

June 2008

This year's Renal Association Annual Conference again saw an opportunity for Renal Scientists to meet up and discuss their needs. Unfortunately not many people were either aware of the meeting or could find the room, so only a select few attended!

Heather Wilson and John Reynolds started by talking through the last survey's findings and asking for comments on this. This was then followed by general discussion about issues that were at the forefront of people's minds. One area which was discussed at length was the cost of attending the annual meeting. This had doubled for scientists from the previous year. It was also recognised that the costs had increased for our clinical colleagues but it was felt that they, on the whole, had wider access to sponsorship. A number of bursaries had been made available again this year from Amgen and this had been gratefully received. However it was unclear how these had been allocated as this year's Young Renal Scientist winner had not been awarded one. Given the paucity of awards available the question was asked as to how many had been awarded between clinical and non-clinical applicants. It was requested that more transparent criteria be applied next time.

Also important to scientists was the opportunity to attend technical workshops. How to fund these is obviously an ongoing issue but people welcomed the suggestion that they could be added to the beginning of next year's annual meeting to cut down expense.

Finally, there was a request to increase the sharing of technical expertise within the renal community. This could be done by giving contact details for specialists within various fields who would be willing to pass on their years of experience to those less so.

The Renal Scientist Working Group will do its best to try to address some of these issues so watch this space and our website (<http://www.renal.org/pages/pages/academic-affairs/research/renal-scientists.php>) for more information and updates. Additionally if there is something you wish to say but didn't manage to make our meeting then please contact me at J.M.Williams.med@bham.ac.uk

Julie Williams