the rest of Europe added a personal touch to this enriching experience, making it a conference to remember.

What did you gain from it?

My participation at the ENT conference proved immensely valuable on multiple fronts. Firstly, presenting my research on thyroid nodules with indeterminate cytology provided an opportunity to share insights and findings within the field, fostering discussions and potential advancements in this area. The conference served as an enlightening platform where I gained substantial knowledge regarding new advances in thyroid, head, and neck surgery. This newfound understanding has been pivotal in my goal to implement the latest techniques and practices into my daily clinical work, ultimately benefiting my

patients by offering them more informed and advanced care. For example, new medicines for radioactive iodine refractory tumours and anaplastic carcinomas or de-escalating treatment for small medullary thyroid carcinomas are being implemented more commonly in daily practice.

Joining the Young Confederation of CEORL-HNS was a significant step, providing a platform for collaboration and professional development. Being actively involved in collaborative research work through this association has already proven to be an enriching experience. Overall, my participation in the conference has significantly enhanced my expertise, facilitating both personal and professional growth in my field of practice.

What would you like to see done better?

I have always found the CEORL-HNS congresses to be extremely valuable. They include cutting-edge content from all ENT subspecialties, interactive sessions and workshops, as well as poster sessions and research presentations. The invited faculty is outstanding and diverse from across the world. There is also a focus on further engaging with the trainees and young consultants through the Young Confederation.

What I would change in future is to have all the lectures available online for delegates to watch in their own time. There were a few occasions when I had to choose between two talks that were taking place concurrently!

Would you recommend CEORL-HNS to junior trainees? Why?

The 7th CEORL-HNS in Dublin is expected to be better and bigger than any of the previous ones! As John Russell, the president of the next confederation

meeting explains in his welcome message, this is the largest ENT gathering in Europe with an average gathering of over 3000 delegates. There will be 16 parallel sessions that I am sure will be enough to satisfy everyone's taste. Dublin is an amazing and welcoming city with plenty to do outside the conference hours and is easy to get to from anywhere in the UK. I would strongly recommend that trainees become members of the Young Confederation and attend the relevant lectures during the conference, aimed at trainees and young consultants. It is a fairly new society with huge potential on all fronts and it is an opportunity for us all to meet, share experiences and work together.

INTERVIEWEE



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