



Travel Grant Report Form

Name and origin of applicants

Jenni Kippola, National Living donor coordinator, Finland

Purpose granted

Purpose was to visit other Scandinavian transplant centers in order to learn and share knowledge about living kidney donation process, LD investigations and the role of living donor coordinator.

The role of national LD coordinator in Finland is new and we are aiming to increase the numbers of our LD kidney tx to the levels that they are in other Scandinavian countries.

As a result to changes made in legislation in 2019, it is now possible in Finland to participate STEP program and to perform kidney transplantation from an anonymous donor. When writing our own protocols, it is important to find out how these processes are organized in other tx centers.

Visits were planned to Sahlgrenska Hospital Gothenburg Sweden and Oslo University Hospital Norway during 2020.

Amount granted

14 000 DKK

Time and place of visit

Sahlgrenska Sjukhuset, Gothenburg Sweden 18.-20.2.2020

(visit to Oslo postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic)

Report

I arrived in Sahlgrenska Sjukhuset in Göteborg on 18.2. in the morning and was warmly welcomed by patient coordinators Ingrid Petterson and Ulla-Maj Andersson.

I was first introduced to the transplantation department and had a short overview of their transplantation activities. The Sahlgrenska model, in which all transplantation, thoracic and abdominal is organized under same unit, is unique and interesting.

During my visit, I followed patient coordinator Ingrid Petterson at her work and participated in kidney panel, patient evaluation and operation department meetings. These helped me to understand similarities and differences of the LD kidney transplantation process in Finland and Sweden. Not surprising that we are facing very same challenges; lack of resources, especially qualified staff (nurses) and at the same time need to increase the amount of kidney transplantation.

I received very thorough overview of how living kidney donors are evaluated and informed in Sahlgrenska area. I can now for example compare the materials and methods that we use in Finland in informing LD about potential risks of donation to the ones used in Sahlgrenska. This helps us in developing better services to our LD's.

We discussed the similarities and differences of LD activity in Helsinki and Sahlgrenska (and Sweden in general) and shared information about our roles as LD coordinators. It was extremely interesting to meet these Swedish colleagues since I have worked alone in a new role and have had quite little possibilities to discuss practical and ethical aspects of my work.

At transplantation ward I had a possibility to meet and discuss shortly with living donor and the recipient after their operation.

Wednesday evening we had dinner at local restaurant with coordinator Ingrid Petterson, nurse Lizett Ljungqvist and docent Annette Lennerling with very interesting discussions on living donation. There are many complex ethical questions concerning living donation, which I personally feel should be discussed more openly, and I enjoyed this company very much.

Since the change of legislation in Finland on March 2019, we started accepting friends as living kidney donors. Non-directed living donation also became possible and there has been increasing amount of enquiries about this. We are creating our protocol concerning altruistic donation in Finland, and learning about Swedish guidelines and investigation- and informing protocols, provides valuable information to us.

During the third day of my visit I was introduced to STEP process especially from the LD coordinators' point of view, which will help when we plan participation on STEP in Finland, hopefully already during 2020. Co-operation and communication between involving tx centers is important when transplantations and donations are organized within STEP program, and meeting and discussing with Scandinavian colleagues has helped me to understand the role of the LD coordinator in this process.

Evaluation

During my visit to Sahlgrenska, I most enjoyed the ethical discussions, practical information and visions of future Scandinavian LD coordinator co-operation.

The information and knowledge shared during the visit has already become useful, when first kidney transplantation from anonymous altruistic donor was planned and performed in Finland and while preparations to participate in STEP program continue.

Scandinavian co-operation in LD kidney transplantation will increase in future with more countries participating in STEP program. Living donor coordinators should start networking within ScandiTransplant in order to help each other in developing LD process and supporting each other in ethical discussions related to living donation.
