

Report on “ESO Department to Department Visit Program”

By Anne-Katrin Giese

Host institution: Institute for Stroke and Dementia Research, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and Medical Center of the University of Munich

From November 6th to 10th, I visited the Institute for Stroke and Dementia Research (ISD) in Munich. My hosts Professor Martin Dichgans and Doctor Rainer Malik introduced me to the wide range of projects and remarkable researchers, which make the ISD one of the leaders in the field of stroke and dementia research.

Since its inception in 2010 the ISD has grown into a large, comprehensive research center integrating a total of nine research groups, with topics ranging from brain imaging and biomarkers, vascular cognitive impairment to translational stroke and dementia research.

Furthermore, these efforts are augmented by a very active stroke and memory clinic which integrates an advanced clinical trials unit, running several ongoing stroke and vascular dementia-related trials. The existing clinical research infrastructure will be complemented by the opening of a dedicated research MRI research scanner later this summer.

Throughout my visit I had the opportunity to meet with different group leaders and scientists from the ISD. Of foremost interest for me was the *Translational Stroke and Dementia Research Group*, led by Professor Martin Dichgans, whose focus are the molecular, cellular and physiological mechanisms of stroke, with a particular interest in the identification of genes involved in small vessel disease and large artery stroke. I joined group meetings and one-on-one meetings with several members of the research group. Of special interest were the discussions with Doctor Malik on the topic of different genetic analysis, including estimation of heritability through different methods and genetic correlation analyses of various traits. These methods will be very useful to apply to upcoming projects and I very much look forward to collaborate with Doctor Malik in the future.

Additionally, I was also introduced to the *Vascular Cognitive Impairment Research Group* and the *Brain Imaging and Biomarker Group*. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to meet with Doctor Frank Wollenweber and Doctor Anna Kopczak from the clinical team, who showed me the outpatient stroke and dementia clinic with the clinical trials unit, as well as the inpatient neurology ward and stroke unit.

The week was marked by many interesting conversations and I sincerely appreciate the time and effort invested by everyone to make the Department-to-Department-Visit such a fantastic and incredibly useful week. I would like to thank everyone at ISD, especially Professor Dichgans and Doctor Malik for their incredible hospitality. Lastly, my heartfelt thank you also goes to ESO for giving me this wonderful opportunity within the Department-to-Department-Visit Programme.

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