

ESO Department to Department Visit Report
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Host Institution: Neurology Department, Bispebjerg Hospital, Copenhagen, Denmark
The visit took place from 14th of June 2021 to 13th of October 2021 (4 months)

After successfully completing my four-month visit at the Stroke Unit of Bispebjerg Hospital in Copenhagen, I was able to draw valuable insight into the Danish Healthcare System.

They say that traveling abroad helps one to get a better view of their own country, and that was certainly the case for me. Through this amazing opportunity, made possible by the ESO Department to Department Visit Programme, I was able to be a part of an exceptional stroke team and to closely observe a state-of-the-art stroke care setting. This prompted me to imagine how things could be done differently back home.

It is a fact that pre-Hospital care is still a work in progress in Greece, especially as far as stroke care is concerned. With the help of professor Hanne Christensen, who was in charge of my clinical rotation schedule during my visit in Copenhagen, I was provided the opportunity to spend time with the ambulance staff and to see how a stroke patient in Denmark is treated from point zero.

Flash forward to the ED, where I was allowed to become a member of the IVT team. There, I noticed how the regional electronic health record system facilitated the medical team's effort to shorten the door-to-needle time, by providing them with access to the patients' medical records before they arrive at the hospital. At the same time, the Bispebjerg setup of the ED examination room, located right next to both an MRI and a CT scanner, dedicated to IVT patients, allowed doctors to apply the Wake-Up protocol and treat patients faster.

Upon admission, patients were treated in the specialised stroke unit, which was where I spent the largest part of my visit. During that time, I was able to observe several differences in the approach of ischemic stroke and intracranial haemorrhage patients between Bispebjerg Hospital and my home department.

A neurosonology unit was also located in the acute ward, where I was granted the opportunity to be trained by experienced colleagues in the field. I remain grateful to Dr Rosenbaum for allowing me to draw insights from his extended experience and to engage in conversations about the pitfalls in the ultrasound examination of stroke patients.

My visit also included spending some time in the in-hospital rehabilitation ward, under the supervision of Dr Meden. Given that a dedicated in-hospital rehabilitation ward currently does not exist in Greece, it was greatly beneficial for me to see it in action and to become a member of its multidisciplinary team.

Before leaving Copenhagen, I was further allowed to visit the neighbouring hospital Rigshospitalet, which provides endovascular treatment for stroke patients of the Capital Region of Denmark. There, I witnessed the last stage of acute stroke care, tagging along with the neurologists in charge of evaluating possible thrombectomy patients and observing the neurointerventionists' work during a thrombectomy.

My stay concluded with a visit to the municipal rehabilitation facility, an institution yet to be widely available in Greece. Once again, I felt welcome and was offered the chance to observe their work, thus further enriching the ideas I am hoping to bring back home.

The rather busy schedule of my visit to Denmark also included a retrospective research project, under which I collaborated with Dr Louisa Christensen. Towards the end of my stay, I was asked

to deliver a presentation of my work in the department's annual Research and Development Day, which served as the best possible way to conclude a particularly fruitful and exciting visit.

Overall, this has been an unforgettable experience that has already had a significant impact on the ongoing endeavours of my home department's stroke team. Inspired by my visit, my colleagues at Eginition Hospital and I organised and successfully carried out an IVT/EVT simulation seminar implementing the latest guidelines in our home department in Athens.

I am grateful to ESO for making my visit to Denmark possible and equally so to my colleagues in the stroke unit of Bispebjerg, for truly making me feel part of the team. I hope we meet again!