

2025 TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

The following reports are sent in by our young CSANZ Travelling Fellowship winners who are asked to write a report on their experience at the International Meetings that they attended and presented their work.



Dr Jack Luxford presented at the International Society for Heart Lung Transplantation (ISHLT 2025) in Boston, USA

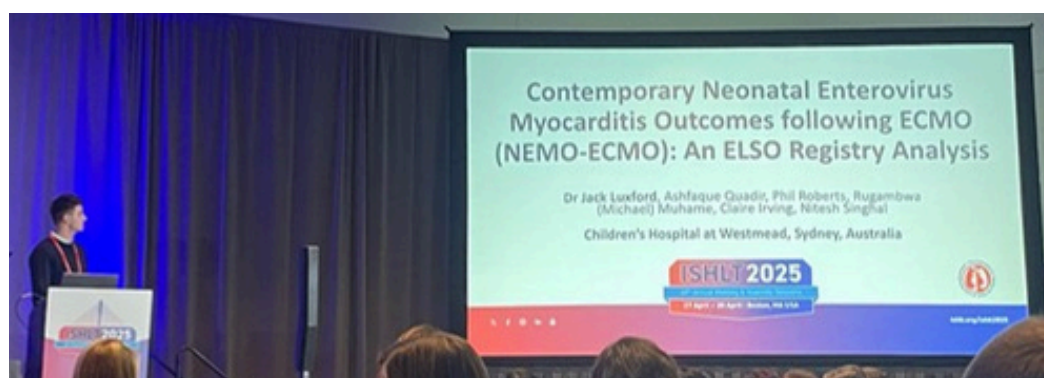
**PhD Student of Paediatric Cardiology,
Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, Westmead, NSW**

It was a pleasure to travel to the ISHLT Annual Meeting 2025 in Boston with the support of the CSANZ Travelling Fellowship to present my research on outcomes following ECMO support for neonatal myocarditis related to enteroviral infection. I am currently in my first year of my PhD and final year of Advanced Training in Paediatric Cardiology at the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, based at the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

At this meeting in Boston, I presented a mini-oral presentation entitled "Contemporary Outcomes of Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation for Neonatal Enterovirus Myocarditis: An ELSO Registry Analysis." This work used the international ELSO registry to build the largest cohort to date of neonates supported on ECMO for enterovirus myocarditis, a devastating condition affecting newborns with high mortality and morbidity. This work demonstrated improvements over time in mechanical support, but highlights the persisting risk of mortality in the very young, and the problems of prolonged ECMO support in this cohort of infants. I hope to continue this line of research to improve outcomes for babies who develop enterovirus myocarditis.

I additionally had the opportunity to learn from international experts in paediatric heart failure and transplantation based in North America, Asia and Europe, make new friends and connections and all whilst enjoying the sights (and cold winds) of Boston.

I hope to continue to share the results of my PhD in paediatric myocarditis with the CSANZ community and thank the Heart Failure Council for their generous support. I would also like to thank my PhD and project supervisors Dr Julian Ayer, Dr Nitesh Singhal and Dr Rugambwa Muhame for their support.





Dr Aafreen Khalid presented at the ESC Heart Failure Meeting in Belgrade

Advanced Trainee at Royal Adelaide Hospital, SA

As a first year cardiology advanced trainee, I was humbled to be awarded a 2025 CSANZ Travelling Fellowship that enabled me to attend the ESC Heart Failure Congress in Belgrade. Presenting my e-poster “Retrospective review of primary prevention implantable cardiac defibrillator insertions for heart failure with reduced ejection fraction” allowed me to share our centre’s real-world experience with device implantation, guideline adherence and GDMT optimisation. The discussions generated were highly valuable, offering insights into approaches used internationally and prompting ideas for refining local practice.

The scientific program was exceptional with several trials standing out. The FINEARTS-HF blinded drug-withdrawal results were particularly impactful, demonstrating a clear increase in cardiovascular events following finerenone cessation and reinforcing the importance of treatment continuity. The FUTURE-HF first-in-human study of an implantable inferior vena cava sensor highlighted an innovative and feasible method for remote haemodynamic monitoring. Additional late-breaking data—from REDICAE on the safety of diuretic withdrawal in selected HFrEF patients, HELIOS-B showing meaningful reductions in mortality and cardiovascular events with vutrisiran for ATTR-CM, and updates from PRAISE-HFrEF—provided a comprehensive and forward-looking view of evolving heart failure management.

Equally valuable were the networking opportunities. I enjoyed meeting clinicians and researchers from a wide range of centres, many of whom are working on similar challenges in advanced heart failure and device therapy. These interactions have already led to sharing of insights and developments including scope for sharing insights and developments including scope for potential collaborations. Experiencing Belgrade’s history and hospitality added a memorable cultural dimension to the experience.

I am sincerely grateful to my supervisor, Dr Michael Stokes, for his ongoing support, and to CSANZ for providing ongoing excellent professional development opportunities for early career researchers.

Dima Nasrawi presented at ACNAP 2025 in France

PhD Candidate, Southern Cross University, Griffith, QLD

I was honoured to attend the ACNAP 2025 Congress (12-14th of June) in Sophia Antipolis, France, thanks to the support of the Travelling Fellowship. This was a truly enriching experience, both professionally and personally, as it marked my first time participating in a major European cardiovascular nursing and allied professions conference.

At the congress, I had the opportunity to present my research titled *“Postoperative care pathway with phase 1 cardiac rehabilitation: experiences and perceptions of patients and carers following coronary artery bypass grafting surgery.”*

Presenting my work to an international audience was both exciting and rewarding, and I received insightful feedback that will help shape the next phase of my PhD project. The discussions that followed my presentation were particularly valuable, offering new perspectives and potential avenues for collaborations.

Beyond my own presentation, I was inspired by the breadth and depth of content at ACNAP 2025. Sessions on CONNECT at the bedside, environmental justice and health disparities among many other presentations were especially impactful. The congress also provided a fantastic platform to connect with peers and experts from across Australia, Europe and beyond, many of whom I am in touch now and hope to collaborate with in the future.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to present my research on this global stage and extend my sincere thanks to the fellowship committee for making this experience possible.

Abstract can be viewed: <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/302094?query=postoperative>

Dima met up with all the
CSANZ Cardiovascular Nursing crew at ACNAP25
From l-r: Prof Caleb Ferguson, Prof Rochelle Wynne,
Dr Nicola Straiton and Dima Nasrawi.

Bonjour from France!





Dr Joseph Assad presented at ESC 2025 in Madrid

Department of Cardiology, Liverpool Hospital, NSW
Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research
University of New South Wales

It was a privilege to receive the CSANZ Travelling Fellowship to attend ESC Congress 2025 in Madrid, where I presented three components of my PhD focusing on utilising the HeartLogic™ multiparameter algorithm, remote monitoring and digital heart failure care, providing an invaluable platform to showcase our work to an international audience of experts.

A central highlight was presenting the early results from NOTIFY-HF, the first randomised trial to integrate HeartLogic with a patient-facing mHealth pathway which aims to shift remote monitoring from clinician-driven alerts toward patient-empowered early action. Our six-month results were encouraging, demonstrating feasibility as well as clinical benefits and generated strong interest, particularly around how patient-facing physiological data may reshape future heart failure workflows.

My oral presentation on HeartLogic alert burden and mortality complemented this, highlighting that frequent alerts independently predict both all-cause and cardiac mortality, identifying a high-risk subgroup who may benefit most from proactive, patient-centred intervention strategies such as NOTIFY-HF.



The second moderated e-poster, HeartLogic trends before heart failure hospitalisation, demonstrated that HeartLogic scores and sensor components diverge 45–60 days before admission, reinforcing the physiological basis for early, patient-triggered escalation pathways. ESC 2025 provided outstanding networking and collaboration opportunities with leaders in the digital health and heart failure fields. Beyond the scientific program, memorable moments included seeing the King of Spain walking around on the final day and watching Real Madrid play at the Bernabéu!

I am grateful to CSANZ for supporting my attendance and research. A special mention to my PhD supervisors – A/Prof Hany Dimitri, Prof Dominic Leung and Dr Giuseppe Femia for their ongoing guidance and mentorship.



Dr Jonathan Ciofani presented at ESC 2025 in Madrid

**Cardiology Advanced Trainee, Royal North Shore Hospital,
Sydney**

I am a second-year Cardiology Advanced Trainee at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney and had the privilege of attending the ESC Congress 2025 in Madrid with the support of a CSANZ Travelling Fellowship.

I presented our research entitled "Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors for aortic stenosis: a drug-target Mendelian randomisation study," which used genetic data from approximately one million participants to demonstrate that genetically predicted ACE inhibition is associated with a significant reduction in aortic stenosis risk. This provides a rationale for future randomised controlled trials in aortic stenosis, for which no proven medical therapy currently exists.

I attended several guideline sessions, including the release of the 2025 European Guidelines for the Management of Valvular Heart Disease, directly relevant to my clinical and research interests in aortic stenosis. Sessions on population genomics additionally provided valuable insights into cutting-edge methodologies and resources applicable to my research programme.

In my capacity as Chair of the CSANZ Fellows in Training Committee, I attended the ESC NCS Young Leaders' Meeting. This provided an invaluable opportunity to connect with young cardiovascular professional leaders from National Cardiac Societies worldwide, exchange ideas and explore collaborations to enhance training experiences for cardiology trainees and fellows in Australia and New Zealand.

I am deeply grateful to CSANZ for their generous support, and to my supervisors and collaborators for this work: Dr Daniel Han, Dr Benjamin Woolf, Dr Dipender Gill, Dr Usaid Allahwala and Prof Ravinay Bhindi.

Abstract DOI: [10.1093/eurheartj/ehaf784.2361](https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehaf784.2361)

Full manuscript DOI: [10.1016/j.ijcha.2025.101729](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijcha.2025.101729)



Dr Cheng Hwee Soh presented at ESC 2025 in Madrid

Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute, Melbourne

Attending the ESC Congress 2025 in Madrid was an exceptional and eye-opening experience, made possible through the generous support of the CSANZ Travelling Fellowship. As the world's leading cardiology conference, ESC delivered an extraordinary breadth of scientific content, exposure to cutting-edge innovations, and opportunities to engage directly with global experts shaping the future of cardiovascular care. Being immersed in this environment was both energising and deeply affirming of the direction of my research program.

I was honoured to present three abstracts (two moderated posters and one poster) covering key areas of my work this year:

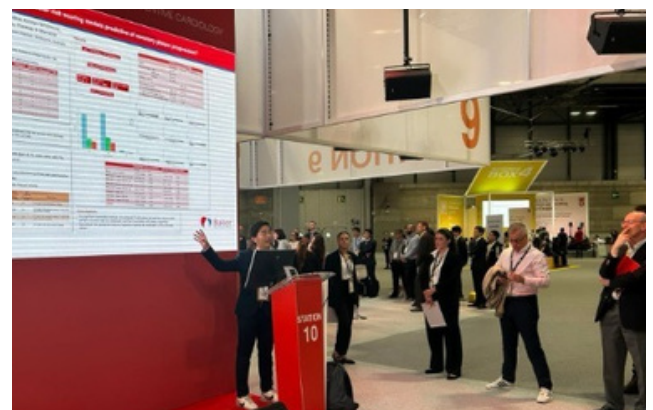
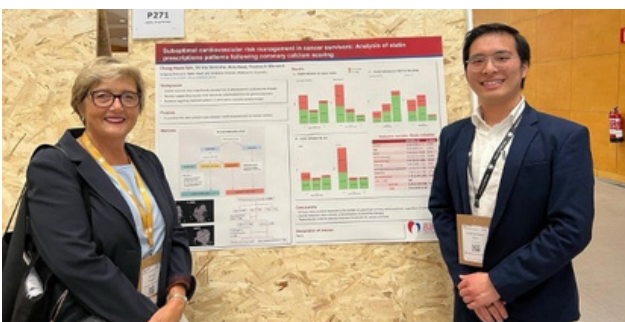
1. Statin initiation in individuals with subclinical atherosclerosis.
2. Surveillance imaging of left ventricular function in asymptomatic cancer survivors.
3. Prediction of traditional cardiovascular risk models for coronary plaque progression.

The discussions that followed each presentation were highly constructive and allowed me to receive targeted feedback from investigators working on similar methodological and clinical questions. It was encouraging to see strong engagement with these topics, reflecting an international recognition of the importance of early detection and prevention in cardiovascular disease.

Beyond the formal sessions, ESC provided a remarkable platform for networking. I connected with researchers from across Europe, North America, and Asia who shared similar interests in preventive cardiology and cardio-oncology. Most significantly, I developed new collaborations with Dr Mari Nordbø Gynnild (Oslo, Norway) and Dr Johan Sandslatt (Gothenburg, Sweden). Dr Gynnild's expertise in cardiotoxicity risk stratification among cancer survivors and Dr Sandslatt's work on improving initiation of preventive therapies complement my own recent publications. We are now working toward joint manuscripts and future multi-site analyses. These collaborations would not have emerged without the opportunity to attend ESC in person.

Overall, the Congress was an immensely positive and inspiring learning experience. Seeing the global momentum in imaging-based risk prediction, AI-enabled diagnostics, and preventive strategies has prompted me to think more deeply about how my next phase of research can integrate these innovations to improve early detection in high-risk populations, particularly cancer survivors.

I am sincerely grateful to CSANZ for supporting my attendance and enabling opportunities that will meaningfully shape my future research trajectory.





Dr Emilia Nan Tie presented at ESC 2025 in Madrid

Alfred Health Cardiology, Victoria

Attending ESC Congress in Madrid was an unforgettable experience, both professionally and personally. Madrid is a vibrant and interesting city, and catching up with colleagues from around the world in such a beautiful setting added a special dimension to this conference. The scale of ESC is unlike any other conference I have been to with over 30,000 attendees and 1,000 sessions.

The scientific program was phenomenal. Being able to attend the Hotline and Late-Breaking Clinical Trial sessions was a real highlight. I am particularly interested heart failure and haemodynamics, and I attended a many amazing sessions (with over 1000 sessions it was hard to pick). These were an invaluable as a prelude to my upcoming PhD on obesity and HFpEF, looking at the haemodynamic, metabolic and imaging features in weight loss. The exposure to cutting-edge research and diverse perspectives has given me fresh research ideas galore.

Presenting my abstract “Prevalence of inherited cardiomyopathies in patients with sub-epicardial scar on cardiac magnetic resonance imaging” was a fantastic career opportunity and a real celebration of the work our team has done. <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/306709>. The engagement and discussion that followed were incredibly rewarding, and I connected with researchers whose insights will help shape my future work, opening doors for mentorship and collaboration.

Overall, the greatest benefit was the combination of scientific learning, networking, and inspiration. ESC has strengthened my commitment to advancing research in heart failure and haemodynamics and given me confidence as I embark on my PhD journey.

I am deeply grateful to CSANZ for making this possible, this support has been instrumental in creating opportunities that will have a lasting impact on my career. Thank you to CSANZ, as well as my supervisors and the Alfred Health Cardiology unit for making this possible.





Dr Mithila Zaheen presented at ESC 2025 in Madrid

**PhD Candidate
Westmead Hospital, Sydney**

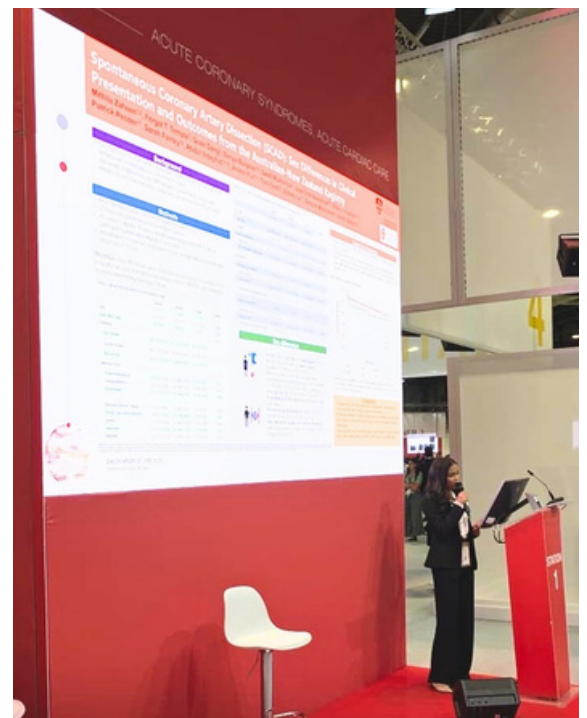
I was fortunate to be awarded a 2025 CSANZ Travelling Fellowship, which allowed me to attend the world's largest cardiology conference - the ESC Congress in Madrid, Spain.

As a second-year Cardiology Advanced Trainee and PhD candidate, it was an honour to present some of my early research on Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection (SCAD). I delivered an oral presentation on sex differences in SCAD, as well as an e-poster presentation on how multimodality imaging can enhance diagnostic accuracy. Sharing this work on an international stage was an incredible experience.

Presenting at ESC gave me the chance not only to disseminate my research findings, but also to engage with global experts in the field. The questions, feedback, and discussions were insightful and encouraging. I particularly valued connecting with academics and like-minded professionals - including female interventional cardiologists from many countries worldwide who are working to establish their own national SCAD registries.

Women's cardiovascular health has always been a passion of mine, and this opportunity strengthened my dedication to advocating for greater awareness of SCAD and its impact.

The conference itself was inspiring, filled with stimulating late-breaking trials, cutting-edge science, and fascinating case discussions. I returned to Westmead Hospital feeling energised, with new clinical insights and plenty of ideas for future research directions.



I am sincerely grateful to my PhD supervisors, A/Prof Sarah Zaman and Prof Clara Chow, for their constant support and guidance. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to CSANZ for their generous contribution in enabling me to attend ESC 2025. Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the patients who have so generously taken part in the Australian-New Zealand SCAD Registry. Without their trust and contribution, this research - and the progress it enables - would not be possible.



Dr Anton Trask-Marino presented at AHA 2025

**PhD candidate
The Florey, The University of Melbourne**

Attending the American Heart Association 2025 Scientific Sessions in New Orleans was an incredible experience. Having previously only attended smaller national meetings in vascular biology and cardiovascular medicine, I was struck by the sheer scale and energy of the AHA. Every session was captivating; highlights included cutting-edge coronary and valve trials, notably the TOP trial, which reaffirmed the lack of benefit of a liberal over a restrictive transfusion strategy after major vascular or general surgery.

I was fortunate to present my PhD research describing a novel sheep model of heart failure with reduced ejection fraction undergoing cardiopulmonary bypass (CPB). This model was developed to investigate the pathophysiological mechanisms underlying two of the most common and feared complications of cardiac surgery—acute kidney injury and neurocognitive dysfunction—for which no effective preventative therapies currently exist. By integrating pre-existing heart failure with advanced renal and cerebral monitoring techniques, our large-animal model addresses a major limitation of existing CPB models, which typically use healthy animals.

A personal highlight was receiving the Paul Dudley White International Scholar Award for the top abstract from Australia. This recognition created invaluable opportunities to meet and learn from Paul Dudley White International Scholars from around the world, many of whom I hope to collaborate with in the future. I also greatly enjoyed the Paul Dudley White lecture delivered by Prof Susan R Davis AO on the influence of sex steroids on cardiometabolic health.



Overall, the meeting was profoundly inspiring and has significantly broadened my scientific perspective. Exposure to world-leading research, the opportunity to present my own work, and the connections formed have all contributed meaningfully to my development as an early-career researcher. I am sincerely grateful to the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ) for awarding me a travelling fellowship, which enabled my attendance at AHA25.

I look forward to contributing to the CSANZ community in the years ahead.