



ISPO 16th World Congress Cape Town Report Marta Geada

It was such an honour to be present at ISPO 16th World Congress hosted under the theme "Assistive Technology for All". This one was particularly special for me since I was part of such an amazing and versatile team of professionals and I was going to present some of the findings of the team.

I teamed up with Jennifer Fulton, our Lead Amputee Physiotherapist at The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, and Marjan Zuur, the Psychologist at De Hoogstraat rehabilitation centre based in Utrecht the Netherlands to share our experience with paediatrics amputee rehabilitation processes in a presentation titled 'Not just small adults'. It was such an incredible experience to share our reality and learn about different realities from a great mix of countries. From Canada to Rwanda, we learn about different approaches, limitations of prescriptions, what you can achieve with limited prescriptions, timings of different rehabilitation techniques and social challenges of children with limb deficiency and families of children with limb deficiency in different cultures.

I was also humbled to be part of the Symposium about Fibula Hemimelia, showing the different prosthetic approaches when there is a lengthening surgery planned, when there is not, and when there is an early amputation. It was so interesting to hear the discussions of different disciplines and different countries. How the goal is the same, to have the best functional outcome possible for the patient, but the approaches differ. My third project of the Congress was in the form of a poster about our team findings titled 'Patterns of bony deformity in children with trans tibial amputation due to septicaemia', already presented at ISPO UK Glasgow but still attracting interest from many disciplines and points of view.

I learned so much from other papers and symposiums but in particular the discussions regarding Osteointegration (different surgeries and implants comparing results and the big question mark of long term outcomes) and energy return feet or 'sports limbs' for children (what impact does it cause in physical but also psycho-social development).

Every World Congress is different and special in its own way. But for me, this one in particular, for being the Professor Hanspal the president and the expression of everything that he showed us about what Prosthetics and Orthotics care in the world is. The focus on patient care, equality of opportunities and the efforts to take assistive technologies to every person that needs to be able to fully participate in the society. This shows that there are no limits, there is no tiredness, there is will, there is commitment to the cause and there is still so much work to be done.

So we will continue to work together, to develop the best care possible and to be able to deliver that care to every single person that needs it. Yes, it is very difficult, but not impossible if we work together.

Being awarded with the ISPO UK MS Travel Bursary was such a great help for me to attend this World Congress and I would like to again express my sincere gratitude.

