



THE SMAE INSTITUTE™

2025 ANNUAL CONVENTION

Oxford Belfry Thame, Oxfordshire
Friday 3rd & Saturday 4th October 2025

"What we learn with pleasure, we never forget." ALFRED MERCIER

EARLY BIRD RATE

Book before 29th August
and **SAVE £20**

LIMITED HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Book early to avoid
disappointment!

Join us for a fantastic event comprising of learning and networking, where you'll have the opportunity to listen to renowned lecturers, alongside exploring the extensive trade exhibition in a beautiful 4* hotel, with luxurious accommodation. Delegates will be treated to tasty snacks, unlimited refreshments, and a delicious hot/cold buffet lunch. And that's not all – you're invited to join us at our Gala Dinner featuring a Celebration of Achievement and music to dance the night away.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to expand your knowledge and connect with like-minded professionals.

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE

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Annual Convention Agenda



Friday 3rd October 2025

8.45am – 9.50am Registration, Trade Exhibition & Arrival Refreshments

9.50am – 10.00am Welcome by **Tracey O'Keeffe**

10.00am – 11.00am Dr Michael Backhouse PhD, BSc (Hons), FRCPodM, FFPM RCPS (Glasg)
Associate Professor, Warwick Medical School

Improving footcare for people with inflammatory arthritis

Foot health problems are highly prevalent in people with inflammatory arthritis (IA), persisting despite significant advances in pharmacological therapy. However, patients often report that their foot symptoms are ignored by health professionals, and treatment is often inadequate. To help bridge the gap between the clinical need and current foot care provision, the British Society for Rheumatology (BSR) have recently published its first guideline on foot health management in IA. This presentation will provide delegates with an understanding of the new guideline and its implications for practice.

11.00am – 11.40am Refreshment Break & Trade Exhibition

11.40am – 12.40pm Prof. Stuart Jones Chair in Pharmaceutical Medicine,
Director of the Centre for Pharmaceutical Medicine Research

Why is it so difficult to treat nail infections? The problems and some possible solutions.

Persistent skin and nail infections have the potential to become drug-resistant and enter the blood, constituting a significant health burden. Current treatment approaches are inadequate, leading to patients with life-long infection and an "alarming" increase in treatment-resistant infections, which has recently spread from the subcontinent to the UK and USA. The high prevalence, persistent nature, and poor patient outcomes make nail infections a significant unmet clinical need. In this presentation, we will discuss the properties of human nails, including their composition, structure and how chemicals pass into them. We will consider the types of fungi that infect the nails and how they become a persistent feature hard keratin tissues. Finally, we will discuss current treatments and some novel approaches that aim to treat nail infections.

12.40pm – 2.00pm Hot/Cold Buffet Lunch & Trade Exhibition

1.05pm – 1.50pm Breakout Session (Optional - £15pp)

"A clinical mystery? The answer is probably in the history" with **Dr Andrew Hill**

This session will outline the key importance that a detailed patient history provides to the consultation. It will focus on the key elements that should be covered, as well as some useful communication techniques that will help you in situations where obtaining a history is not straightforward.

2.00pm – 3.00pm Robert Isaacs BSc Pod (hons) MRCoP HCPC

Biomechanics Made (a bit) Simple(r)

Let's be honest, biomechanics is more than just difficult to learn. Sometimes it just does not seem to make sense! In this presentation, we will attempt to address some of what makes this subject so confusing and provide a simplified framework for understanding how to assess different types of patients. Spoiler alert, it depends! There is no single type of biomechanical assessment protocol which works for all situations.

3.00pm – 3.40pm Refreshment Break & Trade Exhibition

3.40pm – 4.40pm Belinda Longhurst BSc (Hons); PGCert; FHEA; FFPM RCPS (Glasg),
Podiatry Lecturer

Person-centred and evidence-based management of verrucae

This presentation will review current research on the aetiology and clinical manifestation of verrucae. Relevant case studies will be presented, focusing on the evidence-based management of HPV associated lesions, within the context of person-centred treatment. The risks associated with treatments for verrucae will also be considered.

4.45pm – 5.15pm Complimentary session with **Tracey O'Keeffe** MA, BSc, RN,
PGCE, MCFHP MAFHP

An invitation to mindfulness – Take 2!

Following last year's successful gathering, we are offering a further complimentary session where you are invited to come and hear about mindfulness, what it offers, and experience a meditation to use when you need a quick reset! Feel free to come if you are already practicing mindfulness regularly, new to it and interested, or totally sceptical! Just come ready with an open mind and a body that needs restoring! It may just make your evening even better... No need to bring anything, just a willingness to participate.

7.15pm – Late Gala dinner, music, and celebration of achievement (for those booked)

Saturday 4th October 2025

8.30am – 9.15am Registration, Trade Exhibition & Arrival Refreshments

9.15am – 10.15am Michael Ratcliffe FFPM RCPS (Glasg), MRCPod, FRCPodM, B.Sc. (Podiatry), M.Sc. (Health Research), Cert. Ed.

Exploring the aetiology, pathology and conservative management of hammer toes

Hammertoes are a common forefoot deformity originating principally from the proximal interphalangeal joint of the lesser toes. Hammer toe deformity generally involves an imbalance between the muscles that provide extension and flexion movement to the toes. We will explore the aetiology, risk factors and muscular imbalance that can lead to this deformity and how to conservatively manage the symptoms and where possible, correct the actual deformity itself.

10.15am – 11.00am Refreshment Break & Trade Exhibition

11.00am – 12.00pm Dr Jonathan Bowling FRCP
Consultant Dermatologist

Acral melanocytic lesions

This presentation will firstly provide a guide to the presentations of typical benign, congenital and acquired, acral melanocytic lesions. Illustrations and explanations of how acral anatomy shapes the development of benign naevi will be discussed. Secondly, four distinct patterns of acral melanoma will be presented, including the presentation of acral lentiginous melanoma in situ.

12.00pm – 1.20pm Hot/Cold Buffet Lunch & Trade Exhibition

12.30pm – 1.15pm Breakout Session (Optional - £15pp)

Orthotic Prescription Workshop with Robert Isaacs

A simplified and down-to-earth look at what type of insole to use for different types of problems and different types of patients, including off-the-shelf and custom considerations. This will not be a detailed and nuanced look at the fine detail of prescription variables, but rather a broad overview of what types of things to use when.

1.20pm – 2.20pm Deborah Cunningham-Wood

BSc (Hons) Podiatry; MA; Bed (Hons); currently DHealth student at BCU Diploma Foot Health Therapies; Level 5 Diploma Sports Therapies; NLSSM; Diploma HE; MCFHP MAFHP;

Why is mobility important as we grow older?

This presentation will focus on the importance of remaining mobile, exploring some of the barriers that exist and how the foot health clinician can help support individuals. It will discuss the concept of mobility maintenance as a vital element of ageing well and our role within that as we work with our clients to look after their physical and mental health.

2.20pm – 2.30pm Ten-minute recess

2.30pm – 3.30pm Dr Andrew Hill DHealth; MSc Podiatry; BSc (Hons); PGCert L&T; FFPM RCPS(Glasg); FHEA; FSSCh Programme Lead and Senior Lecturer – BSc (Hons) Podiatry

Why all the Nerves?

This presentation will focus in on taking a detailed and holistic approach to neurological assessment of the lower limb. A lecture dedicated to helping to understand the what, why, when and where of Podiatric-neurological examination.

3.30pm – 3.35pm Closing Talk

MEET THE LECTURERS

Belinda Longhurst

BSc (Hons); PGCert; FHEA; FFPM RCPS (Glasg), Podiatry Lecturer

Belinda qualified as a podiatrist in 2003 and was awarded a First-Class Honours degree with Distinction by the University of Southampton. She is a Podiatry lecturer for the SMAE Institute's BSc (Hons) Podiatry degree programme (in collaboration with Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh) and is a Fellow of both the Higher Education Academy and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. Belinda has a special interest in Podiatric Dermatology and has frequently presented her published work at both national and international conferences. She is also joint course provider for the Royal College of Podiatry Skin Surgery Course (extended scope of practice) and is a Trustee and Volunteer Coordinator for the Registered charity Forgotten Feet, which offers free footcare to the homeless and socially isolated. Belinda is keen to promote the upskilling of Foot Health Practitioners and Podiatrists in lesion recognition skills to strengthen the profession and improve patient outcomes.

Dr Andrew Hill

DHealth; MSc Podiatry; BSc (Hons); PGCert L&T; FFPM RCPS(Glasg); FHEA; FSSCh Programme Lead and Senior Lecturer – BSc (Hons) Podiatry

Andrew has been a practicing Podiatrist since he qualified from The University of Brighton in 2006. He is the Programme Lead for The SAME Institute's BSc (Hons) Podiatry degree programme as well as for the Local Anaesthesia and Prescription Only Medicines programmes. Andrew obtained his teaching qualification in 2011, his MSc in Podiatry from QMU in 2015 and his Doctorate in Health from the University of Bath in 2022. Andrew's professional area of interest is in the foot in diabetes and health behaviours. He has several peer-review publications to his name and also works as a peer reviewer for 'The Diabetic Foot' journal and 'Patient Education and Counselling' Journal. Andrew also holds posts as an education visitor for the HCPC and Regional Advisor for Podiatry to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow.

Dr Michael Backhouse

PhD, BSc (Hons), FRCPodM, FFPM RCPS (Glasg) Associate Professor, Warwick Medical School

Mike is a podiatrist and Associate Professor within the Clinical Trials Unit at the University of Warwick. He qualified from the University of Southampton and gained his PhD from the University of Leeds. Mike now leads a multidisciplinary team of researchers aiming to improve the lives of people with foot and ankle problems. With a research portfolio of over £6M, Mike has either led or been involved in most of the large NIHR Funded RCTs into foot and ankle problems in the last decade (CODIFI, CODIFI2, OSTRICH, and BigTOE). He has also been at the centre of developing key policies including the Musculoskeletal Core Capabilities Framework for FCPs, and the recent British Society for Rheumatology's (BSR) guideline on the Management of Foot Health in IA.

Michael Ratcliffe

FFPM RCPS (Glasg), MRCPod, FRCPodM, B.Sc. (Podiatry), M.Sc. (Health Research), Cert. Ed.

Michael qualified as a podiatrist from the University of Brighton in 1989. Michael has clinical experience working in the National Health Service specialising in lower limb gait rehabilitation post trauma. Michael also has commercial and industrial experience, running a podiatry business within Boots the Chemist and working for Everflex (UK) Ltd, an orthoses manufacturer, and academic experience, as a Lecturer in Podiatry (Lower Limb Anatomy and Pathomechanics) and as Head of School at the former Birmingham School of Podiatry. Michael's academic interests centre on researching the mechanical behaviour of the heel fibro-fatty padding within the gait cycle. Currently, Michael has been appointed as Sales Training Manager for Cuxson Gerrard & Co. Ltd researching foot care products, cosmetic and medical device regulation and delivering podiatric training nationally. He continues to work, part time in private practice.

Dr Jonathan Bowling FRCP

Consultant Dermatologist

Jonathan Bowling is a Consultant Dermatologist based in Oxford, UK.

His main professional interest is skin cancer management and particularly the use of dermoscopy in the early diagnosis of melanoma.

He completed his dermatology registrar training in London, during which time achievements included, becoming concurrently, the dermatology national trainee representative and the Dowling club secretary. In 2002 he organised the first London regional training day for dermatology trainees and the UK's first dermoscopy training event. He became the medical director of Dermoscopy UK, a dermoscopy education company that he founded in 2003. By the time he completed his dermatology training in 2004 over 50% of British dermatologists had attended one of his dermoscopy courses.

Following a skin surgical fellowship in 2004 he was appointed consultant dermatologist at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust in 2005. Whilst there, he became the skin cancer lead for Oxford and chair of the West Thames Valley specialist skin cancer MDT. He introduced dermoscopy assessment into the skin cancer pathway which yielded improvements in both surgical capacity and melanoma detection which have remained world leading, 10 years after publication, from two recent independent systematic reviews.

He has published extensively on dermoscopy, and worked with the SAC to ensure that experience and training in dermoscopy training was included within the UK dermatology training curriculum. He is the author of the pioneering and award-winning textbook 'Diagnostic Dermoscopy: The Illustrated Guide', first published in 2011, available in 5 languages, and now currently in its second edition. He lectures worldwide on skin cancer diagnosis and provides national and international courses on dermoscopy to NHS skin cancer networks, dermatologists, plastic surgeons and GPs, with over 4000 delegates attending his courses.

Since 2014 he has divided his time between dermoscopy education, private practice and his family.

Deborah Cunningham-Wood

BSc (Hons) Podiatry; MA; Bed (Hons); currently DHealth student at BCU Diploma Foot Health Therapies; Level 5 Diploma Sports Therapies; NLSSM; Diploma HE; MCFHP MAFFP;

Deborah recently qualified as a podiatrist, becoming part of the inaugural cohort to complete the BSc (Hons) at The SMAE Institute, accredited by Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh. Her professional journey has been shaped by diverse and people-focused roles, including 18 years as a schoolteacher, service in the Metropolitan Police, and work as a leading sports therapist for her local rugby club. Alongside raising five children as a single parent, Deborah has successfully run her award-winning foot health business for over 20 years, having originally qualified as a Foot Health Practitioner through The SMAE Institute.

Following her training in podiatry, Deborah secured a place on the Doctorate in Health (DHealth) programme at Birmingham City University, where she recently completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Research. In her role as PGR Representative for the Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences, she was recently appointed Lead PGR Rep. Her doctoral proposal explores the communication strategies used by podiatrists in private practice to promote mobility among older adult patients, with a focus on the barriers and facilitators that shape these interactions and influence engagement in physical activity.

**BOOK
HERE!**



Professor Stuart Jones

Chair in Pharmaceutical Medicine

Director of the Centre for Pharmaceutical Medicine Research

Professor Jones holds a chair in Pharmaceutical Medicine in the Pharmacy Department of the Faculty of Life Sciences & Medicine at King's College London. He started his career in the Pharmaceutical Industry at Pfizer in Sandwich, Kent, but left this post to complete a PhD in Inhaled formulation design with Prof Marc Brown and Gary Martin at King's College London. Following his PhD he took up a post as Head of Research and Development of the dermal SME MedPharm Ltd, then moved back into academia 17 years ago when he first took up a lectureship at King's College London.

Professor Jones heads a research team at King's that is focused on understanding the design of innovative pharmaceutical formulations and devices. His is interested in how therapeutic agents are released from formulations and how they cross biological barriers. He uses new discoveries in drug delivery and barrier transport processes to design new diagnostic and drug administration systems. To date this work has been funded by 18 research grants with a total value of > £ 5 million. He has published over 80 research articles, 8 patents and successfully supervised more than 34 PhD students. He acts as a consultant to the pharmaceutical industry and expert witness in patent litigation.

Professor Jones's team is currently working on innovative approaches to non-invasive biomarker sampling via the skin, the use of natural compounds to modify skin keratinocyte function, development of topical formulations that generate gases, novel formulations for drug delivery to the skin, hair and nail, the use of skin stretching to promote needleless delivery, the use of nanomaterials in the oral and respiratory mucosa, targeting hair follicles using nanosystems and the use of 3D printing to develop topical patches.

Robert Isaacs

BSc (Hons) MRCOP

Robert qualified in 2000 from the University of Brighton. He took a post in the NHS and remained there, taking on a specialist role in biomechanics in 2005. From 2005 until 2021 he worked as Lead Podiatrist in Biomechanical therapies, specialising in Paediatric Biomechanics and leading the Musculoskeletal Podiatry team for the West Kent locality.

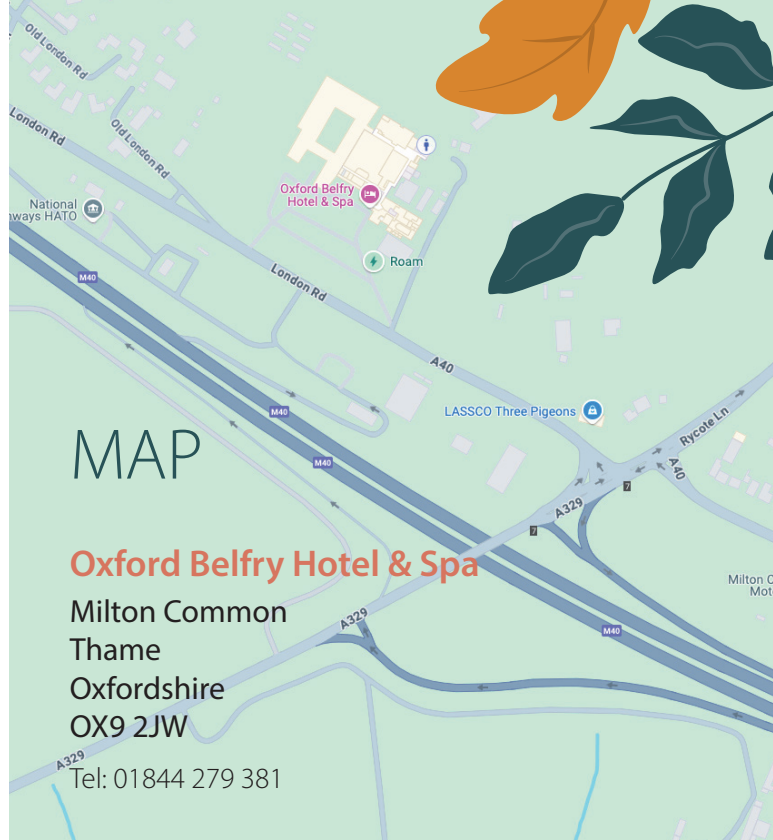
Robert has been involved in the delivery of several podiatry degree programs, including the Podiatry degree from QMU. He has also lectured on the MSc Biomechanics module for the University of Ulster and CESPU (a Portuguese university offering Podiatry). He has been an invited lecturer at the Langer Biomechanics Summer School, the Royal College of Podiatry annual conference, the British Chiropody and Podiatry Association annual conference and the Institute of Chiropody and Podiatry annual conference. He has written for several professional journals and writes a regular column for "ComMenT", the journal for CMT UK (a charity supporting people with Charcot Marie Tooth).

Tracey O'Keeffe

MA, BSc, RN, PGCE, MCFHP MAFHP

SMAE Institute Programme Lead (Dip FH) / Part-time Lecturer for the SMAE Institute BSc (Hons) Podiatry Programme

Tracey has over 30 years' experience as a nurse working through acute and community care, as well as being a SMAE trained FHP for more than 15 years. Throughout her career and practice, she has always been involved in education, with a passion for understanding and translating to others how knowledge impacts patient care and experience. Aside from senior clinical roles, she has been a Senior Lecturer at higher and further education level, Education Lead for a London NHS community trust, and a Fellow at Health Education England. As a part-time lecturer at the SMAE, Tracey is Programme Lead for the FHP Diploma and teaches on the BSc (Hons) Podiatry Degree Programme, Local Anaesthesia and Prescription Only Medicines programmes. As well as this, Tracey continues to teach on nursing programmes as well as being involved in patient-facing education. She is a Mindfulness Teacher, a qualified Coach and works 1-2-1 with people for personal and professional development.



GALA DINNER MENU



STARTER

- 1 Chicken Liver Terrine, toasted brioche and onion chutney
- 2 Prawn & Avocado Cocktail, Bloody Mary mayonnaise, mixed salad and sourdough crisp
- 3 Spiced Sweet Potato Soup, toasted coconut and fresh coriander (V) (VE) (GF)

MAIN

- 1 24Hr Braised Beef, chive mash, honey glazed vegetables and red wine jus (GF)
- 2 Grilled Seabass Fillet, Mediterranean couscous and orange herb dressing
- 3 Butternut Squash, Kale, Harissa and Vegan Cheese Parcel, Pomegranate, orange and pine nut dressing (V) (VE)

DESSERT

1. Raspberry Bakewell Tart and Clotted Cream (V)
2. Dark Chocolate Clementine Tart, Passionfruit coulis and vanilla ice cream (V) (VE)
3. Tropical Fruit Salad (V) (VE) (GF)