

EPA GAINING EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME REPORT
On the observership visit at the East London NHS Foundation
By Dr. Gulay MAMMADZADA

I had a privilege to spend my observership in East London NHS Foundation Trust during the winter term. Due to some complications with my visa, my visit turned out to be shorter than I originally expected, but it only intensified the overall experience and made each day count, with every step of the way more diverse and full of new experiences. I was lucky enough to be placed in 2 institutions - Donald Winnicott Centre and WHO Collaborating Centre for Mental Health Services Development (Newham Centre for Mental Health). I was supervised by Dr. Olivier Andlauer and Dr. Domenico Giacco.

My observership was mainly focused on learning more about methods of psychosocial interventions to psychosis. Everyone in the Donald Winnicott Centre was very welcoming, friendly and eager to answer all my questions regarding the day-to-day work operations. During our daily meetings I was shadowing Dr. Andlauer during his sessions with patients suffering from acute psychotic states. Through these meetings I got introduced to the Early and Quick Intervention in Psychosis (EQUIP) program and gained insight into EQUIP team's multifunctional approach. After each session we would discuss the case with Dr. Andlauer and patient's care coordinator (it would usually be a social worker) from both medical and social stand points. These talks helped me learn and consequently compare different approaches to intervention in psychosis in both UK and Azerbaijan.

Donald Winnicott Centre is located in a very culturally diverse area, which was a great advantage; reason being, transcultural psychiatry and the effect of the background on mental well-being is my topic of special interest.

As part of "home visits", Dr. Andlauer and I visited patients living under the supervision of nurses in special facilities. Observing the EQUIP team putting all their resources - medical, social and psychological to improve the quality of life of people with mental illnesses was very informative and inspiring.

During the visit to the WHO Collaborating Centre for Mental Health Services Development, Dr. Domenico introduced me to his colleagues - researchers and PhD students. All of them

were kind enough to share the projects they were working on currently, as well as answer all my questions regarding the methods and results of their studies. It was very notable to learn about the new studies investigating the family's role in patients' rehabilitation process.

Another study that is conducted by psychologists of the Centre is a large study on global mental health and its definitions in various countries and cultures.

On the day of my visit there was a special meeting with the participation of the researchers and research assistants that was mainly focused on the discussion of the new trial on involuntary hospital treatment. Participants would first listen to the presentation and then debate and share their ideas on improvements or changes needed for the application. I really appreciated how everyone involved in the meeting were suggesting ideas on how to better solve occurring issues or better avoid them by choosing more appropriate methods.

Together with Dr. Giacco we discussed future possibilities for future scientific collaborations.

During the observership, I didn't get a chance to make a presentation about my home institution, however, on my return, I am planning on giving a presentation for local young psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and nurses. This presentation will cover my experience as an observer. It will also help translate and share gained knowledge, improve some of the ongoing issues in the field and create a platform for future development.

This program is a wonderful opportunity for psychiatrists to get acquainted with the new varieties of mental services, treatment methods and different organizational approaches. Notably, all of that is possible in very short time periods, which is another great advantage of the program.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone involved in the development of this program, and encourage all young specialists to apply and widen their educational experience through being a part of it.



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