

Object : Project for the development of the pediatric neurology in Africa

This initiative emerges from an increased demand for training from neurologists trained in French-speaking subSaharan African countries (Senegal, Ivory Coast, Benin) and Maghreb (Mali, Mauritania) where pediatric neurology is not developed. The proximity of Tunisia and our geographical and cultural links could be an interesting opportunity for these young doctors

I, Prof Ilhem Ben Youssef Turki, lead of the pediatric neurology department, which is located in the Mongi Ben Hmida National Institute of Neurology, in Tunis, a reference center in neurosciences. The pediatric neurology service was created in 2003 and complemented the already existing clinical and research departments, namely departments (neurosurgery, adult neurology (important for the transition from the childhood to the adulthood), neuro reanimation, neuroradiology, stroke unit, biochimia and clinical biology, 2 research laboratories (1 in pediatric neurology of which I am the director attached to a clinical investigation center and 1 in adult neurology). The proximity between the pediatric neurology department and its research laboratory is very interesting to allow clinical research from the patient's bed to the bench and biological research from the bench to the patient's bed. Recently, this department has been completely upgraded, according to the specificities of the child with neurological diseases, with an unit specialized in child neurophysiology (long-term video EEG, PSG, Holter EEG- ENMG- PE- ERG), a multidisciplinary diagnosis care unit (neuropsychology, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy) specialized in child neurology, various activities: outpatient consultations, hospitalisation, pediatric neurology emergency, specialized consultations (neuro-orthopedics orthopedic devices, abnormal movements - botulinum toxin, MS, epilepsies with a committee for the management of drug-resistant epilepsies).

The strong points of the department:

- A modern service upgraded to international standards,
- its location in a national center for care and research dedicated to neurosciences, a larger panel of diagnosis and management of child neurological pathologies (orphan diseases, particularly neurometabolic diseases, neuromuscular diseases, epilepsy, childhood neurophysiology, abnormal movements, neuroinflammatory diseases .....),
- An united and efficient multidisciplinary team with 5 full-time teachers (Professor, associated professors, assistant professors, Pediatrician) attached to the Faculty of Medicine of Tunis (University Tunis El Manar),
- Proximity to our institution of the faculty of medicine and higher schools of health sciences.

All this points, make us a breeding ground for education and training in pediatric neurology for young doctors and all the specialists associated to the pediatric neurology (Nursing sciences, rehabilitation-rehabilitation specialities ....).

We have, also, developed national and international partnerships and social networks with neuropediatricians and related specialties: neurosurgery, neuroradiology, pediatrics, genetics, orthopedics, physical medicine, child psychiatry, rehabilitation specialties, both in the public and private sectors.

So, on term of service, we can offer:

- A Ground training for the traineeship in pediatric neurology and clinical research in pediatric neurology for all doctors interested, particularly for French-speaking (or even English-speaking) sub-Saharan Africa doctors, under the aegis of the TCNA (Tunisian Child Neurology Association).
- The pediatric neurology department and the Resarsh lab of pediatric neurology in Sfax (directed by Chahnez Triki), could also be another training ground.
- A certificate of complementary study in pediatric neurology, at the Faculty of Medicine of Sfax, with distanciel courses and face-to-face internships, open to Tunisians and foreigners. We will also, start, an other in Tunis.
- Also, a cycle of master class by e-conférences in EEG -ENMG and therapeutic education, in child neurology, at the Faculty of medicine of Tunis.
- Tunisians teachers staff can, also, participate in other forms of training or education organized by the ICNA.
- We could also expand our services for paramedics and offer training courses for nurses, pericultrices, juxta medical specialties (speech therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, neuropsychology) or EEG-ENMG technicians.

On the financial level :

- We can request the AUF (University Agency of the Francophonie), whose actions implemented with and for the benefit of its member institutions (Tunisia, Maghreb, Africa, etc.), contribute to strengthening the quality of training, research and governance; improving the employability and professional integration of graduates and the involvement of universities in the economic, social and cultural development of societies.
- We can also solicit universities through Erasmus programs which aim to financially support a wide range of actions and activities in the fields of education, training of young graduates with the possibility of staying abroad for the strengthening of their skills and increase their employability through international partnerships. This dimension makes it possible to open up the program to activities of institutional cooperation, mobility of young people and staff at a global level.
- Catharsis consulting and the pharmaceuticals companies partners can provide logistical and financial support to this training projects with a public and private partnership.
- Young medical applicants could also seek funding from their universities or Ministries.
- The contribution of the TCNA would be by supporting and organizing the logistics of the training, whether face-to-face or in distenciel, organization of internships, choice and the follow-up of the teaching, in accordance with the quality and safety standards.

These projects can be organized via ACNA with the support of ICNA.

All of his proposals relate to the possibilities in Tunisia. With the ACNA office and ACNA members, we will be able to define the existing opportunities and needs of the other regions of Africa and develop a more comprehensive training in terms of prevention, care, education, research, adapted to expectations.



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Very Best regards  
Sincerely Yours

Pr Ilhem Ben Youssef Turki