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March 25 – April 5, 2019

REPORT

ESO Department to Department Visit Programme 2019

The two-week exchange in the Department of Neurology of Karolinska University Hospital in Stockholm under the mentorship of Dr. Michael Mazya was an immensely enriching experience both professionally and personally.



The Karolinska University Hospital in Solna is a highly specialized academic hospital, and the only place in Stockholm region that performs interventional treatment for acute ischaemic stroke patients. The new Karolinska hospital building is one of the most modern hospitals in the world, having neurologists moved in less than a year ago, and advocating a unique perspective on the treatment of patients – a value-based healthcare approach and a very much patient-centered care.

As a neurologist, working with acute stroke patients in Vilnius, I was eager to learn how optimising patient flow and implementing novel approach to acute ischaemic stroke treatment could benefit acute stroke patients in Lithuania.

Luckily the two weeks spent shadowing Dr. Michael Mazya were rather different, as the first week I could observe the role of a regional stroke consultant on-call (consultations by phone from 7 emergency hospitals in the region, teleconsultations with ambulances, and acute decision-making for newly admitted patients), whilst the second week was focusing on the duties of a consultant in charge of the neurological intermediate care unit at KUH. The company of Dr. Mazya and his colleagues (both physicians and nurses) made me feel very welcome, as most of the time the staff kindly discussed their daily routines in English, and tried to elucidate the reasoning behind the organizational aspects, and the everyday clinical decision-making.

I was also introduced to the staff of the headquarters of SITS International registry, which is an initiative to provide safe implementation of stroke treatment in routine clinical practice, helping the authorities to monitor new treatments and setting new guidelines. This was important to me as VUH Santaros Clinics have been a part of SITS International ever since Lithuania began employing reperfusion therapy for acute ischaemic stroke patients in 2014.

I am very grateful to Prof. Nils Wahlgren and Assoc. Prof. Niaz Ahmed for giving me an opportunity to learn from some of the best European stroke care practices, and to Dr. Michael Mazya for being such an inspiring mentor and such a welcoming host. The two-week exchange through ESO Department to Department Visit Programme amounted to an inspiring and stimulating experience, and undoubtedly, the lessons learned from colleagues in Stockholm will be of great value in attempting to improve acute stroke care back at home.