

The Baltic Sea Summer Schools on Epilepsy



Report on the 7th BSSSE

The Seventh BSSSE took place in Viimsi close to Tallinn, Estonia, on August 18 – 23, 2013. Our local host was the Estonian League against Epilepsy represented by Dr. Sulev Haldre of Tartu.

The course was attended by 42 participants from 23 countries: Azerbaijan, Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay and Uzbekistan. If nationalities are considered, Ecuador, Germany, Iran and Spain can be added. The average age of the participants was 32.2 years, which reflects well the primary target group of this summer school, young post-graduates and PhD students.

The faculty consisted of 14 teachers from the Baltic Sea region: 6 from Denmark (Beniczky, Hjalgrim, Nikanorova, Klitgaard, Sabers, Wolf), 3 from Germany (Köhling, Stefan, Wellmer), 2 from Norway (Johannessen, Johannessen Landmark) and one each from Estonia (Haldre) Lithuania (Mameniškienė) and Finland (Pitkänen). They covered the following topics:

Clinical epileptology

- Symptomatic epilepsies in adults
- Symptomatic epilepsies mimicking idiopathic epilepsies
- Subjective and objective seizure symptoms
- Reproductive aspects in epilepsy
- Genetics and epilepsy
- Remission in adult patients
- Convulsive and non-convulsive status epilepticus
- Psychiatric comorbidities

Diagnostics

- Seizure semiology and anatomy
- Epilepsy diagnostics: what is useful and necessary?
- Advanced diagnostic approaches
- Epilepsies and non-epileptic conditions of childhood: differential diagnosis
- Video quiz: epilepsy or not?

Therapy

- AED pharmacology: Newest antiepileptic drugs and Orphan drugs
- Use of acute drugs in epilepsy management
- Radiosurgery and radiotherapy of epilepsy

Basic aspects

- Functional neuroanatomy
- The present understanding of “generalized” and focal ictogenesis

Research

- New approaches in preclinical AED development
- From mechanisms to biomarkers for epileptogenesis
- Ontogenetic excitability changes

Introductory courses

The optional early morning introductory seminars have rapidly become a very popular feature of the BSSSE, attended by virtually everybody. The two highly appreciated series of a) EEG and b) Imaging in Epilepsy were this year supplemented by a series on the praxis of pharmacotherapy which will be further refined next year.

Transnational research around the Baltic Sea and beyond: in a plenary session transnational projects were discussed which BSSSE participants have the possibility to join.

The study methods at the BSSSE are strongly interactive with only 2, maximum 3 frontal lectures per day and otherwise tutorials (including journal clubs), case-oriented study and discussion of submitted own cases in variable small groups. 10 participants chose the alternative to case reports, i.e. presentations of own research for discussion in the plenary.

The course evaluation confirms once again the students' high appreciation of the interactive methods, where case-oriented study and the early morning seminars received the highest marks.

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

- Commission of European Affairs of the ILAE
- Danish Epilepsy Society
- Estonian League against Epilepsy
- German Society for Epileptology
- Norwegian Epilepsy Society
- Society of Epileptologists of Lithuania
- Peter & Jytte Wolf Foundation for Epilepsy
- UCB Nordic

BSSSE 8 with a different programme will take place close to Vilnius (Lithuania) on August 3 – 8, 2014, with the Society of Epileptologists of Lithuania as hosts, and Rūta Mameniškienė and Peter Wolf as Co-Directors.



Sulev Haldre



Peter Wolf