**Call: „Neuropsychological survey on NDMA receptor encephalitis”**

**What is N-methyl-D-aspartate Receptor Encephalitis?**

**N-Methyl-D-Aspartate receptor encephalitis** (NMDARE) is a rare autoimmune disorder where the body's immune system attacks NMDA receptors in the brain, leading to inflammation. This condition can cause symptoms such as psychosis, confusion, memory problems, seizures, dysautonomia and abnormal movements. Early diagnosis and treatment, often involving immunotherapy, can significantly improve outcomes.

**What is the SAPIENCE Project?**

Despite typically good neurological outcomes, many patients with NMDARE experience long-term cognitive, psychological, and social impairments that affect their well-being and daily activities, particularly given the young median age of 21 years. Since its discovery in 2007, the psychosocial impact of the disease has not been thoroughly studied.

**Social and psychological long-term impact of NMDA receptor encephalitis** (SAPIENCE) is a European multi-center prospective observational cohort study focused on the long-term cognitive, psychiatric, psychological, and social outcomes in patients with NMDAR encephalitis at three study sites (Barcelona, Spain; Berlin, Germany; Lyon, France). The study is structured into three interconnected levels. Level 1 involves qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus groups with patients and their caregivers. Level 2 includes a condensed version of the interview to assess experiences, standardized questionnaires examining patient-reported outcomes (PROMs), and comprehensive neuropsychological examinations. Level 3 features an online survey open to patients globally, assessing PROMs and patient experiences in relation to clinical and cognitive outcomes.

**What we are looking for:**

For Level 2 of the SAPIENCE project, we are planning an online assessment of patients with NMDAR encephalitis. This assessment will include evaluations of verbal memory using the Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test (RAVLT), working memory with the Digit Span test, and spatial navigation with the Vienna Test System (VIENNA). Additionally, we will measure patient-reported outcomes (PROMs) such as sleep quality using the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), fatigue with the Fatigue Severity Scale (FSS), depressiveness with the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II), anxiety using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), and health-related quality of life using the EQ-5D-5L. An interview will also be conducted to gather patients' experiences, including interactions with healthcare providers, the diagnosis process, symptom-related experiences, and social relationships.

We are seeking a master's student in neuropsychology or in psychology with a keen interest in neurological and neuropsychological topics to assist with recruitment, conducting interviews, neuropsychological assessments, and statistical analysis of the results. This opportunity can serve as a potential master's thesis project.

*More information:*

<https://neurologie.charite.de/en/research/klinische_forschergruppe_sapience/>

On autoimmune encephalitis and the group of Lyon: <https://www.rhu-betpsy.fr/>

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