

Report of two-day epilepsy school on Improving the Knowledge and Care of Childhood Epilepsy amongst General Practitioners (Medical Officers) in Enugu State Nigeria.

This workshop held on the 21st and 22nd February 2023 at the old conference hall of the National Orthopaedic Hospital Enugu Nigeria. The workshop was attended by 23 participants. The two day workshop was facilitated by Prof Ngozi C. Ojinaka, professor of Paediatrics and child health and consultant Paediatric neurologist, Prof Anne E. Aronu, also professor of Paediatrics and child health and consultant Paediatric neurologist, Dr Ndubuisi Onyemaechi, Senior Lecturer/Consultant Paediatric Neurologist and Dr Adaobi Bisi-Onyemaechi, also a Senior Lecturer/Consultant Paediatric Neurologist, all of the Paediatric Neurology Firm, Department of Paediatrics, University of Nigeria.

Nine lectures were given during the workshop, two tests (pre and post test) and case scenarios were conducted during the workshop.

The following nine lectures were given over the two days;

1. ***Introduction to childhood epilepsy***- This was taken by Dr Bisi-Onyemaechi . The objective of this lecture was to highlight the differences in epilepsy in childhood epilepsy vs adult epilepsy eg age –related epilepsies, potentially important relationship between seizures (and their treatment with antiepileptic drugs) and learning/behavioural difficulties, treatment must take account of educational issues and family dynamics
2. ***Paediatric epilepsy syndromes 1***- This was also taken by Dr Bisi-Onyemaechi . The lecture intended to teach the medical officers the different epileptic syndromes that can occur in the neonatal(eg Early Infantile Epileptic Encephalopathy , Early Myoclonic Encephalopathy)infancy and early childhood(eg Infantile spasms ,Dravet syndrome Lennox Gastaut Syndrome Myoclonic Astatic Epilepsy (Doose Syndrome) etc
3. ***Paediatric epilepsy syndrome 2***-This was taken by Prof NC Ojinnaka who taught landau kleffner syndrome, panayiotopoulous syndrome, Absence with myoclonus ,Benign rolandic epilepsy, juvenile Myoclonic epilepsy, febrile seizure and febrile seizure +
4. ***Antiepileptic medications***- this lecture was taken by Dr Ndubuisi Uwaeuoke. The objective was to introduce them to newer and available anti-seizure medications, their mechanism of actions, indications and side effects.
5. ***Approach to child with first seizure***- This lecture was given by Prof AE Aronu. The lecture was to tell them what to do with a child who present s for the first time with a seizure, when to start Anti-seizure medications .
6. ***Status Epilepticus***- This lecture was taken by Prof AE Aronu . it was aimed at teaching them current definition of status epilepticus, step by step actions to take when a child presents with status epilepticus.

7. ***Ketogenic diet***- This lecture was taken by Dr Ndubuisi Uwaeuoke. The objective was to introduce them to the principles of ketogenic diet, types of ketogenic diet local sources of the diet.
8. ***Common paroxysmal non-epileptic events in children***- This lecture taught them the different seizure mimics in children according to the state of consciousness and ages.
9. ***Non pharmacologic management of epilepsy***- This was taught by Dr Bisi-Onyemaechi . The objective of this lecture was to sensitize them on other treatment options available for epilepsy none of which is available in Nigeria yet eg Epilepsy surgery, Vagal nerve stimulation, responsive neuro stimulation.

Feedbacks from course participants

1. The participants requested that we develop a standardized protocol for the treatment of epilepsy in children for them especially status epilepticus which would be presented to the state ministry of health for approval. This would help them standardize treatment in the various local communities where they are practicing.
2. They also requested if we can look for partnerships that can help make some medications like Vigabatrin, lamotigine, clobazam etc available and also affordable to our local population.
3. They were excited at the non-pharmacologic treatment of epilepsy and requested that we should make efforts to make these options available in the country for eligible patients.

Post workshop actions

A Whatsapp group would be formed with all participants as members where further questions and advice on childhood epilepsy can be answered and also to provide a channel for faster communication and referral.

Limitation of the workshop

The course held 3-4 days to Nigeria's national elections and pockets of political violence had erupted in some communities. This limited the ability of the doctors practicing in those communities to attend the workshop. Also a few doctors had to leave before the end of the workshop so as to get back to their communities early because of the fear of insecurity. About four medical students who indicated interest to attend the workshop were subsequently enrolled.

Conclusion

The course participant and the facilitators are sincerely grateful to International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) for this opportunity given them to increase the capacity of medical officers in the local communities in our state to manage childhood epilepsy.

Thank you ILAE.













