

EAACI Clinical Fellowship

Final Report 2018

Name: Bárbara Kong Cardoso

Host institution: Allergology Unit at Hôpital Arnaud de Villeneuve - University Hospital of Montpellier, France

Home Institution: Immunoallergology Department – Hospital de S. Bernardo, Centro Hospitalar de Setúbal, Portugal

Duration of fellowship: 3 months; September – November 2018

Project title: "Optimizing Protocols in Drug Hypersensitivity".

The EAACI Clinical Fellowship Program gave me the great opportunity to spend three months in the Allergology Unit in the University Hospital of Montpellier. The aim of my fellowship was to improve and increase my knowledge in the drug allergy field. My goal was to participate actively in the everyday clinical work and on different projects namely on the “Optimizing Protocols in Drug Hypersensitivity” project.

This report will shortly describe the organization of my clinical fellowship and of all the activity performed during my stay in Montpellier. I will explain how I achieved my initial defined goals and conclude with a brief reflection on the global experience of the fellowship.

The clinical activity of this Allergology Unit was divided in two great domains - the Day Clinic and the out-patients consultations. From the beginning I was fully integrated into the unit’s dynamic, I was part of the medical team responsible for every procedure required for the allergy workup that took place in the Day Clinic.

Being this unit very dedicated to drug allergy, most of the days of the Day Clinic agenda were occupied with drug allergy tests - approximately 40 to 50 patients per week. I was involved in all clinic activities including: the preparation and performance of all diagnostic procedures – skin test (patch, prick and intradermal) and drug provocation test (oral, subcutaneous and intravenous); the management of reactions and in the patient’s hospital discharge procedures.

Every clinical case proposed to drug tests were closely studied by the medical team and discussed with the responsible senior doctor in small meetings. At these meetings the younger doctors had the chance to learn and clarify practical concepts related to the patients hospitalized in the Day Clinic.

Regarding out-patients consultations, there are General Allergology as well as Drug Allergy and Perioperative Allergy focused consultations. I had the great opportunity to attend the Drug Allergy consultations performed by Professor Demoly and the Perioperative Allergy consultations performed by Dr. Chiriac. I deepened my knowledge in the detailed collection of anamnesis and in the correct selection of the following test to perform.

At the beginning of every week a Team Meeting took place. In this meeting different topics of immunology and allergology were discussed and the summary of clinical cases or recently published articles were presented.

Every Wednesday a Drug Allergy Meeting occurred which focused on the clinical cases of patients observed in the out-patient consultation, Day Clinic or hospitalization. The clinical cases analyzed in these meetings are chosen for its complexity (i.g. multiple or uncommon involved drugs, severe or unusual clinical manifestations) in which the input and experience of all the team improved the patient outcome. With a careful and practical look to every case, these meetings were great learning moments.

As consequence of recent research using the Drug Allergy and Hypersensitivity Database (DAHD) new optimized protocols have been implemented in this Allergy Unit. During my fellowship I was involved in the application of these new protocols, contributing mainly in the clinical evaluation of the patients, in the performance of skin and drug provocation tests as well in the management of any reactions that may have occurred.

As result of my participation in this project, two papers are being written in which the EAACI Clinical Fellowship will be mentioned when the final work is submitted.

Since this unit activity is not limited to Drug Allergy, I was able to dedicate some time to other fields of allergology. I improved my knowledge in the Food Allergy and Hymenoptera Venom Allergy fields and performed the respective necessary allergy workup test (skin tests and oral provocation test) and treatment (immunotherapy with hymenoptera venom using rush and cluster protocols).

Furthermore, during my time in Montpellier, I had the opportunity to participate in the “Journées Anaphylaxie Pratique” (Montpellier - 5 & 6 October) and in the “XIII èmes Rencontres D’Alergologie” (Narbonne – 16 & 17 November).

The EAACI Clinical Fellowship was an extremely valuable learning experience that with no doubt enriched my medical training.

I deepened my knowledge and improved my skills in drug hypersensitivity. With the opportunity to learn from more than 500 clinical cases, I developed the capacity in analyzing drug allergy cases from a practical point of view. I was able to perfect and learn new techniques necessary in the allergy workup.

Working with this highly skilled team gave me also the possibility to acquire some knowledge regarding scientific writing, systematic revisions and statistical analysis. This motivating fellowship allied with the clinical challenge that I encountered in drug allergy confirmed my interest in this area.

Besides all the expertise related to allergology that I gained in this fellowship, the contact with a different hospital organization and a medical system of another country was also very enriching.

I must thank the medical team, Professor Pascal Demoly, Dr. Anca Chiriac, Dr. Davide Caimmi, Dr. Jean Luc Bourrain, Dr. Luciana Tanno, Dr. Linnea Ung and the allergology interns, that very kindly welcomed me. This team helped me to fully achieve my objectives and to turn this stay into a very rewarding professional and personal experience.

Bárbara Kong Cardoso