

4th Baltic Sea Summer School on Epilepsy (BSSSE4): Report

The 4th BSSSE took place in Granavollen (Norway) from June 6 – 11, 2010, under the direction of the undersigned, and with Dr. Mameniškienė of Vilnius as programme secretary and Ms Novotny from the EUREPA office as organisational secretary. The application rate was good, so the course could be held with 40 participants, i.e. the maximal possible attendance. These represented 23 different countries.

The faculty consisted of 16 persons, 6 from Norway (Johannessen, Johannessen Landmark, Kostov, Larsson, Lossius and Taubøll), 3 from Denmark (Høgenhaven, Nikanorova and Wolf), 2 from Sweden (Malmgren and Tomson), and 1 each from Finland (Kälviäinen), Germany (Stephani), Lithuania (Mameniškienė), Poland (Mazurkiewicz- Bełdzińska) and Russia (Guekht).

The format was strongly interactive with only 2 frontal lectures per day and otherwise study in small groups (tutorials, case-oriented learning and discussion of submitted cases). Instead of presenting own cases, participants had the option of presenting own research for plenary discussion which was the preference of 6 students.

The topics covered by the faculty included

- Pregnancy and breast-feeding
- Endocrinology in epilepsy
- AED pharmacology
- EEG (interictal and ictal)
- Intensive monitoring
- Neuroimaging in epilepsy
- Status epilepticus
- Recent progress in epilepsy genetics
- Epilepsy and comorbidities
- Differential diagnosis of syndromes
- Epilepsy or non-epilepsy
- Non-epileptic events in children and adolescents
- Seizures in children associated with falls
- Withdrawal of AEDs
- When AED treatment fails
- Challenges in the treatment of epileptic encephalopathies in childhood
- Management of epilepsy in specific groups of patients
- The new ILAE definition of pharmacoresistance
- Socio-cultural history of epilepsy

As a new feature of this 4th Summer School, particular focus was given to possibilities of using the BSSSEs as an instrument to generate transnational research in and beyond the Baltic Sea region. Thus, a small group of participants had been selected because of an expressed interest in studying specific aspects of social perceptions of patients with different types of epilepsy. A special interest ad hoc session resulted and was attended by almost all participants which was very encouraging.

In the relaxed atmosphere of a small convention centre in a beautiful landscape of hills and lakes north of Oslo, an excellent spirit of intense study and international exchange developed rapidly. The mostly young audience (mean age of 35 years,

range 25 - 53) appreciated the interactive course format, as can clearly be seen from the course evaluation. This gave again outstanding results, with case-oriented learning once more receiving the highest marks.

The majority of participants attended with bursaries, for which the organisers are very grateful to

- UCB Nordic
- ILAE Commission of European Affairs
- Danish Epilepsy Society
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Epileptologie (German Chapter of the ILAE)
- Norwegian Epilepsy Society
- Peter & Jytte Wolf Foundation for Epilepsy
- Desitin Norway

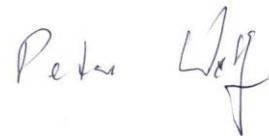
Special thanks go to the Norwegian Epilepsy Society for hosting the Summer School and giving sponsorship to the social programme. The Norwegian Epilepsy Center in Sandvika and the Rehabilitation Centre Røysumtunet very kindly invited the participants to visits where they presented their work. We thank Ms. Johannessen who perfectly organised all local transport to and from Granavollen.

Great thanks are due to a brilliant and dedicated faculty and, last but not least, to an eager and committed audience.

BSSSE 5 with a new programme is planned for June 19-24, 2011 in Sopot (Poland) with the Polish League against Epilepsy as hosts, and Maria Mazurkiewicz-Beldzińska and Peter Wolf as Co-Directors.



Svein Johannessen



Peter Wolf