

EAUN Fellowship at MSK

Insights from the Department of Nursing Research Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center



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The EAUN offers every year a one to two-week fellowship to its members. With the overarching goal to foster the highest standard of urological nursing care throughout Europe, nursing research activities becomes mandatory to improve the level of evidence-based care.

This year, the Aarhus University Hospital (represented by Bente Thoft Jensen) received the fellowship award and visited the Office of Nursing Research at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK) in New York from 2 to 16 April this year. For years, the Aarhus University Hospital, EAUN and MSK have been cooperating through educational initiatives, research, publications, and contributions to scientific meetings of the EAUN. The scope of this fellowship was to observe and identify possibilities to further engage in research projects between/within our institutions and the EAUN.

The goal at MSK is to provide state-of-the-art cancer treatment and care. Moreover, MSK seeks to improve the lives of cancer patients through dynamic partnerships with the patients and their local care providers. Besides providing patients with the best possible cancer care, the Memorial Hospital maintains an extensive research programme that focus on basic laboratory research, and translational research that bridges discoveries made in the laboratory and those made in the clinic.

To provide the best care, MSK has reinforced the focus on nursing research and the Director of Nursing Research, Dr. Margaret Barton-Burke, past chair of the ONS, has been leading the Office of Nursing Research since 2016. When Dr. Barton-Burke took office, the number of nursing research activities at MSK have grown tremendously and her research team now consists of five junior and senior researchers and administrative co-workers supported by different service departments including the Department of Clinical Research Administration and support service. A new trend is also seen with several PhD and master students from the states of New Jersey and New York affiliating with the research team.

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The two-week programme was carefully set up in cooperation with Dr. Margaret Barton-Burke and her staff. During the planning phase, it was possible to arrange specific meetings in those clinics, which had the highest interest in potential partnership in upcoming research protocols. The actual programme was divided into two tracks; workshop with nurses and nurses leaders engaged within research in clinical practice and conditions for research on administrative and educational level at MSK.

Workshop activities

During the workshops, at the Rockefeller Institute, I met with the local group of CNSs and NPs from different cancer specialties and discussed the "life of nursing research" in clinical practice. Another interesting topic was how we define and differentiate between developments and research in nursing. What are the educational needs and minimum set of

institutional requirements to make a nursing research programme a success? Clearly, we face the same kind of challenges in the clinic and organisational spheres despite the differences between our healthcare systems. Among the participants in the workshops was CNS Nora Love, well-known for several outstanding lectures at the EAUN meetings, EAUN-speaker Mallory Bowker, Department of Surgery and Nurse Leader Beau Amaya, Outpatient Genitourinary Services, who welcomed further initiatives to improve evidence-based care in urology.

Following the research track, I met with the group of experts facilitating sexual health in females care after major cancer surgery. My special thanks to Dr. Jeanne Carter, Head of the Female Sexual Medicine & Women's Health programs, Gynecology Service, Department of Surgery, and Dr. Shari Goldfarb, MD, Department of Medicine. They both assisted with experiences, discussions and considerations on how we can join forces and possibly improve awareness on sexual aspects in survivorship care in females undergoing major abdominal cancer surgery. NP and PhD student Lisa Mill added to the information regarding barriers in female sexuality issues during the past 20 years, and noted how the public awareness in this field still lacks professional interest.



Director of Nursing Research, Dr. Margaret Barton-Burke and her staff



Nurse Forum at MSK April 2018

Participating in the IRB-meeting was encouraging, particularly the issues on nursing care and patient perspective, which are highly recognised and pivotal in any research protocol at MSK. Moreover, the actual numbers of nursing-based research protocols are significantly increasing along with the growing acknowledgement of the importance of our contribution to research in patient care.

Finally, I lectured at the Nurse Forum at MSK to present results of earlier shared research projects. I expressed my appreciation for the continued interest and support of the Office of Nursing Research, MSK to cooperate with the EAUN and Aarhus University Hospital. Special thanks to Dr. Guido Dalbagni, Department of Surgery (MSK), Dr. Jørgen B. Jensen (AUH) and Director of Nursing Research, Dr. Margaret Barton-Burke and her staff who all have been very supportive of this "journey" in the last couples of years.