

AN INTERVIEW WITH... an ESPE Clinical Fellow

2014 ESPE Clinical Fellowship recipient
Sophia Sakka (Athens, Greece) tells us
about the impact it has had on her career.

Why did you apply to the ESPE Clinical Fellowship Programme?

I wanted to broaden my knowledge and experience in paediatric endocrinology in an internationally recognised centre of excellence. I trained as a paediatrician in Greece. However, there is currently no formal training programme in paediatric endocrinology locally, so I applied to the ESPE Clinical Fellowship Programme to fulfil my long-standing ambition of training in the specialty.

I was keen on the training programme offered by the Department of Endocrinology, Bone and Diabetes at Birmingham Children's Hospital. This has a track record for excellent scientific activity, and a special interest in bone disorders, which is missing from our Department in Athens.

What did your Fellowship involve?

I worked under Wolfgang Högler in Birmingham. My inclusion in the junior medical staff rota allowed me to take part in all the department's activities. These included outpatient endocrine and diabetes clinics,



ward rounds, dynamic function tests at the medical day care unit, and teaching and research projects. I had clinical responsibility for the care of patients.

Observing experienced consultants in highly specialised clinics was extremely valuable. These clinics covered disorders such as osteogenesis imperfecta, Alström syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome and disorders of sex development. I saw a large variety of rare and complex cases, which I had never dealt with before. Alongside my clinical work, I was working on a research project in metabolic bone disease.

What do you feel you have learnt?

The most valuable lessons were learning to deal with difficult inpatient and emergency cases while I was on the ward, and operating independently at the outpatient clinics.

I enjoyed working with a range of professionals. Importantly, I now have much greater experience of treating patients with metabolic bone diseases.

And what did you enjoy most?

I really liked the department's structured programme and the notes meeting after the outpatient clinics, where all the patients were discussed. I met many paediatric endocrinologists from the UK and elsewhere, with whom I share many interests and hope to collaborate.

What impact will the Fellowship have on your future?

I have achieved exactly what I hoped! I will be able to incorporate my knowledge into my everyday practice and be more comprehensive in my care of patients.

For the future, I hope to enhance our collaboration with other centres of excellence in the ESPE network and support the creation and evaluation of a common approach to paediatric endocrinology cases throughout Europe.

How can ESPE improve the Fellowship programme?

I believe the Fellowship should last longer than 3 months, especially for participants from countries where there is no possibility of specialising in paediatric endocrinology, when the ESPE Clinical Fellowship offers the best opportunity to learn more about our discipline.

Sophia Sakka, Athens University Medical School, Aghia Sophia Children's Hospital, Athens, Greece



54th Annual Meeting 1-3 October
ESPE 2015 BARCELONA
European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology

WORKING GROUPS AT ESPE 2015

Thursday 1 October, 08.00-11.00

Don't miss these exciting
speakers at this year's
ESPE Working Group events

Bone and Growth Plate Working Group (Hall 3)

Jeffery Baron (USA), Francesco De Luca (USA),
Outimajja Mäkitie (Sweden), Nadja Fratzl-
Zelman (Austria), Maria Luisa Bianchi (Italy)

Diabetes Technology and Therapeutics Working Group (Hall 1)

Paolo Pozzilli (Italy), Michel Polak (France),
Moshe Phillip (Israel), Revital Nimri (Israel),
Olga Kordonouri (Germany), Thomas Reinehr
(Germany), Thomas H Inge (USA)

Disorders of Sex Development Working Group (Hall 2)

Christa Flück (Switzerland), Arianne Dessens
(The Netherlands), Martine Cools (Belgium),
Olaf Hiort (Germany), Faisal Ahmed (UK), Birgit
Köhler (Germany), Anna Nordenström (Sweden)

Obesity Working Group (Hall 7)

Francesc Villarroya (Spain), Christoffer
Clemmensen (Germany), Luis A Pérez-Jurado
(Spain), José M Ordovás (USA)

Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology Working Group (Hall 4)

Charles A Sklar (USA), Michaël Grynberg
(France), Jacques Donnez (Belgium),
Patrick Puttemans (Belgium), Mats Brännström
(Sweden)

Turner Syndrome Working Group (Hall 5)

Jacqueline Pieters (The Netherlands),
Maura Foresti (Italy), Berit Krüström (Sweden),
Malcolm Donaldson (UK), Theo Sas
(The Netherlands)



ESPE 2015: improving patient care

DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,

On behalf of ESPE, I look forward to welcoming you to the 54th Annual Meeting of ESPE in Barcelona, Spain, on 1–3 October.

The theme of ESPE 2015 is 'Improving patient care: a pluridisciplinary dialogue' and you will enjoy an exciting scientific programme. This will feature plenary lectures, symposia, and Meet the Expert, New Perspectives and Technologies sessions.

Plenary lectures at ESPE 2015

Marian Rewers (USA)

Genetic and environmental determinants of type 1 diabetes

Andrew Hattersley (UK)

New advances in monogenetic diabetes

Carles Lalueza-Fox (Spain)

New advances in human evolution from the analysis of ancient genomes

Alan Templeton (USA)

Genomic diversity in present day humans: evolutionary aspects

Francesc Villarroya (Spain)

Ontogeny of FGF21 in the human: implications for metabolic health

Pinchas Cohen (USA)

The GH/IGF axis, ageing and longevity – the interface with diet and mitochondrial peptides

You will hear the latest developments from prestigious leaders in the fields of diabetes, the human genome, metabolic programming, obesity, skeletal growth, neuroendocrinology, bone, thyroid, adrenal and gonadal disorders, cancer syndromes, gene therapy, regenerative endocrinology and much more. That's not to mention our Working Groups and Yearbook sessions.

Thank you for all your abstracts. We have received the highest number ever submitted to an ESPE Meeting! We'll be encouraging interaction and discussion wherever possible, and this year will feature ePosters, alongside the regular poster sessions and free oral communications, to enable even more delegates to participate in ESPE 2015.

ESPE 2015 takes place at the Fira Gran Via, one of the largest and most modern venues in Europe, very close to Barcelona airport and around 25 minutes from the centre of the city. Throughout the Meeting, there will be lots of opportunities for networking and socialising with colleagues and friends, providing the perfect environment for developing international collaborations.

Together with the Programme and Local Organising Committees, we are all working hard to bring you an outstanding Meeting for 2015. I very much look forward to seeing you there.

My best wishes,
Dr Laura Audí
ESPE President 2015



ESPE News Contents *(click on a link below)*

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- ⊗ Australasian Paediatric Endocrine Group (APEG)
- ⊗ ESPE 2015: speakers' previews
- ⊗ Research Update: Disorders of Sex Development
- ⊗ ESPE Newsletter survey results
- ⊗ ESPE award winner: Tomasz Romer
- ⊗ ESPE Winter School 2015
- ⊗ An interview with ESPE Clinical Fellow Sophia Sakka
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Welcome to issue 29

DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,

In this issue, we are pleased to present the results of our recent Newsletter survey (see [page 5](#)). Thank you to all who took part. Your views are very valuable to us and will shape the content of future issues. As always, we on the Editorial Board will do our best to maintain the quality of your Newsletter and enrich it with feedback from all members, so if you wish to get in touch please email espe@eurospe.org.

On this page, you will find a letter from ESPE President, Laura Audí, updating us with recent news from the forthcoming ESPE Meeting in Barcelona, which we are all awaiting with enthusiasm. You can also enjoy more previews from invited speakers at ESPE 2015 on [page 3](#), which are sure to promote scientific enthusiasm for the conference. See [page 7](#) for details of the speakers at the Working Group events at ESPE 2015.

[Pages 4 and 5](#) feature our latest Research Update, this time from the ESPE Working Group on Disorders of Sex Development, co-ordinated by Anna Nordenström. We hope you like these regular summaries of new

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