



The Baltic Sea Summer Schools on Epilepsy

Report on the 5th BSSSE

The Fifth BSSSE took place in Sopot, Poland, on June 19 – 24, 2011. Our hosts, the Polish Society of Epileptology, had found an excellent place, a small, unpretentious hotel on a dune above the beach of the Baltic Sea, with all necessary facilities and a helpful staff. The conditions were ideal for participants and faculty to get together and have lively exchanges over the entire duration of the Summer School.

The course was slightly overbooked with 43 participants from 15 countries: Denmark (3), Estonia (1), Georgia (4), Germany (3), India (1), Indonesia (1), Iran (4), Lithuania (7), Moldova (2), Poland (8), Portugal (2), Russia (4), Sri Lanka (1), UK (1) and Uzbekistan (1). The average age was 32.2 years, and for most of them it was a new and exciting experience to be with an international peer groups for the best of a week.

The faculty consisted of 15 persons from the Baltic Sea region: 4 from Poland (Jedrzejczak, Mazurkiewicz-Beldzińska, Slawek, Steinborn), 3 each from Denmark (Høgenhaven, Nikanorova, Wolf), Germany (Lerche, Stephani, Wellmer), and Norway (Johannessen, Johannessen Landmark, Kostov) and 1 each from Lithuania (Mameniškienė) and Sweden (Malmgren). They covered the following topics:

Clinical epileptology

- Genetics of the epilepsies
- Seizure semiology in children and in adults
- Myoclonic seizures and myoclonic epilepsies: diagnostic challenges
- Movement disorders and epilepsy – differential diagnosis
- Seizures provoked by external stimuli
- Psychogenic non-epileptic seizures
- Epilepsy and co-morbidities in children
- Prognosis of idiopathic childhood epilepsies
- Catastrophic epilepsies

Diagnostics

- Use and abuse of EEG
- EEG in the intensive care unit
- Neuroimaging: state of the art in diagnostics and developments in research

Therapy

- AED pharmacology (I + II)
- When to start AED treatment
- Acute drug administration as part of treatment strategies
- Surgical treatment of epilepsy: where, when and how?
- Indications of epilepsy surgery in the first year of life
- Neurostimulation as a treatment option: VNS and other methods

The study methods at the BSSSE are strongly interactive with only 2 frontal lectures per day and otherwise tutorials, case-oriented learning und discussion of submitted own cases in variable small groups. 9 participants opted for the variant instead of case reports to present own research for discussion in the plenary. This resulted in an interesting cluster of themes concerned with epilepsy genetics which was taken up again in an evening brainstorm discussion on transnational research possibilities. Here participants can invite others to research cooperation.

A new feature was an optional early morning EEG seminar for beginners where $\frac{3}{4}$ of the students participated.

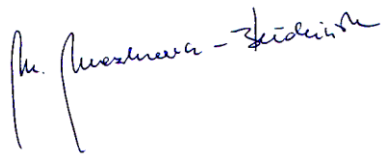
The course evaluation showed again the students' appreciation of the interactive course format, where once more case-oriented learning, the most interactive feature, received the highest marks.

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

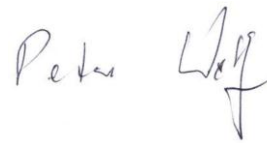
- UCB Nordic
- Danish Epilepsy Society
- German Epilepsy Society
- Norwegian Epilepsy Society
- Polish Society of Epileptology
- Peter & Jytte Wolf Foundation for Epilepsy
- Cyberonics

It is a great pleasure to thank the Polish Society of Epileptology for being perfect hosts who took care of all local arrangements including a wonderful beach party with original folk music and country dances. Special thanks are due to a brilliant and committed faculty and an eager and dedicated audience.

BSSSE 6 with a different programme including some focus on translational research will take place in Rostock (Germany) on July 8 – 13, 2012, with the German Epilepsy Society as hosts, and Rüdiger Köhling and Peter Wolf as Co-Directors.



Maria Mazurkiewicz-Betdzińska



Peter Wolf