

4th ASEPA-ANZAN EEG TEACHING COURSE BY INTERNATIONAL MASTER TUTORS HELD IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN

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The fourth ASEPA-ANZAN EEG course was held in Karachi on 25 & 26 November 2023. This signature methodological hands-on teaching course in Electroencephalography (EEG) is organized biennially for fresh neurologists and neurology trainees by Epilepsy Association of Pakistan (EAP) and National Epilepsy Centre (NEC) since 2017. A teaching faculty of seven international master tutors visited Pakistan this year to teach 40 enthusiastic participants from all over Pakistan. Dr. Zarine Mogal, President EAP and Dr. Hiba Mahmud Secretary EAP welcomed the guests and participants. The tutors included Prof John Dunne, Chair ILAE-AO (Australia), Prof. Chong-Tin Tan, Chair ILAE-AO Fellowship Training Task Force, Prof. Kheng-Seang Lim, Secretary ILAE-AO, Prof. Raymond Azman Ali (Malaysia), Prof. Derrick Chan, Chair ASEPA (Singapore), Prof. Shang-Yeong Kwan, immediate Past Chair ASEPA and Dr. Chien Chen, immediate Past Secretary ASEPA (Taiwan).

On request of the ASEPA and Myanmar leadership virtual participation of fifteen was made possible, however only ten attended. A virtual station for participants from Pakistan was set up to enable all to learn from and interact with some virtual faculty members too. The virtual faculty comprised of Prof. Andrew Bleasel, Prof. Ernest Somerville, Dr. Ella Stephens, Dr. Hanka Laue-Gizzi, Dr. Manori Wijayath, Dr. Michael Fong, Dr. Tania Farrar and Dr. Zebunnessa Rahman; all from Australia with coordinating tutors from Myanmar, Prof. Moe Moe Zaw and Dr. Aye-Mya Min-Aye.

The EEG course has eight sessions, each having an introductory lecture on the topic followed by friendly intensive interactive hands-on teaching in small groups. As always, the enthusiasm of the tutors to teach and the eagerness of the participants to learn kept them all engaged in intensive teaching and learning for nine long hours each day with the participants asking for more. This overwhelming response is indeed the measure of success of this EEG teaching course and a source of great satisfaction for the organizers. The ASEPA-ANZAN EEG teaching course concluded by final remarks by Prof. John Dunne, Prof, Ernest Somerville, Prof. Andrew Bleasel and Prof. Zaw and a vote of thanks by Dr. Zarine Mogal. A mandatory online self-assessment quiz for participants is a new addition to this course from this year. Certificate of

Participation shall be issued only on receipt of a completion message by Dr. Nicholas Lawn, the creator of this very useful tool.

EEG reading is a complex art. Formal hands-on courses on basics of EEG and its correct interpretation like the ASEPA-ANZAN EEG Teaching Course was to not available to the neurology community worldwide until 2000 when Prof. Ernie Somerville and Prof. Andrew Bleasel from Sydney, Australia formulated and initiated this very distinctive EEG Teaching Course for Australian Neurology trainees and later extending to New Zealand. In 2010 they graciously extended this course to the ILAE-Asia Oceania chapters in collaboration with ASEPA.

Very few neurologists in Pakistan especially those trained in the country get the opportunity to learn EEG in a formal methodological manner. A hundred and fifty neurology trainees and fresh neurologists have benefitted from the four courses. This unique hands-on EEG teaching course introduces the participants to the basic technical & clinical aspects of EEG reading in adults and children in a methodological manner. It is imprudent to claim or expect the attendees to become experts in EEG reading by attending this two-day teaching course. However, it provides them a very strong foundation with clear concepts with which they can master their skills over time with experience. And to become skillful in the art of EEG can only be gained through spending quality time in EEG labs, recording and reading EEGs independently and committing the report on paper and then having it reviewed by the experts.

We hope to continue holding this biennial educational activity in the future.