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To the EADC Committee

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EADC RRFS Exchange Report

As part of the EADC RRFS Exchange Program, I visited the Centre for Age-Related Disorders (SESAM) at Stavanger University Hospital, Norway in May 2025. The exchange provided a valuable opportunity to initiate a cross-institutional collaboration focusing on lifestyle-related risk and protective factors for cognitive decline, with particular emphasis on cognitive reserve and dementia prevention. During the first week, I was warmly welcomed by the SESAM team and introduced to the center's ongoing research activities. This initial period was devoted to familiarizing myself with the interdisciplinary environment, understanding current project structures, and jointly shaping a relevant and feasible research question. In the second week, I attended SESAM's internal scientific conference, where researchers presented their current projects to colleagues, clinicians, and members of the public. This event was particularly inspiring and allowed for in-depth discussions on methodological approaches, local initiatives, and broader research goals.

The following weeks were dedicated to conducting a comprehensive literature review and drafting the first version of a collaborative manuscript focusing on cognitive reserve in aging populations, using data from the PROTECT Norge study. In parallel, we worked on clarifying data governance and access procedures, a necessary step to advance the empirical phase of the collaboration. While final data access was not yet completed by the end of the visit, clear next steps were defined, and we expect analyses to begin shortly after my return to Switzerland.

Significant progress was made in developing the manuscript structure, theoretical framing, and analytic approach. We also agreed on a continued collaboration including virtual meetings and the possibility of a follow-up research stay in Stavanger to support ongoing work and data interpretation.

This exchange has provided a motivating and collegial environment that encouraged scientific dialogue and long-term collaboration. I am deeply grateful to the EADC RRFS Program for supporting this opportunity, and to the SESAM team, Prof. Dag Aarsland, for their hospitality and commitment to collaborative science. Beyond the academic experience, the stay in Stavanger offered a unique insight into Norwegian culture and its breathtaking nature, making the visit both professionally and personally enriching.

Thank you and best regards

Dr. Esther Brill