

MACP Award Report

Awardee Name:	Paul MacDonald
Date of Report:	26/09/2025
Name of the Award:	Research Awards Fund 1
Amount awarded:	£1500
What the award was used for:	1. PhD Tuition Fees (Partial Support) : Contribution toward self-funded PhD tuition fees at University of Worcester £750 2. Stakeholder Engagement: Attendance at the Association for the Study of Obesity (ASO) UK Conference in Aberdeen - Registration £150 - Travel (Return rail from Worcester to Aberdeen or equivalent) £150 - One night accommodation (budget hotel or B&B) £100 4. PPI Incentives: Gift vouchers to thank PPI participants (e.g., £25 x 10 participants) £250 5. Dissemination Materials: Poster printing, design support, and plain language summaries for stakeholder sharing £100
Please indicate if you are happy for us to share your report and any photo/picture through our Social Media channels, email to members only and/or in our quarterly newsletter	yes
Summary of how this award or bursary helped you in your career/clinical/academic practice Education Awards • MSc/PgD Awards: 200 words • Level 1 Awards: 500 words • Level 2 Awards: 1000 words • Level 3 Awards: 1500 words Research Awards • Conference Presentation Award: 500 word report • Research Fund 1: 1000 word report	Introduction The Musculoskeletal Association of Chartered Physiotherapists (MACP) Research Award Fund 1 has been instrumental in advancing my doctoral research and supporting my development as a clinical academic physiotherapist. My PhD, conducted at the University of Worcester, aims to explore the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of UK physiotherapists regarding adults living with obesity. The ultimate goal of this research is to develop and validate a measurement tool that will enable the systematic evaluation of physiotherapists' readiness and capability to manage obesity in clinical practice. This work directly contributes to NHS priorities focused on addressing obesity and health inequalities, aligns with the NICE obesity guideline (CG189), and supports the professional development of physiotherapists in tackling complex, population-level health challenges. The £ 1,500 funding was allocated across five categories: contributions to PhD tuition fees, stakeholder engagement through attendance at the Association for the Study of Obesity

• Research Fund 2: 1500 word report • Elsevier and Jane Greening Award: 1500 word report	(ASO) UK Conference, incentives for patient and public involvement (PPI), and dissemination materials. This report details the impact of each aspect and highlights the broader influence of this award on my research trajectory, professional development, and contributions to the physiotherapy community. PhD Tuition Fees (Partial Support) Pursuing a part-time PhD while working full-time in clinical practice presents both logistical and financial challenges. As a self-funded doctoral student, the financial burden of tuition fees is a constant hurdle. The MACP contribution of £750 provided significant relief, allowing me to make steady progress without the distraction of financial strain. This support not only alleviated my personal burden but also demonstrated the MACP's commitment to investing in clinical academic pathways within physiotherapy. By helping to cover my fees, the award affirmed my identity as a physiotherapist-researcher and supported a career trajectory that blends advanced clinical expertise with research leadership. Additionally, this assistance allowed me to focus my time and energy on my studies rather than seeking alternative financial aid. The investment has had a multiplier effect. It enabled continuity in my doctoral studies at a crucial stage, ensuring that timelines were met, ethical approvals were secured, and recruitment strategies for the qualitative phase were implemented without delay. This continuity enhances the likelihood of producing meaningful results that align with the MACP's mission to advance musculoskeletal physiotherapy through research, evidence, and innovation. Stakeholder Engagement – ASO UK Conference, Aberdeen The award allowed me to attend the ASO UK Conference in Aberdeen, covering registration, travel, and accommodation. The conference offered a unique opportunity to engage with the leading UK forum for obesity research and policy, which is directly relevant to my PhD. This experience had a multi-layered impact. Firstly, it broadened my knowledge by exposing me to the latest evidence on obesity management, behaviour change, and public health strategies. This information directly influenced refinements to my PhD's interview schedules, ensuring that my qualitative work aligned with current debates and frameworks. Secondly, it provided invaluable networking opportunities. Engaging in conversations with researchers, clinicians, and policymakers helped foster professional connections that could lead to collaborations, mentorship, and potential platforms for disseminating my work. Additionally, attending the conference strengthened my dual identity as both a physiotherapist and a researcher. Interacting with a multidisciplinary audience emphasised the importance of
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	physiotherapy in obesity management, positioning the profession as vital to cross-sectoral approaches. Finally, my presence at the ASO raised awareness of the MACP's support for this research, highlighting the organisation's role in promoting physiotherapy's contribution to addressing broader public health challenges. PPI Incentives Patient and public involvement (PPI) is essential for conducting high-quality health research, as it ensures that lived experiences significantly influence research design, delivery, and dissemination. The MACP award facilitated the provision of vouchers to PPI participants, recognising and valuing their contributions. The impact of this funding was substantial. By providing tangible incentives, we enhanced the inclusivity and diversity of PPI participation, helping to eliminate barriers for individuals who might otherwise have been unable to contribute. It also built trust, showing that we respect participants' time, expertise, and perspectives. Their input was vital in shaping key elements of my research. They helped refine the language of interview guides to ensure that questions were accessible and sensitive, and they contributed to the development of plain language summaries for dissemination. This collaboration enriched the rigour and relevance of the study, ensuring that it accurately reflects the realities of physiotherapy encounters with adults living with obesity. Importantly, this support advanced the principle of co-production in health research. By meaningfully embedding PPI, the study is more likely to produce outcomes that are both impactful and applicable in practice, thereby facilitating the translation of findings into physiotherapy education, policy, and clinical care. Dissemination Materials Effective dissemination is crucial for ensuring that research findings reach and influence a wide range of audiences. The funding for this initiative covered poster printing, design support, and the creation of plain language summaries. This modest yet essential investment enabled the communication of emerging findings in accessible and engaging formats. Posters allowed for the presentation of preliminary results at internal Trust events and professional meetings, encouraging dialogue and feedback from colleagues. The design support enhanced the clarity and visual appeal of the materials, ensuring that key messages were effectively conveyed to both professional and lay audiences. Plain language summaries have been shared with PPI participants and stakeholder groups, promoting transparency and accountability while ensuring that knowledge extends beyond traditional academic circles. These materials underscore MACP's commitment to bridging the gap between research and practice,
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	demonstrating that even small investments in dissemination can significantly enhance the reach and impact of research outputs. Broader Impacts of the Award While the financial allocations from this award were modest, its overall impact has been significantly larger. It facilitated the continuation of my doctoral studies, enabled meaningful engagement with stakeholders, promoted inclusive public and patient involvement (PPI), and ensured accessible dissemination of research findings—each of which is essential for maintaining the quality and impact of my work. Professionally, the award has solidified my path as a clinical academic leader, positioning me to influence policy, practice, and education in the field of physiotherapy. It has increased my visibility within both the physiotherapy and obesity research communities and strengthened my Trust's commitment to supporting research-active clinicians. On a broader scale, this investment has helped to build capacity within physiotherapy to tackle one of the UK's most pressing health challenges: obesity. By providing me with the necessary tools, experiences, and networks to advance this work, the MACP has supported a project that has the potential for national and international significance. Conclusion The MACP Research Award Fund 1 has provided essential support for my PhD, facilitating progress in covering tuition fees, engaging stakeholders, involving patients and the public, and disseminating research findings. Each of these components has significantly impacted my research, professional development, and contributions to the physiotherapy field. This award highlights the importance of targeted support for early-career professionals, enabling clinical academics to excel. It has directly enhanced the rigor, inclusivity, and visibility of my research, while also advancing the MACP's mission to promote evidence-based musculoskeletal physiotherapy. I am truly grateful for this investment, which has been instrumental in maintaining momentum, increasing impact, and laying a foundation for future contributions to research, education, and practice.
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Picture of awardee/conference/course/ Experience as relevant	