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Trouble du comportement alimentaire de l'adolescent

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Rapport d'évaluation d'une entité de recherche. Trouble du comportement alimentaire de l'adolescent. 2009, Université Paris-Sud, Université Paris Descartes, Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale - INSERM. hceres-02033491

HAL Id: hceres-02033491

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Submitted on 20 Feb 2019

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agence d'évaluation de la recherche
et de l'enseignement supérieur

Section des Unités de recherche

Evaluation report

Research unit :

Troubles du comportement alimentaire de
l'adolescent

University Paris 11



Mars 2009



agence d'évaluation de la recherche
et de l'enseignement supérieur

Section des Unités de recherche

Rapport d'évaluation

Unité de recherche

Troubles du comportement alimentaire de
l'adolescent

University Paris 11



Le Président
de l'AERES

Jean-François Dhainaut

Section des unités
de recherche

Le Directeur

Pierre Glorieux

mars 2009



Evaluation report

The research unit :

Name of the research unit : Troubles du comportement alimentaire de l'adolescent

Requested label : UMR_S INSERM

N° in case of renewal : 669

Head of the research unit : Mr Bruno FALISSARD

University or school :

Université Paris 11

Other institutions and research organization:

Université Paris 5

INSERM

Date of the visit :

December 10, 2008



Members of the visiting committee

Chairman of the committee :

Mr Guy THOMAS (Université Pierre & Marie Curie, Paris, France)

Other committee members :

Mr Paul BEBBINGTON (London, UK)

Mr Koen DEMYTTENAERE (University Hospital Gasthuisberg, Leuven, Belgium)

Mr Josep-Maria HARO, (Barcelona, Spain)

Mrs Laurence TIRET (Faculté de médecine Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France)

CNU, CoNRS, CSS INSERM, représentant INRA, INRIA, IRD.....) representatives :

Mrs Danièle LUCE (Paris, France, INSERM CSS representative)

Mr Daniel MARCELLI (Poitiers, France, CNU representative)

Observers

AERES scientific representative:

Mr Alexis ELBAZ, Paris, France

University or school representative:

Mrs Anne MANTEL, Université Paris 11

Mrs Colette VOISIN, Université Paris 11

Research organization representative :

Mrs Marie-Josèphe LEROY-ZAMIA, INSERM



Evaluation report

1 • Short presentation of the research unit

Inserm unit 669 brings together a total of 79 persons, including :

- 19 researchers with teaching duties
- 6 full time researchers, all of them INSERM
- 19 research physicians
- 1 visiting professor
- 1 postdoctoral fellow
- 25 PhD students
- 7 engineers
- 1 administrative assistant

In addition :

- 21 researchers hold the HDR, with 17 of them currently supervising PhD students
- during the 4 past years, 7 theses were defended (about 2 per year on average); the mean duration of a thesis was 4 years
- no lab member has been granted the PEDR
- the number of “publishing” lab members among researchers with teaching duties and full time researchers is 25 out of 25

2 • Preparation and execution of the visit

The visit started with a meeting *in camera* between the experts and the AERES representative, who explained the purpose and terms of the visit.

Oral presentations by the head of the unit and researchers followed, in the presence of all members of the unit. They led to scientific discussions between members of the committee and members of the unit. Given the large number of projects and researchers working in the unit, some projects could not be covered during the scientific presentation.

A poster session was organized at lunch time and allowed the visiting committee to interact with the doctoral students.

The visiting committee then split into three groups, which met with researchers, PhD students, and engineers, respectively.

The experts then met with University representatives.

A final meeting was held with the head of the unit.

The visit ended with a further private meeting of the experts.



3 • Overall appreciation of the activity of the research unit, of its links with local, national and international partners

This research unit was created in 2005, and is currently applying for renewal. The initial project was to set up the first French research unit specifically dedicated to the study of mental health in adolescents. In this respect, the unit has more than fulfilled its mission. In four years, it has grown significantly larger, by attracting clinician psychiatrists from South Paris hospitals, young researchers, and other research groups (notably a group with expertise in genetic epidemiology and genomics). The unit deliberately welcomes researchers of any orientation, provided they are prepared to run their projects according to the rules of good scientific practice.

Over the last four years, 310 papers were published in peer reviewed journals. Eleven meetings were organised by members of the unit.

The group is highly concerned with societal issues and the popularisation of scientific knowledge. Several books for the general public have been written and published.

The group is obviously successful at obtaining grants, from which it derives the bulk of its financial resources.

The influence and reputation of the unit are more at the national than the international level. The group is not presently involved in any EU-funded program. However a strategically important collaboration has been set up with the CRIP in Quebec, and was ratified within the framework of an international unit (one researcher from Quebec has been recruited as CR1 Inserm, and a senior researcher from CRIP is presently hosted as visiting professor). Moreover, the leader of the genomics and genetic epidemiology group has established a close collaboration with the University of Singapore.

The large numbers of PhD students and Master students bear witness to the educational activity of the unit. In addition, two members of the group are responsible for Master's degrees.

Overall, this research unit exhibits a clear development dynamic, with several well thought-out and relevant strategic options (collaboration with CRIP, hosting of a genetics and genomics oriented team, hiring of highly skilled and promising young researchers).

On the weak side, the very rapid development has to some extent been at the expense of coherence. The quality of research is rather variable from one project to the other, and collaboration within the group requires further development.

4 • Specific appreciation team by team and/or project by project

Three main research themes are identified :

- Harmful or self-harming behaviours
- Evaluation of therapies and practices
- New methods in psychiatric research

A total of 13 different projects were identified under these three themes.

Two projects appear particularly promising: 'Longitudinal interventional studies: eating disorders, attachment relationships'; and 'Determination of emotional endophenotypes'. A third project, 'Integrative genetic epidemiology and multifactorial diseases', is potentially of high interest but needs to be further integrated within the unit.

Three ongoing projects: 'Psychotropic medication: clinical and epidemiological evaluation'; 'Clinical and epidemiological research into eating disorders'; and 'Clinical and epidemiological research into addictive disorders' have already yielded a number of high quality papers, but links with other aspects of the unit's activity seem minimal.



5 • Appreciation of resources and of the life of the research unit

A number of researchers are clinicians with teaching duties, who can devote only one day per week to research. In this respect, organisation of the unit around core members should be envisaged. However, information concerning the life of the unit (including opportunities for training) is circulated among all members.

Engineers and technicians who apply for promotion receive adequate support. They sign publications as co-authors, whenever they have contributed to the work. Engineers and technicians deeply regretted the absence of any representative of their category among the visiting committee.

PhD students and Master students supervision is effective.

Clinical and methodological competences are well represented in the unit.

The head of the unit obviously does an excellent work of bringing together members of widely varying origins.

6 • Recommendations and advice

– Strong points :

This team is one of the very few teams working in the field of epidemiological psychiatry in France. The team has had a spectacular rate of growth since it was created in 2005. The members of the lab highly appreciate the enthusiastic and participative management style of the head of the unit. The team has developed an interesting international collaboration with CRIP. The team has been able to attract three very promising young researchers who work in different fields. In addition to its research activities, the team has strong educational activity, both for students and the general public.

– Weak points:

The team includes many projects of a variable scientific quality: the scientific quality of some of the projects requires to be improved. The team members have an unequal level of scientific publications (with, in some instances, too much emphasis on reports to Government agencies). Finally, collaboration between members of the lab is underdeveloped.

– Recommendations:

As acknowledged by the head of the unit, reorganisation is needed around a few major high quality projects with well identified leaders. Collaboration between members of the lab should be encouraged. Minor projects and clinical research in hospitals must be put within more structured frame.

Overall the committee very strongly supports this recently created research unit.

Note de l'unité	Qualité scientifique et production	Rayonnement et attractivité, intégration dans l'environnement	Stratégie, gouvernance et vie du laboratoire	Appréciation du projet
A	B	A	A	A

Le Président de l'Université Paris-Sud 11

à

Monsieur Pierre GLORIEUX
Directeur de la section des unités de recherche
AERES
20, rue Vivienne
75002 Paris

Orsay, le 20 mars 2009.

N/Réf. : 74/09/GCo/LM/LS

Objet : Rapport d'évaluation d'unité de recherche
N° S21000410

Monsieur le Directeur,

Vous m'avez transmis le douze mars dernier, le rapport d'évaluation de l'unité de recherche « Troubles du comportement alimentaire de l'adolescent » - UMR S 669, et je vous en remercie.

L'université se réjouit de l'appréciation portée par le Comité sur cette unité et prend bonne note de ses suggestions.

Comme le suggère le directeur d'unité, monsieur Bruno FALISSARD, nous n'avons pas de remarque particulière à formuler sur cette évaluation.

Les points à améliorer seront discutés avec ce dernier dans un esprit constructif pour l'avenir de la recherche à l'université.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur le Directeur, l'expression de ma sincère considération.

Guy COURRAZE
Président

