

A CLINICIAN'S PERSPECTIVE**2016 MDT Conference of the Americas—Miami, FL***Fiona MacKenzie, Pt, Dip. MDT*

When I was first introduced to the idea of attending the McKenzie International and/or Americas Region Conferences, I had assumed these meetings were reserved solely for Diplomates and/or Faculty Members; exclusive events intended for the elite. At the time, I had recently become Credentialed in MDT and I did not feel that the qualifications of this small town girl from Ontario were adequate enough to allow me to attend. As a result, I passed on the opportunity to travel to Austin, Texas for the 12th McKenzie International Conference hosted in October of 2012.

A year later, I registered for the Diploma MDT Program. Only then (with encouragement) did I feel that I could consider attending the Conference of the Americas in Denver, Colorado in July of 2013. It was here that I experienced all that a MDT conference has to offer. I absolutely LOVED it! I quickly learned that my view of McKenzie International and/or Americas Region Conferences was completely mistaken; They were intended for MDT clinicians of ALL levels! I was quite disappointed in myself for not having attended one of these amazing events earlier.

I made a tough decision to pass on the 13th McKenzie International MDT Conference hosted in Copenhagen, Denmark in September of 2015. I was busy preparing for my Diploma Exam the following month. So, when the opportunity arose to attend the 2016 Conference of the Americas in Miami, Florida, I jumped at it. I might have even been one of the first to register, I was THAT keen. Even if it meant that this red-haired, fair-skinned, snow-loving Canuck would likely swelter in the blazing sun unprotected!

My second MDT conference lived up to my expectations and then some! This year, I was able to celebrate my new designation and quietly spent a moment staring at my nametag. While the 2016 Olympics had already begun and the athletes were in search for a gold medal in Rio, I had already found mine in Miami, Florida.

So what's the lure, you ask? What is it that these conferences can offer us as MDT clinicians? The answer in short - a perfect mix of EVERYTHING!

Academically, the conferences act as an added opportunity to continue your professional development. You'll attend general sessions where some of the brightest researchers and clinicians will present advances in evidence-based practice. In addition, you'll learn about how we can promote the role of MDT within the healthcare environment and review research supporting its use clinically. You'll attend problem-solving workshops where you'll learn directly from numerous Faculty Members of The McKenzie Institute. Their unique approaches and cumulative experience will assist in improving your clinical reasoning strategies and practical application of the MDT Method.

Socially, the conferences are helpful in building an international, professional network among other like-minded clinicians who share your passion towards MDT. You'll also be reunited with previous course instructors, colleagues and classmates. You can be sure to expect many laughs as you reminisce and create new memories!

Culturally, the conferences allow you to explore the world, in addition to the values and customs of each new host venue. And, let's not forget the appeal of new foods and beverages!

Where else can you combine over 10 hours of education with travel AND fun?!?!? Nowhere.

Grab a pen and mark your calendar! Save the date for the 14th McKenzie International Conference to be hosted in San Francisco, California, September 22-24, 2017!