

Introducing the Epileptic Disorders Internship Program

Irfan S. Sheikh¹, Roohi Katyal², Aris Hadjinicolaou³, Sándor Beniczky⁴,
Fábio A. Nascimento^{1,5}

¹ Department of Neurology,
Massachusetts General Hospital,
Harvard Medical School, Boston,
MA, USA

² Department of Neurology,
Louisiana State University Health
Sciences Center, Shreveport, LA,
USA

³ Department of Neurology,
Centre Hospitalier Universitaire
(CHU) Sainte-Justine, Université de
Montréal, Montréal, Québec,
Canada

⁴ Department of Clinical
Neurophysiology, Danish Epilepsy
Centre, Dianalund and Aarhus
University Hospital; Department of
Clinical Medicine, Aarhus
University, Aarhus, Denmark

⁵ Department of Neurology,
Washington University School of
Medicine, St. Louis, MO, USA

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As the educational journal of the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE), Epileptic Disorders (EPD) has the mission to create educational links between epileptologists and other health professionals in clinical practice and scientists or physicians in research-based institutions. With the journal's mission in mind, EPD Editor-in-Chief (SB) and Education Associate Editor (FAN) have created an inaugural EPD Internship Program. The Program is inspired by the successful Neurology® Resident & Fellow Section [1] and aims to recruit stellar clinical neurophysiology/epilepsy clinical fellows and adult/child neurology residents to serve 6-to-12-month terms. With the guidance and mentoring of the editors, the interns' primary responsibilities include reviewing manuscripts submitted to EPD, leading an EEG/epilepsy education research project, and assisting with the journal's social media efforts.

In January 2022, the EPD Internship Program welcomed its first class of interns: ISS, RK, and AH. All three shared their experiences through the excerpts below.

Intern, Dr. Irfan S. Sheikh

The EPD Internship experience was excellent. Throughout the six months, I learned the educational and review process of manuscripts through feedback from the Associate Editor. Through reviewing manuscripts and constructing weekly social posts, I grasped a further understanding of the various

topics in epilepsy, for example learning about concussive seizures [2] and intra-familial variability in Unverricht-Lundborg disease [3]. With regards to individual projects, I created an interactive set of video-based teaching modules covering broad topics in epilepsy and EEG which provides young learners (residents and starting clinical neurophysiology/EEG and epilepsy fellows) with a roadmap to learn about EEGs. This content was created based on the ILAE roadmap for a competency-based educational curriculum in epileptology [4]. Working in a team to construct and execute this project has provided collegiality and strengthened my communication skills. Overall, the experience gained through the EPD Internship Program strengthened my EEG and epilepsy knowledge while I enter my second year of clinical fellowship and has driven my interest towards academic epileptology.

Intern, Dr. Roohi Katyal

As a trainee in the last few months of clinical fellowship training, ready to embark on my journey as an academic epileptologist, I felt that the EPD Internship experience was extremely educational and perfectly complemented my clinical fellowship training. This is a phenomenal opportunity in a truly exceptional learning environment. The monthly meetings and one-on-one feedback tremendously helped me learn about the art of developing and delivering a high-quality manuscript

• **Correspondence:**
Fábio Augusto Nascimento e
Silva
Campus Box 8111
660 South Euclid Avenue
St. Louis, MO, 63110, USA
<fabion@wustl.edu>,
<nascimento.fabio.a@gmail.
com>

review. By way of creating social media posts, I learned how to identify the key research question, highlight main learning points, and deliver those in an effective and concise manner. My education research project consisted of surveying epilepsy fellowship program directors in the US to better understand the current state of fellows' epilepsy surgery education. Working on this project resulted in delving into a vast array of highly educational content with the bonus of several opportunities to discuss study findings with some of the best in the field.

Intern, Dr. Aris Hadjinicolaous

My project consisted of a survey distributed to program directors across the US and Canada to assess the current state of EEG education in child neurology residency training, in order to identify potential areas to optimize this critical educational experience. Having the opportunity to work as part of a team experienced not only in EEG education, but also in the preparation, administration and analysis of such survey responses was a truly formative experience. Having accepted an attending epileptologist position, in which I will continue to work on educational research, this program truly provided a springboard into this world, and additionally allowed me to establish contacts with collaborators that I will continue to work with throughout my career.

The EPD Internship Program has the mission to train the next generation of leaders in the field of academic epileptology through the creation of an inquisitive, reflective, and engaging educational forum under the close guidance of the EPD editorial team. The goals for the Program are to develop exemplary EEG/epilepsy educators, prepare researchers of EEG/epilepsy education, and train future editors of epilepsy journals. The Program allows interns to critically assess and appraise high-quality educational manuscripts submitted to EPD with direct mentorship from the team. In the process, they are exposed to virtually all aspects

of the editorial role along the full trajectory of manuscripts - from submission to publication. Moreover, interns have the opportunity to gain additional education skills by continuously selecting published EPD articles and summarizing their main take-home points in social media posts. This exercise is also valuable in that it introduces social media as a tool to delivering medical education. Upon designing and spearheading individual education research projects, interns acquire expertise in the research process such as identifying relevant questions and appropriate methodologies, and interpreting and presenting results in the form of publication.

We are honored to be able to provide our interns with an intensive academic experience and help them grow in both educational and research capacities. Similarly, we are delighted to be able to contribute to the ILAE mission to ensure that health professionals, patients/caregivers, and the public worldwide have the educational and research resources that are essential to care for patients with epilepsy. It is truly rewarding and exciting to have the unique opportunity to train the future leaders of epileptology and, through them, disseminate evidence-based practices that improve the quality of care for patients with epilepsy on a global scale. ■

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