Kindly sponsored by RSA, I attended the RSA Annual Conference in Auckland New Zealand during 26-28 June 2019. The Conference was a great success and I whole-heartedly enjoyed it.

The main reason that I applied for the attendance is two-fold. Firstly, it was a great opportunity to connect to the renal profession community. Renal nurses tend to be satisfied with our daily job of nursing our patients and unconsciously limit our visions to the repetitive routines. The Conference provided a good opportunity for me to interact with colleagues from different parts of the Australasia region, all of whom bringing with them great expertise and skills in renal care, which for me was an eye-opening experience, providing an opportunity to obtain a bigger picture of renal nursing profession. I was able to catch up with a couple of previous colleagues from both Australia and New Zealand, exchange our stories of our patients and friends, and congratulate each other’s growth in both career and life.

Secondly, the Conference provided a unique opportunity for me to update my knowledge and skills related to renal nursing. In today’s society of ‘knowledge explosion’, it is crucial for each of us to actively seek opportunities to expose ourselves to new development in our profession, so as to make sure that our practice is in line with the progress in renal nursing.

It was a very fruitful experience for me to attend the Conference. My learnings from the Conference are many, the top three include:

Firstly, the demystified renal nursing research knowledge and skills. The half-day Workshop on renal research was a great success. The three high-expertise presenters did a good job in teaching the attenders on the structure and methodology of research. The step-by-step guidance on research proposal, literature review, research methods and referencing were pragmatic to novice nurse researchers.

Secondly, the environmental sustainability component of the Conference was very educational. One of my previous colleagues from Melbourne carried out a very interesting research project in her Unit on the recycling of haemodialysis waste and produced a prize-winning poster. It’s really inspirational to fellow renal nurses in terms of how much we can contribute to sustainability cause and reduce our footprint on global climate change in our daily practice as renal nursing.

The last but not the least, the innovative aspect of renal nursing. It was an eye-opening experience to see our home dialysis colleagues from Hong Kong to present their design of a small but smart devise to help home dialysis patients to safely anchor the needles while connecting/disconnecting themselves to dialysis machines, as if they had a ‘third hand’ in the process. I believe this small device could be recommended to wider home dialysis community in Australia and other regions.
The benefit of my Conference attendance is not limited to my personal development only. After returning to my work, I shared my knowledge obtained from the Conference with my colleagues at work, so everyone had an opportunity to update his/her knowledge in renal practice to some extent. I also described to my colleagues the excitement of meeting interesting people, of the awesome beauty of the City of Sails, and of the highlights of the presentations/posters/new techs from the Conference. Many of my colleagues have showed interests in joining the RSA community and attending future education opportunities of RSA.

In the past years since I have become an RSA member, I have been sponsored by RSA to attend many annual conferences held in different cities in both Australia and New Zealand, in addition to many seminars and webinars on a regular basis. This contributes greatly to my professional development and my journey of life-long learning which is crucial to my satisfaction of self-esteem. The CPD points coming along with the conferences and the other educational opportunities of RSA is a bonus.

I have no doubt of the value of being an RSA member and always stress on this point in front of my colleagues. I will definitely continue to do so in the future.