

The Baltic Sea Summer Schools on Epilepsy



Report on the 6th BSSSE

The Sixth BSSSE took place in Rostock, Germany, on July 8 – 13, 2012. Our local host on behalf of the German Society for Epileptology was Prof. Rüdiger Köhling, Director of the Physiological Institute of Rostock University. 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 attended by 40 participants from 21 countries: Azerbaijan (3), Croatia (2), Czech Republic (1), Cuba (1), Denmark (4), Egypt (1), Estonia (2), Georgia (3), Germany (2), India (2), Lithuania (7), Moldova (1), Netherlands (2), Nigeria (1), Norway (1), Poland (1), Russia (1), Sweden (1), Ukraine (2) UK (1) and Uzbekistan (1). The average age was 33.6 years, and for most of them it was a new and exciting experience to be with an international peer group for the best of a week.

The faculty consisted of 15 persons from the Baltic Sea region: 5 from Germany (Köhling, Lehmann, Stefan, Stephani, Wellmer) 4 from Denmark (Beniczky, Nikanorova, Klitgaard, Wolf), 2 each from Norway (Johannessen, Johannessen Landmark) and Sweden (Ben-Menachem, Kokaia) and one each from Lithuania (Mameniškienė) and Finland (Helmy). They covered the following topics:

Clinical epileptology

- Seizure semiology in children and in adults
- Epilepsy and language lateralization
- Exogenous modification of ictogenesis
- Psychiatric comorbidities

Diagnostics

- Imaging in epilepsy diagnostics and research
- The EEG in epilepsy today
- EMG in neurophysiological investigation of epilepsy
- Magnetoencephalography in epilepsy

Therapy

- AED pharmacology (I + II)
- Timing of AED administration
- Epilepsy surgery today
- Neurostimulation: VNS and other methods

Research

- New approaches in preclinical AED development
- In vitro and in vivo models of epilepsy: basic mechanisms
- Translational genetic and stem cell approaches
- Regulation of pH and neonatal seizures

Introductory courses

In response to last year's success with an optional introductory EEG course, BSSSE 6 offered one course on EEG and in parallel another one on imaging. It turned out that most students would have preferred a schedule where they could attend both courses. This will be adjusted in next year's BSSSE.

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

The study methods at the BSSSE are strongly interactive with only 2 frontal lectures per day and otherwise tutorials, case-oriented study and discussion of submitted own cases in variable small groups. 6 participants opted for the alternative to case reports, i.e. presentation of own research for discussion in the plenary.

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

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

- UCB Nordic
- Commission of European Affairs of the ILAE
- Danish Epilepsy Society
- German Epilepsy Society
- Norwegian Epilepsy Society
- Peter & Jytte Wolf Foundation for Epilepsy
- Cyberonics

BSSSE 7 with a different programme with more focus on pediatric issues will take place close to Tallinn (Estonia) on August 18 – 23, 2013, with the Estonian Epilepsy Society as hosts, and Sulev Haldre and Peter Wolf as Co-Directors.



Rüdiger Köhling



Peter Wolf