

## 2023 ISPAD “Allan Drash” Clinical Fellowship Report

**Recipient:** Emine Ayça Cimbek, MD- Turkey

**Duration:** 6 weeks (April 10<sup>th</sup>- May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

**Host center:** Oslo University Hospital- Diabetes Center

**Mentor:** Lars Krogvold, MD, PhD

### Introduction

My home center, Karadeniz Technical University Medical Faculty, Department of Pediatric Endocrinology, Trabzon, Turkey, is a referral center on the northeast coast of Turkey, serving patients from 6 cities in this region of Anatolia. We take care of hundreds of children and adolescents with diabetes and endocrinologic disorders. My main goals for the program at Oslo University Hospital were to increase my knowledge about setting up and running a multidisciplinary diabetes team, see the most up-to-date approaches in diabetes management, improve my skills in new technologies, and gather deeper insights into diabetes research. Thankfully I’m glad to express that I feel that they are fulfilled. Despite the limited duration, I had the opportunity to participate in both clinical and research activities during the program.

### Activities

Oslo University Hospital Diabetes Program is a perfect example of multidisciplinary diabetes care, including physicians, nurses, dietitians, a social worker, a psychologist, and a secretary. I became familiar with the hospital Ullevål Sykehus and the team on my first days in Oslo. I met my mentor Dr. Lars Krogvold and discussed my ISPAD Allan Drash Fellowship learning objectives. Not only he but also the other members of the team warmly welcomed me.

During my visit, I attended various diabetes and endocrinology clinics with Dr. Lars Krogvold, an inspiring figure in this field with his research, clinical work, and personality. I also attended clinics with nice doctors, Sissel Birgitte Sørensen, Ingvild Menes Sørensen, and Hanna Dis Margeirsdottir, where we had the chance to share knowledge. Physicians at Oslo University Hospital mainly provide outpatient services several days a week and perform research or other hospital work on the other days. We saw 4-5 patients a day during the outpatient clinic days. I was exposed to different technologies in clinics, including various pumps and sensors. We analyzed and discussed in detail each patient's pump/continuous glucose monitoring data with the patient and his/her family. I learned that the chance for patients that the costs of insulin pump systems and glucose sensors are covered by insurance in Norway was established in recent years. With the recent advances and regulations

regarding the health care system for children with diabetes in my country, I believe that diabetes technologies will soon be more available. It was impressive to see that most families could manage the technology data. I had the opportunity to establish a direct dialogue with patients and their families. In the outpatient clinic, the physicians and other team members all have interviews with the patients individually, and patients are followed up according to a regular, intense schedule established by the team. In one of the weekly meetings, I had the chance to learn more about this schedule and observed the discussion that it worked well. I attended nurse-led clinics and saw that all team members were as capable as each other and tried to give the same message to the patient and family. I worked with lovely nurses Anne Karin Måløy, Pernille Gundersen, Siv Janne Kummernes. I attended several pump trainings with the team, patients, and families. It was impressive that the team, especially Dr. Lars Krogvold, was very interested in the various psychological aspects of pediatric diabetes.

I also observed that the team was happy to experience serving children and adolescents from different cultures, ages one to twenty years. I learned more about managing exercise in type 1 diabetes as most children and adolescents were sporters. My knowledge about dietary management of diabetes flourished during clinics. I think that all these efforts provide the excellent glycemic control the clinic has achieved. I also attended daily inpatient rounds with Dr. Lars Krogvold or the responsible attending physician when a patient was newly diagnosed in the center. I participated in diabetes education in the wards.

There was a weekly Diab-endo meeting, which was attended by the team to discuss the cases admitted in the ward and the challenging issues. In one of the weekly meetings near the end of my visit, I gave a presentation on the clinical and research experiences of my home center and team in Trabzon, Turkey, and the activities of the Turkish National Pediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes Society. I was happy to mention the improved healthcare system in my country. On another day, I also presented a research article in one of these meetings.

We often discussed learning points and possible research projects with Dr. Lars Krogvold during my stay. We had a chance to prepare a case report together. Although the main aim of this program is to improve the clinical expertise in pediatric diabetes, I had the opportunity to attend several research meetings at Ullevål Sykehus, led by Prof. Torild Skrivarhaug. Researchers Nicolai A. Lund-Blix and Maryam Saeed presented their qualified large-scale research on diabetes. I had the chance to observe the hard work of the team of the Norwegian Diabetes Registry. I was lucky to attend another research meeting at Oslo University Diabetes Center led by Professor Kåre I. Birkeland, where Dr. Lars Krogvold gave a lecture on how to write an article. He enabled me to attend an international diabetes symposium, where he presented the results of their fascinating DIVID Intervention Study with Senior

Professor Knut Dahl-Jørgensen and a local meeting on the 100<sup>th</sup> year of insulin. In these meetings, I had the chance to increase my knowledge, sharing experiences with other physicians.

I'm delighted and surprised to learn I've been the first ISPAD Allan Drash fellow of this great center in beautiful Oslo. In light of the experiences I gained during this fellowship, I believe that our team's and center's work and service for children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes will improve to provide a better life for them and their families. Although it has been a very short time since the completion of my fellowship, I had a chance to make a presentation in my home center regarding this program, and we've already decided to make some revisions related to our services and approach to achieve better glycemic control.

### **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank the whole Diabetes team at Oslo University Hospital for their hospitality, kindness, and cooperation. During my stay, I went to this center every day with joy and enthusiasm, not only because of my passion for diabetes but because of this great center's atmosphere, established by Dr. Lars Krogvold and the team. All of them have helped me in learning various aspects of diabetes technologies. I am grateful to Dr. Lars Krogvold, who was always ready to help and friendly during my stay. He tried every chance to get us involved in research/clinical meeting/education to ensure we got as much as possible from this fellowship. I learned a lot from our discussions during clinics and rounds. He diligently translated the interviews into English and encouraged the team and the families to speak in English. I hope we will always stay in touch and be able to meet again as soon as possible. A special thanks to the diabetes nurse Anna Karinne for all her efforts and kind help. I want to thank patients and their families for their kind collaboration. I thank Prusha Mohammed Salih from Iraq, the concurrent ISPAD fellow, for her accompaniment. I thank my family for their support during my visit and career.

Lastly, thanks to ISPAD for giving me this great opportunity. Being awarded the Allan Drash fellowship has been an honor and a privilege.

Emine Ayça Cimbeç, MD

Karadeniz Technical University, Medical Faculty

Department of Pediatric Endocrinology

Farabi Hospital, Trabzon, Türkiye

Tel: +90 462 377 56 20 [eminay89@yahoo.com](mailto:eminay89@yahoo.com)