

## Step by step towards professional development

Good day everyone. Let me introduce myself: I am Agne Ruminaitė, a senior pathology trainee from Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Pathology department. You are probably curious what I am doing in the BDIAP newspaper?

Let's briefly return to the beginning. I was born, raised, graduated gymnasium and medical university in Lithuania, following which I joined the Pathology traineeship there, and currently I am in my third year of the four-year course. I knew that I would be a pathologist from the 4th course of my medical studies. For three years I was the head of the Pathology Union at the Students Scientific Society in my university so I could realise myself by organising various events for students, trainees and help to expand public knowledge about pathology.

When I became a trainee I realized again what a small country we are: our pathology studies do not fulfil my expectations, and after many conversations with trainees from other countries I understood very clearly that I need a fresh air gulp. Hence I decided to participate in the ERASMUS+ traineeship program at my university, which allows medical trainees to spend some time working at an overseas institution. After a tedious search for a place in Europe and in the United Kingdom in particular, I received an affirmative letter from my current coordinator Dr Marie Mathers from Edinburgh Western General hospital, Pathology department, giving me the news that I am welcome to have a two month internship in their department. You couldn't imagine how happy I was.

Many discussions and hours spent, handling official papers later, this February I went to Edinburgh for the first time. The internship exceeded my expectations from the very outset. Despite that, I kept looking for something more... One evening, accidentally, I came across two conferences for pathologists in London organized by BDIAP. In your website I found information about a travel bursary and I thought - why not try? It was my first experience trying out for this kind of bursary so I didn't know exactly what should I do, thus I wrote an honest motivational letter and added my CV. Sam Kiely from BDIAP was very helpful with all my questions that I had at that moment. Trust me, I wasn't expecting to win so I was completely surprised when Dr Nafisa Wilkinson informed me just a few days later that I had won this travel bursary!

Finally I arrived in London and participated in two BDIAP conferences: "Molecular Pathology Study Day 2018" and "Approach to Cut Up Study Day 2018", both of which took place in the impressive Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, a building with antique spirit. Molecular Pathology is our future, but unfortunately I have a poor practical experience with it, that's why I was listening for every speaker with a huge interest. There are so many things happening in this field! The second conference was more practical and most of the presentations were also related with changes according to the 8th TNM staging system. As a senior trainee I am proficient in trimming so I felt quite confident, already knowing many things about it. Both conferences had amazing speakers - their presentations were very clear, comprehensive, illustrated with great examples from daily work routines, and some of them were really entertaining. During the conferences breaks I was chatting with other trainees and I was elated because of my internship in Edinburgh and my experience with this bursary. People were asking questions to which I knew the answers - it's a great feeling to share information with your colleagues.

I would like to one more time thank everyone in BDIAP who helped me with this bursary. It is important for me and it gives motivation which I truly miss in Lithuania.

And to end this, a short message to everyone whose experiences might be similar to mine: to those, who are afraid, who are hesitating, who are a little bit lazy or just don't believe... Try again and again and you will succeed, I am sure! And this rule applies in all situations of our lives. Good luck!

- Agne Ruminaitė

