

BTS congress 2025, Liverpool

Written report by Amélia Vasconcelos

The 2025 British Toxicology Society Congress was a wonderful event that brought together so many different professionals and academics in toxicology. The event was held between the 7th and the 9th of May in the beautiful city of Liverpool. I would like to thank the BTS committee for awarding me a bursary which allowed me to attend this event.

The event started with a continuing education programme about drug absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion processes (ADME), hosted by four professionals in the field, introducing the audience to pharmacokinetic modelling. This was an exceptional way to kick off the event once it brought together all fields of toxicology whilst providing enough background information to the following presentations on the advances of physiologically-based kinetic (PBK) modelling.

In my opinion, one of the highlights of the congress was the presentation by Christopher Pudney from the University of Bath on the prevalence and dangers of synthetic cannabinoids being sold as cannabis vape liquids, particularly to children and young adults in schools. Pudney not only highlighted the growing issue of controlled substance being easily available online, but also shared the development of a robust analytical instrument capable of detecting tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and “spice” (synthetic cannabinoid) in vape liquids. This talk was part of symposium 2 on the first day of the congress named “Knowledge gaps in e-cigarette toxicology”. This symposium offered a comprehensive overview of what is and is not known about vapes and how despite being a less harmful alternative to traditional smoking, these can still be dangerous to the public. The first day of the congress ended with a fantastic activity hosted by the Network for Early-Stage Toxicologists (NEST). This riddle game brought people together and became a wonderful and relaxed networking opportunity.

On the second day of the conference, symposium 4 on the toxic effects of environmental chemicals on the immune system included the presentation by Marjut Roponen from the University of Eastern Finland. This insightful presentation tied the effects of climate change and our urban lifestyles to higher rates of respiratory disease in children. Roponen proposed that children should be exposed to farm animals and rural environments to strengthen their immune system from a young age, demonstrating how modern lifestyles may have a negative impact in our health.

Finally, the congress was a valuable networking experience, particularly for early career graduates such as myself. The BTS congress included presentations on cutting-edge technology and research into popular trends in all field of toxicology, emphasising its multidisciplinary nature.