

ESNO - Mentorship and observership programmes : objectives and application

What are observership and mentorship programmes?

An observership programme allows a team/professional needing practical training to visit onsite another more expert facility during a certain period of time. The observers can learn from their observations and bring back new competencies.

A mentorship programme creates a strong and trustful collaboration between an expert that supervises a team/member needing advice during a certain period of time. Mentorship can be organised remotely.

Objectives

Antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) and Infection prevention and control (IPC) are the two essential pillars to tackle antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Evidence-based good practices and competencies are essential and both theoretical and hand-on trainings are needed.

Observership and mentorship programmes offer a great opportunity to:

- Share and improve knowledge and experience
- Promote evidence-based best practices and practical tips
- Engage with an expert team.

Evidence and examples

The literature shows that mentorship programmes are beneficial on several aspects: they improve patient outcomes, encourage research, develop health professionals training and competencies¹. At the European level, the 2019 Council Conclusions on the next steps towards making the EU a best practice region in combatting antimicrobial resistance strongly recommend developing such programmes².

For example, the ESCMID (European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases) has developed [mentorship](#) and [observership](#) programmes. Concerning the latter, they have put in place Collaborative centres that members can visit for five days to one month in order to observe expert teams. These centres are highly experienced in a specific field. They are therefore able to offer guidance and experience to observers. Observers use this opportunity to improve their knowledge and bring back new competencies to their facilities. Moreover, through the network of ESCMID Mentorship Centres across Europe, mentees can be supported and helped for one to two years by a mentor, who is an expert on specific topics. Therefore, the mentee can benefit from the mentor's competencies and experience. The European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) has also been coordinating a mentorship programme since 2018. As part of the Statement Implementation Learning Collaborative Centers (SILCC) initiative, hospital pharmacists have the possibility to visit 11 SILCC approved hospitals across Europe, where they can receive training in pharmacy procedures in accordance with the [European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy](#).

How could ESNO implement such programmes?

Based on its network, ESNO could develop such programmes across Europe. Nurses/facilities with a specific expertise on AMS and/or IPC can welcome/mentor nurses from other facilities/countries. To implement these programmes, we suggest that:

- ESNO defines selection criteria and a standard operating procedure. As an example, the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) defined such [criteria](#) for AMS.
- ESNO identifies facilities/nurses/teams that demonstrate a strong experience in a field related to AMS and/or IPC and who are willing to participate in an observership/mentorship programme.
- ESNO launches and promotes these initiatives among its members.

¹ Sheri, Krish and al, 2019. A scoping review of mentor training programs in medicine between 1990 and 2017, Med Educ Online; 24(1): 1555435.

² Council Conclusions on the next steps towards making the EU a best practice region in combatting antimicrobial resistance, 14 June 19, n°35, 56, 57.