

ECNP Research Internship

8th-21st December, 2016

Institute of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy

Technische Universität Dresden (TUD)

Intern: Alicja Juskiene, PhD student, psychologist,
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Host: Prof. dr. Hans-Ulrich Wittchen
Institute of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy, TUD, Germany

Research Internship at TUD was inspiring and valuable experience. The program for my 2 weeks internship was very well organized and adjusted to my interests (thanks goes to excellent coordinator, PhD student Judith Schafer). I am happy that I could share this experience with another ECNP intern at that time Ekaterina Berdzenishvili from Georgia.

First of all, I deepened my understanding in both research organization and delivery. I had the opportunity to be introduced to various research projects at the Institute of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy (e.g. GAD-fmrt, PROTECT, BeMind) and at the Chair of the Biopsychology at the Department of Psychology. I attended fMRI assessment which gave me an insight how fMRI assessment is delivered, what kind of scientific hypotheses are tested and what tests are used. Moreover, I observed some cognitive testing, I was introduced with cognitive test THINC-it[®] for screening cognitive dysfunction in patients with depression and I got familiar with Composite International Diagnostic Interview. I had also practical workshops such as introduction to literature search, academic writing and publishing, consultation concerning statistical analyzes what gave me useful tips how to improve my academic writing skills.

Beside that the most useful were the meetings and academic discussions with my mentor prof. with Hans-Ulrich Wittchen, prof. Katja Beesdo-Baum, prof. Clemens Kirschbaum and colloquium where I gave a talk on my research topic. The feedback and questions I got during colloquium and during meetings with professors help me formulate new hypotheses and questions for my current and future research.

Furthermore, from clinical perspective I have a chance to visit Outpatient Psychotherapy Department of the Institute where the chair of the clinic prof. dr. Jurgen Hoyer introduced us with the organization of department, psychotherapy delivery forms and some randomized controlled trials testing novel and improved forms of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). He kindly answered a lot of my questions because I am CBT psychotherapist and I am particularly interested in CBT practice as well as in CBT effectiveness research. Moreover, during my last internship day I had a chance to visit Psychiatry hospital where prof. Michael Bauer and his team showed us department and introduced with the ongoing researches on: cristal meth (dr. Maximilian Pilhatsch), suicide (Dr. Ute Lewitzka), bipolar disorder and smartphone project (dr. Emanuel Severus).

Overall, this intensive internship broaden my knowledge and gave me insight into the ways scientific research works in the global world.

