



Council of International Neonatal Nurses (COINN) News page

Reflections on the COINN conference 2019

Compiled and edited by Julia Petty (UK) and Judy Hitchcock (New Zealand), COINN Board members

Enriched Family – Enhanced Care

(*Whannau/Ko e Fakakoloa'o e Famili, share the care*)



COINN 2019 offered an opportunity to celebrate and recognise the contribution of families in the care of preterm and sick babies in newborn units globally, in a range of cultural contexts. Around the world, the family unit is fundamental to the successful recovery of newborns, providing growth, strength, resilience and unity. The News pages in this edition focus firstly on this global, cultural context. Secondly, it presents first-person reflections from a range of delegates from across the world who came together to not only celebrate global neonatal nursing and healthcare but to also share ideas, network and learn with and from each other. The feedback will end with key, final messages from the conference to reflect on further as we move towards many more in the future (Julia Petty, UK).

The 'family' in cultural context

The cultural context was clear from the outset of the conference with a warm 'Māori' welcome and a vibrant Haka dance display (Fig. 1). In New Zealand, 'Māori' people are the original and indigenous inhabitants of the land. Mokopuna (descendants) are embraced within Whānau (family), Hapū (extended family) and Iwi (society). A constant symbol through the conference was the Harekeke, a flax bush commonly used for weaving (depicted in the logo above). According to Māori lore, Harakeke represents the concept of interdependency and unity of the Māori family Whānau and society helping us understand the important links between family members and their Pepe (babies). Woven flax flowers were gifted to delegates as a memento and lasting memory of the conference (Julia Petty, UK and Judy Hitchcock, New Zealand).



Fig. 1.

Global perspectives

21 countries (Fig. 2) were represented comprising over 400 delegates. Following the conference opening (Fig. 3), the plenary, key-note and concurrent sessions as well as the posters were presented by a range



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

of individuals from a broad variety of countries making the programme a varied, rich and diverse celebration of global work, research, education and innovation.

Reflections on COINN 2019

A selection of reflective comments has been compiled from Twitter, Facebook and email correspondence to summarise and capture the views of delegates; as follows.....

Facebook

From Maree Francis, Nelson, New Zealand

Loved everything about the four days I was at COINN 2019.

Wonderful speakers - great topics about enriching families- no complaints and lots of learning to bring back to Nelson Aotearoa NZ. Sky city convention staff were awesome- what they achieved every day to keep 400 people warm, comfortable, tuned in to the sound and PowerPoint presentation that were every session - wow you people were awesome-constant smiles- thank you!! Being in the company of esteemed colleagues is always amazing - they show in their words and spirit their tireless energy working to make the neonatal space safer and better for babies and families. I feel refreshed and ready to tackle almost anything.

Thank you to the organising team. Great work everyone. Your efforts didn't go unnoticed.

Selected tweets

Nancy Feeley@NfeeleyN (Canada) #COINN2019 "Parent Rachel Calander delivers powerful message of importance of focusing on strengths and abilities of children - gorgeous pics too"

Megan Bater@meg_bater (Australia) "Such an honour to hear Heidelise Als present keynote today at #COINN2019"

Tracey Jones@traceymjo(UK) "The poster presentations @COINNurses conference have been impressive this year!"

Marsha Campbell-Yeo@DrMCampbellYeo (Canada)"Mothers of babies requiring NICU care at high risk of PTSD - excellent talk @Nancy Feeley- incidence, importance of screening and providing interventions to reduce incidence #COINN2019"

Yvonne Freer @FreerYvonne (UK) "Neonatal nurse education presented by Andre Ndayambaje #COINN2019 in low resource setting of Rwanda has impressive outcomes"

Judy Hitchcock @hitchcock_judy (New Zealand) "Excellent presentation from Emma Malone presenting the correlation between CHD and

long term feeding and neuro development issues. Really interesting research".

Lynne Wainwright @LynneWainwright (UK)"Some great networking with ladies from Alabama who are also doing work around sibling experience in NICU"

Julia Petty @petty_julia (UK) "There is no point in having the best science in the world if we can't communicate it effectively"...So true! As presented by Nikki Turner....Excellent keynote on issues in global immunisation. Flying the UK Neonatal Nurses Association @NNAUK1 flag at COINN2019 with great colleagues"

Karen New @New2Karen (Australia) #coinn2019 recognises 2 board members for contribution to @COINNurses Deb O'Donoghue & Wakako Eklund

Click here for the full #COINN2019- Twitter story URL <https://twitter.com/i/moments/1128346919430950913>

Varying global perspectives

With thanks for the following contributions:

The Japanese perspective

Wakako Eklund with acknowledgements to the following JANN members for their contributions:

JANN Board Director: Mieko Uchida: JANN International Communications Committee: Miki Konishi, Aya Nakai, Aya Shimizu, Kazuyo Uehara; and JANN Members: Yukie Horigane, Chisato Kameyama, Miho Kunishima, Chika Muroka, Gaku Nishimiya, Noriko Nakamura, Kaori Saitoh, Makiko Toyoshima, Miki Yamada (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4.

COINN2019 in Auckland, NZ welcomed by far the largest number of Japanese delegates in the history of COINN, with nearly 30 Japanese members representing various areas of Japan from the south in Okinawa to further north in Ibaragi prefecture. Two Japanese neonatologists among them who travelled in support of their nurse colleagues deserve our special recognition. The COINN planning committee as well as the COINN board deeply appreciate the Japanese Academy of Neonatal Nursing (JANN) for their commitment to join forces with the global neonatal community with the goal of improving neonatal outcomes, while empowering the profession of neonatal nursing as a distinct specialty. A total of 13 posters and three oral presentations were given by the Japanese delegates covering topics such as palliative care, care of extremely low birth weight infants, efforts to increase breast feeding/milk production, ethics of managing infants with

rare conditions, thermoregulation, infection control, management of medically dependent neonatal unit graduates in the community, Japanese neonatal nurses' accomplishments/future challenges and more.

Preparing any presentations require extensive efforts as well as mentorship by experienced colleagues to refine the content so that the presentation was effective. The Japanese delegates whose primary language is not English have put forth extraordinarily brave efforts to prepare for COINN2019 to ensure that their presentations would deliver messages that were meaningful to their global colleagues. To alleviate the challenges of language barriers, innovative efforts were made by the International Communications' Committee members of JANN to mentor and support those in need for preparing English presentations. Phenomenal organizational efforts and individual commitment were behind every Japanese presentation and every smile. Japanese delegates generously provided rich experience-based thoughts from their COINN experience from the perspective of non-English speaking participants. Many members felt sensed and were touched by the warmth and heart-felt welcome demonstrated by the planning committee and board members from the very first day, who embraced them with the most upbeat kiwi spirit. Having a workshop-day followed by the opening reception where they could mingle with and get to know other participants facilitated the members to feel relaxed and to feel "familiar" with the atmosphere. Although the "exact words" or "accurate expressions" may not have come to them quickly, the Japanese participants were inspired by the "rewarding networking experience."

The Japanese delegates were moved by and appreciated the Maori cultural input that was notable throughout the conference. Valuing and implementing culturally sensitive family-centred care is a focus in various regions of Japan today with increasing number of immigrant families in neonatal units.

One of the highlights of many delegates' COINN experience were the workshops including the Fisher & Paykel plant tour which added a tremendous experience in witnessing the important partnership between industry and clinicians as well as what goes on behind the development of any therapeutic devices that enhance neonatal care. The visit to the Starship neonatal unit allowed us to see the highly dedicated neonatal care offered in New Zealand. Culturally rich displays of Maori art on the walls of the unit also inspired the Japanese members as they face challenges of improving the care of families who are not from the Japanese culture. A member who participated in the Neuroprotective Care workshop reported a rich learning experience packed into 4 hours which inspired her greatly with knowledge that she would adopt in her research and practice.

While many may have felt limited understanding and challenges with spontaneous in-depth discussions at the poster display or while listening to the oral presenters in terms of detailed concepts or subtle nuances, they responded in turn with an intense effort to glean the messages by reading the slides or capturing images of important slides. The experience of an immersive, all-English conference and listening to presenters hour after hour can be quite exhausting at times. Despite communication challenges, the Japanese delegates described that each day brought new discoveries as well as new encounters inspiring them to return the next day with anticipation. The conference App was identified as a highly useful tool allowing ease of sending questions to presenters rather than speaking out at the microphone on the spot. Following the photos and messages posted by members added an additional special touch to the "networking" experience.

Many are determined to achieve the next level of "networking" and "learning" to enhance their own professional experience by continuing to refine their communication strategies. Those who attended COINN 2016 in Vancouver felt their second COINN in Auckland added extra layers of lasting positive inspiration. What they feel they may have missed due to the communication barriers was richly compensated by

the overall COINN experience they gained through the workshops, discussions at the posters, seeing and hearing about innovations and research and new encounters leading to new relationships throughout the conference. Feeling the joy by asserting their courage to seek out speakers to meet them personally or to express gratitude for their impactful work was a moment to remember for many.

Each delegate returned home with new relationships to treasure and a renewed sense of commitment to continue their endeavour whether one is in clinical roles or in academia with definite anticipation to reconnect with the global members again at future COINN conferences, perhaps in Denmark or in Hawaii. Communication barriers do not stand in the way of the Japanese neonatal nurses aim in continuing to work for the benefit of babies and their families.

Members send their utmost gratitude to the planning committee members and COINN board for their accomplishment of executing the role of host at COINN2019 in Auckland, with finest attention to detail. Every industry/corporate partner receives applause for their generous support which enriched the program. The spirit of passion, power and global unity felt on the dance floor at our unforgettable time-slip into the 1920's remains with each attendant whether one was from Europe, North/South Americas, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Islands or Asia.

The New Zealand perspective

Helen Barwick

COINN19 what an experience. Hope everyone has had a safe trip home and are sharing the knowledge gained. After taking time to reflect, words cannot describe the energy that was apparent throughout the whole event. My conference started with being the Local Organising Committee (LOC) representative on the Neonatal Unit and Fisher and Paykel tour for a group of 20 mostly international delegates. They were a very dynamic group asking many questions and gaining valuable information.

The array of international speakers on the program was very strong and diverse. Mark Turner from the UK arrived just hours before speaking on the 1st day, thanks to the challenges of international travel. Heilise Als what a legend. Talk about a speaker who lives and breathes her subject knowing it extremely well. I am sure she never stopped smiling for the entire conference. Wherever she went delegates gathered to talk with her and take photos/"selfies".

The social events and breakfast sessions were well attended. The conference dinner had the theme "Great Gatsby" and there was much fun and laughter. Delegates and exhibitors all got into the theme.

Hearing what COINN is doing in other countries to promote and support neonatal nursing was informative. Networking with colleagues from different countries was valuable and a great experience.

My delegates badge (Fig. 5) with the local organising committee badge has its own story. The pin in the shape of a silver fern. The silver fern is part of native New Zealand and grows naturally. Our national teams wear this symbol on their uniforms. If you look on the back of this pin you will see engraved "COINN2019". Paua scarf. This scarf was worn by the Local organising committee, and the Neonatal Nurses College of Aotearoa (NNCA). The Paua shell is very brightly coloured and the Paua is a native shellfish to New Zealand. The other scarf seen in the photo was titled "On walkabout "which was worn by many of our Australian neonatal colleagues. My African traveller known as "Thandi" which means "Love". The Mother and Child traveller which was given as a gift along with the South African flag pin.

I am confident that this conference will be spoken about worldwide and information shared with those that could not make this event.



Fig. 5.

The Australian perspective

Deanne August

The 2019 COINN congress in Auckland did not disappoint with experts sharing knowledge from topics including the developing neonatal brain to optimal feeding procedures. Lectures from pivotal leaders such as Dr Heidelise Als offered a once in a lifetime opportunity. However, attending the COINN conference isn't just about learning from specialists or exciting new research. It's an opportunity to meet, share and celebrate neonatal care with international colleagues from across the world. Over the three-day conference, attendees had the opportunity to listen to testimonies of practice improvement for neonates born in China, North America, Japan, South Africa, Australasia, Samoa and Rwanda. On reflection, as a Neonatal Nurse from a first world setting, we have so many resources which enable us to continuously improve outcomes for the patients in our care. Yet, many countries will work with just a portion of those resources, similarly seeking to improve patient outcomes. The sentiment and inspiration gained from COINN is a lasting reminder that we are part of a network of individuals across the globe striving for exceptional neonatal care.

Priya Govindaswamy

I was fortunate to attend the 10th Council of International Neonatal Nurses conference at Auckland and it's a pleasure to write this report in which I can highlight how amazing the conference was. I want to say a big thank you to COINN for organising a wonderful conference and bringing nurses together globally from 21 countries. The conference offered not just an outstanding educational program but a great social event which allowed me to network with neonatal colleagues from all over the world. I also had a paper accepted for presentation titled Knowledge to Action Translation: Engaging families in a surgical NICU.

The conference on Monday commenced with COINN welcome ceremony and nursing awards, followed by an inspiring speech by Dr. Heidelise Als on protecting the preterm brain –family and staff collaboration. It was one life time experience for me to see Dr. Als presenting and calling all the neonatal nurses to come together to protect preterm brains. There were many great presentations, but I was inspired and touched by the 'working with NICU families-Retaining our Humanity' by Dr Simon Rowley. He shared his wealth of knowledge and the key message delivered by him was heart-touching: 'how we need to treat others in the way they would like to be treated' and not the way we would like to be treated. I was particularly interested in hearing the presentation by Rachel Callander 'The impact of language and Empowering Communication at diagnosis' which focused on the importance of communication with parents and families in the neonatal unit.

Having concurrent sessions on all three days divided into streams helped me decide which theme I wanted to learn and focus on. I got to see lots of quality projects presented as posters by enthusiastic neonatal nurses around the world, who have done amazing work for babies and this was inspiring to me. At the end of 3-day conference, I took a great deal of information away with me to incorporate into education, research and practice. I would like to extend my thanks to the Grace Centre for Newborn Intensive Care Unit for their support. I very much appreciate and value it.

The Canadian perspective

Dr. Theresa Kim and Brianna Richardson

Over the two and a half days of May 5-8, the Council of International Neonatal Nurses brought together nurses, nurse practitioners, neonatal specialists and researchers from over 20 countries to Auckland, New Zealand. As research trainees in the MOM-LINC lab based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, we embarked on a journey towards better understanding ourselves and our work in the neonatal field. Starting off with the Powhiri, a traditional Maori welcoming ceremony which set us off to begin discussions on how to enrich whanau (families) and to become whakapapa (genealogy) warriors for our neonates and their families, we quickly learned that this was going to be no ordinary conference.

To stand amongst the presence of trailblazer Carol Kenner, a pioneer in this field, we were flooded with admiration and inspiration with her decades of research and dedication for educating nurses globally. Kerri Nuku's opening speech on the whakapapa warriors situated the importance of the Maori indigenous culture that captivated us and resonated with us beyond the conference. These were only a couple examples of inspirational speakers at the conference. Further to listening to engaging presentations, we were connected to many of the delegates around the world. It truly was an international conference where we made authentic and genuine connections with researchers and clinicians around the globe- and despite our different backgrounds, we all spoke the same language of bettering the lives of families. The knowledge we have gained about different cultures and their approaches in clinical care is something we are excited to share and apply to our clinical care and research in Canada. For example, Tamara Nickerson's talk on Kiwi in Paris provided us with insight on how deeply connected and transformative we can be in a family's life. Tamara also demonstrated that transcending beyond traditional nursing in a family liaison role is a necessity and perhaps essential in helping families to graduate from the neonatal unit and transition home, which sometimes may even involve transitioning to a different continent!

We learned that language is the key to enhanced care. Although we learned that from many of the other speakers, it was refreshing to hear from the perspective of Rachel Callander, who humbly claimed to be

“only an artist” but in fact, (and everyone in the audience would agree), she was a super-being with “super powers” in our eyes, just like her daughter Evie. The need to communicate using compassionate, empowering language in the health system was highlighted and Rachel succinctly presented this concept in the “health language matrix” urging us to practice in the positive and informative quadrant using empathetic language towards patients / parents. In between the two full days of learning and networking, we were able to take a break to travel back in time to the Roaring 20’s at the incredible Great Gatsby Dinner. The phrase “work hard, play hard” is very familiar in the nursing discipline and this was especially true at the gala dinner. The conference centre was transformed with beautiful décor and music that truly made you feel as if you were in another era. We were in awe of the level of dedication to the theme by so many of the delegates! The night began with a special performance by a local dance group (with four incredibly talented neonatal unit graduates) and ended with everyone on the dance floor shouting “encore!” at the band. It was certainly a night to remember!

Enlightening presentations continued into the final day and once the conference officially came to a close, we were already planning our trips to the upcoming COINN conferences in the next few years. After the conference had ended, Dale Garton, Nurse Unit Manager, and Tamara Nickerson gave us a tour of the NICU at Starship Child Health which was another great opportunity to gain more insight into neonatal care in New Zealand. We would like to thank COINN, the conference committee, and all of the delegates for making this an inspiring and exciting conference.

Various images capture the essence of COINN 2019: See Figs. 6–9

Final words

Patricia Bromley from Tasmania summarises the conference very well, as follows:



Fig. 6.

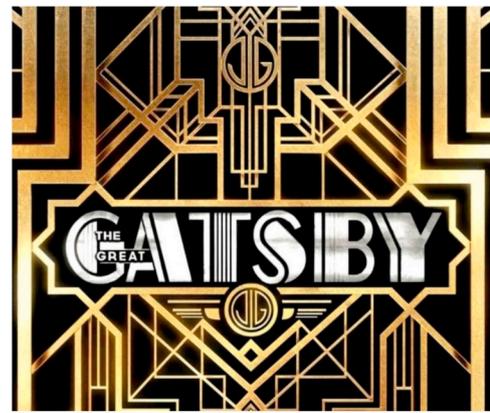


Fig. 7.

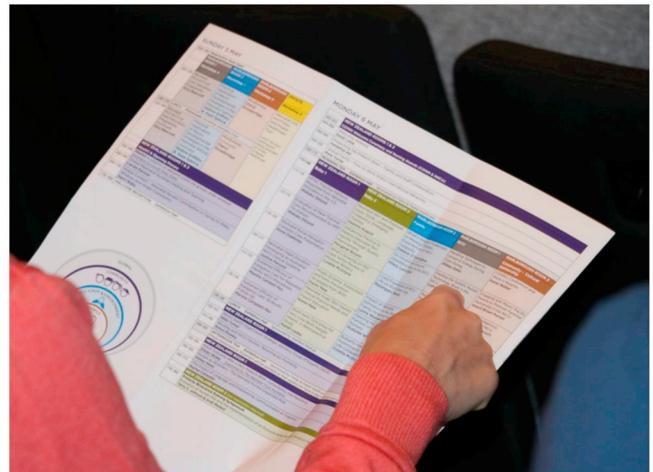


Fig. 8.

“It was a privilege to attend the COINN conference held in New Zealand in May 2019. The welcome ceremony was very moving and a great example to us all reminding us of promoting health equity in our home countries. The presenters were inspiring, and it was great to see such a focus on developmental care. There were many international delegates, and not only did I make new international friends and colleagues, but I ran into past colleagues with whom I worked in the UK way back in the 1990’s. It really is a small world. Thank you COINN for a wonderful conference”.

And in the words of Dale Garton, the COINN 2019 Chairperson:

“We (The Local organising committee) were overwhelmed by the sheer number of nurses globally who attended, their enthusiasm was palpable from beginning to end. The trade sponsorship was amazing and we all had fun which makes learning just that little bit easier. “

Final words came from Karen Walker, COINN’s new president who summarised key messages to further reflect on moving forward, for us all to remain energised from such an enjoyable and valuable shared platform that COINN 2019 offered (Box 1). A message from Karen in her new role is featured overleaf.

At the conference, following the COINN annual general meeting, Karen took over the role of COINN President from the inspirational Carole Kenner (Fig. 10). Carole was formally thanked and commended in the closing ceremony for her passion, commitment and unfaltering drive in taking COINN to where it is today for which we are truly grateful. As tweeted by @meg_bater: *“This lady is an absolute dynamo. Thank you”*

Acknowledgements: With thanks and appreciation to the COINN 2019 sponsors, Jodie and her team from the conference company, Dale Garton (Chairperson), the conference organising committee, the



Fig. 9.

neonatal nurses of Aotearoa and the staff at the Auckland Sky Tower convention centre.

Message from the new COINN President: Karen Walker:

My name is Karen Walker and I am delighted to be the new President of the Council of International Neonatal Nurses. I thought I would take this opportunity to tell you a little about myself. Born in Scotland, I completed my RGN and RSCN at Great Ormond Street and the Royal London Hospitals before relocating to Sydney, where I then completed my undergraduate, Masters and PhD. I've worked in multiple roles over my long career, as a clinical nurse, a nurse specialist, educator, retrieval nurse and as a researcher.

At the moment, I have two synergistic roles which allow me to work in both maternal and neonatal health. I'm the Global Women's Health Program Manager responsible for leading The George Institute's Global Women's Health Program strategy and research in Australia and Research Manager in the neonatal unit at the Children's Hospital at Westmead. I'm also a Clinical Associate Professor with the University of Sydney, the current President of the Australian College of Neonatal Nurses and a founding member of the Alliance for Global Neonatal Nurses in the USA. I sit on international committees and work with the World Health Organisation and other international groups both in Australia and internationally.

I'm happy to say that COINN has a stable board of expert nurses that are committed to remaining on the board and that Professor Carole Kenner will stay on as CEO. I'm also excited to say that we will expand the board and welcome three new members; Dr Wakako Eklund from Japan/USA, Leilani Kahoano from Hawaii and Dr Marsha Campbell-Yeo from Canada. They individually and collectively will bring much experience, passion and expertise to our committee.

We have lots of plans for COINN moving forward with the further

development of our special interest groups and partnerships, conferences, education and training and meetings all over the world. Please follow the COINN website for more information and how to become involved (<https://coinnurses.org>) and we will also keep you up to date through the COINN pages in the journal.



Fig. 10.

Box 1

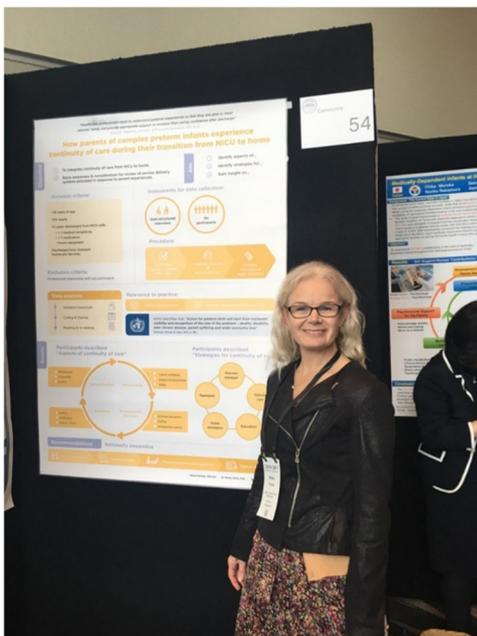
Take-home messages from COINN 2019.

- *We need to focus within our countries on improving the health of our indigenous babies and their families*
- *There remains inequity globally: thus, individually, nationally and internationally, we need to raise our voices as advocates*
- *Every neonatal nurse makes a difference, every day*
- *COINN needs to have a strong political voice and break down silos*
- *Listen to the voices of nurses- this is so important*
- *The language we use is also so important*
- *Collaboration with parents is vital*
- *One baby, one family at a time*
- *Gratitude and Kindness- are we really 'fine'*
- *Everyone has a story to tell – including us*

My Journey to COINN 2019 and beyond - Helsa Fairless: New Zealand See Fig. 11

Some years ago, I was highly motivated to engage in active learning with a tertiary institution with a strong desire to extend my previous Postgraduate studies to advance my knowledge and skills for my own development and to benefit the families we work alongside. Fortunately, the academics and Programme Manager at Whitireia, NZ were thrilled to recognise prior learning and support my existing studies / qualifications and experiences. Although apprehensive of returning to school, I enrolled in a programme specifically aimed at enabling professionals to contribute to advanced knowledge and scholarship: a Masters of Professional Practice. Last year, when the research proposal was waiting ethical approval, and I heavily engaged in reviewing current literature specific to my interest topic “How do parents of complex preterm infant’s experience continuity of care, during their transition from NICU to home”, I first heard about one particular nurse researcher, Dr Carole Kenner, coming to NZ as a key note speaker for COINN 2019. I had to meet her as I had reviewed her literature and realised that we shared a common interest. Not only that, I had decided what an amazing forum to network and so I applied to present at the conference.

COINN 2019: As a delegate at the COINN 2019 conference, I was given an opportunity to really “network”. I did in fact approach, meet and speak with Dr Kenner about my current research. However, I was also ‘star struck’ to ‘accidentally’ meet other delegates whose research I had also reviewed realising we shared a common interest; namely: Marina Boykova, Julia Petty and Ida du Plessis-Faurie.

**Fig. 11**

I very much look forward to the next three years and hope to get the opportunity to meet with many of you.

Warm regards, A/Prof Karen Walker, President COINN
boardpresident@coinnurses.org

In the next edition, the COINN News Pages will provide a summary and update of the COINN Board and its vision moving forward, continuing the drive and commitment in working for the benefit of all neonates and their families as well as the nurses and health professionals who care for them across the globe.

For further information on the COINN News pages or if you would like to contribute, contact Julia Petty (UK) j.petty@herts.ac.uk

When Dr Kenner opened the conference with wise words, her presentation invoked a few thoughts, which I would like to share. Dr Carole identified that researchers have real data to identify and validate, i.e. to help to support current practice and how this reinforces care. She stated that outreach teams are necessary for quality care that is provided. She further reinforced that education and expertise for handling babies is necessary, because nurses are at the forefront to influence quality care and creating partnerships with families. She further identified that we are all leaders; we lead education, advocacy and for saying what is right or wrong with data to support the changes. She reminded us that teamwork is essential as every person with a different entity / skill is what makes the difference, for positive health outcomes for infants and their families.

So, for almost 18 months, I have been a full-time student, employee and Mum who has demonstrated

G R I T. This acronym resonated fiercely for me, described by another COINN speaker, Margaret Alve.

G – Groundedness = to remain focussed & centred, concentrating on the here & now.

R – Resilience = the ability to deal with adversity & bounce back quickly and easily.

I – Integrity = understanding our own beliefs & values & behaving in ways consistent with them.

T – Tenacity = having a passion, drive & determination to not give up despite the difficulties.

I strongly and personally believe that we can all enrich the experiences of families in our care by empowering their care with trusted and inclusive relationships, clear communication, and supportive emotional needs in an environment that is appropriate to their needs. I urge you all to remain passionate and driven, whatever you determine your professional or personal goals to be

What next:

- Thesis submission for examination next month and then publication of my research thereafter.
- I would love to share my research for those who may be interested. It was really encouraging to reflect that whilst there is a gap in the literature in continuity of care for complex infants, the topic of transitioning from hospital to home aligned with academics, in particular those who attended COINN.
- I would love to work alongside others in a potential project comparing the continuity of care in two different contexts, for the purpose of publication.

I have attached a picture of my presentation poster for you all to see. I will also be placing it visibly somewhere in the NICU. COINN reinforced that we can all have some **GRIT**.