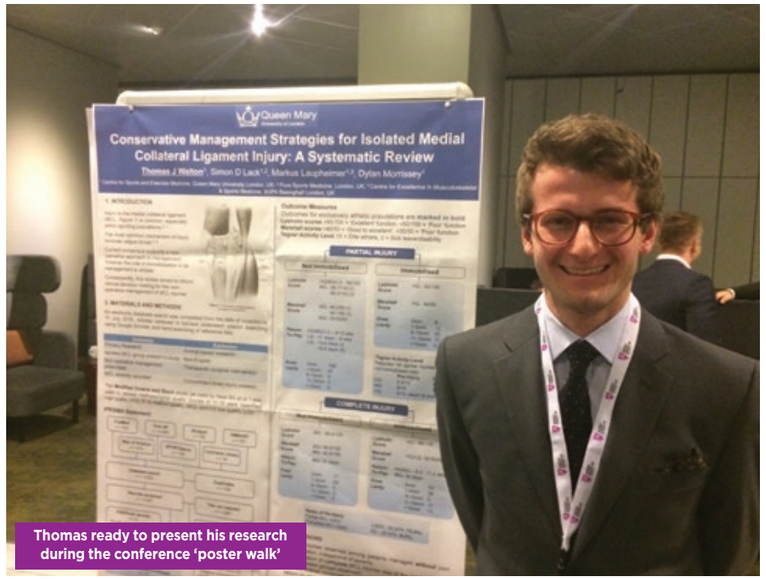

Thomas ready to present his research during the conference 'poster walk'

A packed auditorium awaits the start of a symposium on blood flow restricted exercise in rehabilitation

BASEM External Meeting Sponsorship Award **2016** – ASSOCIATE MEMBER WINNER

Thomas Walton - Fourth Year Medical Student
The Danish Sports Medicine Congress -
"*Treatment and Prevention of Sports Injuries*" -
2nd to 4th February 2017

The musculoskeletal system has always fascinated me, even before I began my studies at medical school. Subsequently, since starting my medical degree in earnest, this curiosity has been further developed into an interest in Orthopaedic surgery. Therefore, when the opportunity arose to complete an intercalated BSc in Sports and Exercise Medicine at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), it was one I was eager to seize.

During the course of my year at QMUL, I completed both a systematic review and a research project as part of my degree. The research question for both of these focused on the non-operative management of isolated medical collateral ligament injuries, and the identification of the most appropriate conservative management strategies. Since graduating, and after much refinement, I was fortunate enough to have my systematic review accepted for presentation at the Danish Sports Medicine Congress 2017, held in the beautiful city of Copenhagen. As a student, the opportunity to present at an international conference was a real privilege, and represented my first tentative steps into the world of academia.

The conference itself is organised annually as a joint venture between the Danish Society of Sports Physical Therapy and the Danish Association of Sports Medicine. The programme is consequently all encompassing, with a formidable range of speakers spread over four parallel sessions for the duration of the event, covering a plethora of topics relevant to physiotherapists, doctors and scientists alike. The conference opened with a talk by Professor Willem van Mechelen on the establishment of sports injury prevention programmes, and highlighted the difficulties associated with implementation, even when the evidence is highly favourable. Indeed, the problem of motivating patients to participate in both prevention and treatment regimes is not simply confined to sports medicine, and this is a dilemma that all healthcare professionals should consider and attempt to resolve.

Over the following two days, I selectively attended various sessions covering Orthopaedic-related research and novel advances in sports medicine. I particularly enjoyed the symposium on blood flow restricted exercise, which is a practice I had no previous experience of. Otherwise known as 'Kaatsu training', this relatively novel method of training has the potential to enhance performance for patients of all activity levels. In addition, during a practical workshop aimed at general practitioners, I learned more sophisticated examination skills for the shoulder.

The poster presentation session at the end of the conference was relatively relaxed and informal; for my first experience of presenting research, this suited me perfectly. I enjoyed discussing my research with many different academics from various countries and backgrounds, who invariably asked pertinent and insightful questions. The perspective afforded through open discussion with like-minded people was a new experience, and highlighted to me the importance of conferences in developing ideas for future research. A particular highlight for me was meeting Dr Bruce Reider, editor in chief of the American Journal of Sports Medicine, and the author of one of the papers included in my review!

Next year, the Danish Sports Medicine Congress will be rebranded as the 'Scandinavian Congress of Medicine and Science in Sports', with the aim of growing into an even larger international event, and I would highly recommend all sports injury specialists consider attending.
My experience this year has helped me develop important skills for my future career, and I am indebted to BASEM and the awards committee for granting me the External Meeting Sponsorship. Without their assistance, this experience would simply not have been possible.

"Since graduating, and after much refinement, I was fortunate enough to have my systematic review accepted for presentation at the Danish Sports Medicine Congress 2017, held in the beautiful city of Copenhagen."

The famous Nyhavn waterfront, shrouded by winter fog