

Final report

of Anna Borushko,

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For first several weeks of my stay I just observed Department's work from inside and how it was organized. The Department provides diagnostics and treatment of different allergic diseases. There are many types of activities performed by different members of working team. Senior doctors consult patients and supervise interns' work, perform research and provide education. Interns and students mainly occupied with the performance of skin and provocation testing with drugs and food, venom immunotherapy, but also visit consultations of senior colleagues and do a lot of preparation and paper work, almost everyone is involved into research activities. Every Wednesday there is a staff meeting for discussion of difficult and interesting cases.

For the skin and/or provocation drug or food testing patients are hospitalized for one day (that was new for me, since we have nor the same in our country, neither in other neighbourhood Russia or Ukraine). Each week there are 3 days for drug allergy work-up, the other 2 days for food allergy work-up; next week the order inverses: 2 days for drug, 3 for food tests. I've attended and participated mainly activities linked with the drug allergy work-up and its preparation.

Working day usually started from 7.30 am, when interns come to prepare drug solutions for tests. At 8 am we had a discussion of the planned patients' visits, placing accents on most dangerous moments needed more rigorous surveillance. Every day the team tested from 5 to 14 (Me=10) patients, doing both skin testing in several steps and gradual provocation. After final assessment patients received explanations of the result. Then doctors proceeded with discharge documentation and preparation of next patients' visits till 5-7 pm.

After first month I started to participate both in preparation and performance of skin tests (prick, intradermal, patch) with different types of drugs, drug provocations and their assessment. Also I partially participated in planning of patients' visits and discharge documentation. Every week I also attended consultations of the senior doctors who assessed first patients and decided whether patient should undergo drug testing.

During my stay there were assessed 303 patients with skin and provocation tests.

More than a half (51%) of the skin tests were performed with the beta-lactam antibiotics, 22% were with the contrast media agents, the last part – with different types of other drugs (incl. non-beta-lactam antibiotics, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), local anaesthetics, corticoids, biologicals, etc.). Nearly the same picture was with the provocation tests: 56% were done for beta-lactams, 19% for NSAIDs, 8% for non-beta-lactam antibiotics, 4% for corticoids, 13% for others. Positive provocation results were 3.6%.

For two days I've visited also food allergy testing (it was very useful experience for me, since in Belarus we also don't test patients with the same way in our country). So I observed how to deal with food allergens preparation and performance of the tests and its assessment. For the first time I encountered food desensitisation in adult with milk, observed how to support and upgrade desensitization in children to different food allergens.

Except intensive clinical activity the Department performs regular educational meetings. Each Monday starts at 8 am with the literature discussion on different allergologic topics or reports from doctors/interns/students working in the Department; on last Monday of my stay I also did a report - on de-labelling of beta-lactam allergy. It was very nice how colleagues accepted my English-speaking report (since with French I'm not so fluent).

I also was very lucky to visit free of charge courses for French allergists (on specific immunotherapy 19-20/12/2019 and on drug allergy 9-10/1/2020) at Montpellier University. Professor Demoly and some senior doctors (Jean Luc Bourrain, Davide Caimmi and Anca Chiriac) made perfect presentations. So I also had a possibility to see how post-graduate study is organized.

During my stay in France there was World Allergy Congress in Lyon (December 12-14), where Professor Demoly was an organizer and co-chair. I asked Professor if I can visit it and got a permission. It was my first time at WAC. So I enjoyed such a possibility to see and to listen to best allergy experts. That attendance didn't affect my Fellowship, since most of the Department clinical work for that period was paused.

In February ThermoFisher Scientific representative has organized a one-hour seminar on molecular allergology for interns, so I also accepted an invitation.

Research on drug allergy in the Department has a broad spectrum of activities. So Anca Chiriac, one of the senior doctors, proposed me to join some projects. I was involved into preparation of the abstract to the EAACI Congress-2020 ("Diagnostic performance of serial serum tryptase measurement to differentiate allergic from non-allergic reaction among patients with perioperative hypersensitivity reaction"). We have also prepared and submitted an abstract for Drug Allergy Meeting -2020 ("Gadolinium-Based Contrast Agents: 18 Confirmed Cases During 7-Year Period In DAHD-Cohort"), but DHM was cancelled due to the COVID pandemic. In May a team of co-authors has submitted to "JACI in Practice" a paper "Hypersensitivity to gadolinium-based contrast agents: a single-center retrospective analysis over 7 years".

A big part of success of my stay belongs to Anca Chiriac. She was very attentive and helpful to me, even before my arrival. She provided me links where I could find an apartment, assisted with the documentation for visa (Belarusians have to obtain Schengen visas to visit EU countries). It was very easy to stay in contact with her and get answers on drug allergy. Anca has organized and controlled most of the work I was involved in. Every time she found a possibility to spend her time explaining some particularities of drug allergic reactions and interesting cases. I also had a possibility to attend her practical seminar on anaphylaxis for department nurses, so that was also very useful and interesting for me as an educator. Due to her assistance I also had a possibility to see the work of DAHD (Drug Allergy and Hypersensitivity Database), and to join online discussion platform on drug allergy cases between French-speaking doctors on AdviseMedica.com. It was great to learn from her.

To summarise, it was very fruitful and intensive period for me. I could say I've seen another world. For the first time I worked in such an international team (since at the Department worked interns and doctors from different parts of the world). It was a great experience for me, I miss those colleagues and these days. And I'm very thankful to everybody who made it possible for me. And most of all I'm grateful to the Professor Demoly, who has organized such a great team work at his Department and allowed me to visit it. It was enjoyable to see how consistently Department works and that it makes such a great deal to diagnose and to treat allergic patients.

I'm very grateful to the EAACI that continues to support pursuit of knowledge of Junior Members.

For now in Belarus there is a tremendous number of patients with COVID-19, so most of hospitals in our country treat only COVID patients, including my clinic. I hope when pandemic will stop and our hospitals return to its usual activity, my experience in the Department of Professor Demoly could be implemented into our Belarusian clinical practice for the benefit of our patients.