

Medical Therapies Commission



Kimford Meador



Dong Zhou

Co-Chairs

Kimford J. Meador (USA)
Dong Zhou (China)

Members

Patrick Kwan (Australia)
Sanjeev Thomas (India)
Tim Welty (USA)

Management Committee Liaison

Emilio Perucca (Italy)

Aims/Goals of the Commission

The aims of the Medical Therapies Commission are to serve the goals of the ILAE related to medical therapies:

1. To advance and disseminate knowledge about epilepsy,
2. To promote research, education, and training,
3. To improve services and care for patients, especially by prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Goals of the individual task forces of our commission are below.

Access to Treatment

The task force (TF) plans to conduct a research initiative that will have several outputs including:

1. An international database of projects, initiatives, and interventions that improve access to AEDs.
2. A validated evaluation and scoring tool for projects.
3. An evaluation of completed and ongoing projects in ILAE member countries.
4. Selected in-depth case studies of showcase projects that can be published and used as models for other countries to implement, and for funding agencies to scale up.

Botanicals & Traditional Medicines

Expand website with listing and description of multiple botanicals. Explore information on traditional medicines.

Dietary Task Force

1. To promote and establish the use of the ketogenic diets, particularly in countries with limited resources.
2. To provide standardized guidelines regarding ketogenic diets and its variants.
3. To advance and disseminate knowledge about the ketogenic diet.

Elderly

Define the scope of the problem, select educational goals, and identify areas needing research.

Emergency Treatment

The goals of the TF on Emergency Treatment is to produce two evidence-based guidelines:

1. European guidelines in conjunction with the EAN.
2. Guidelines for resource poor countries. Both will follow the GRADE Methodology.

Generic Medications

1. Review literature related to generic substitution of antiseizure medications.
2. Review issues related to safety and reliability of generic drugs in various countries, especially resources limited countries.
3. Develop products that inform and assist ILAE members in making decisions about generic substitution of antiseizure medications.

Psychology

1. Investigate barriers to the delivery of psychological care in patients with epilepsy in different nations.
2. Collaborate with the Psychiatry Commission to develop educational input for international epilepsy curriculum that relates to psychological and psychiatric topics.

Regulatory Affairs Task Force

1. Reduce placebo exposure in AED trials by implementing new endpoints (time to event).

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2. Further develop the possibilities of extrapolating data from one age group to another.
3. Interact with the European Medicine Agency in the elaboration of their new guideline for antiepileptic drugs.
4. Elaborate new study endpoints for epileptic encephalopathies and specific diseases.
5. Pursue progress on regulatory trials for status epilepticus.

Women/Pregnancy

1. Improve our understanding of the availability globally of recommendations for the management of epilepsy in women of childbearing potential.
2. Provide women with epilepsy of childbearing potential easy access to updated information of relevance for their treatment.

Commission Activities and Accomplishments:

Activities and accomplishments of the individual task forces of the Medical Therapy Commission are presented.

Access to Treatment

1. The task force conducted a global survey: "Access to AEDs." Data was collected from 110 countries (100 National Chapters + Caribbean Chapter with 10 countries represented), 81% countries in ILAE&IBE, 56% countries in the World HIC: 39 (38,6%), UMICs: 27 (26,7%), LMICs: 25 (24,8%), LICs: 10 (9,9%). The preliminary data was presented at the IEC in Bangkok (June 2019) and it was further discussed during the TF meeting held at the IEC. Unfortunately, it was impossible to analyze data concerning AEDs prices. In order to get this data, another specific form was sent to all ILAE Chapters which responded to the survey on December 2019 (deadline: 15 January 2020). Data analysis and writing of the manuscript with the survey results will start as soon the data on AEDs prices is collected. We plan to have the discussion of the final draft of the manuscript during the TF

Meeting at ECE in Geneva (July 2020).

2. Parallel survey for Africa: In order to fill the gap of information from the African Continent (LMIC/LICs), during the TF Video Conference on November 2019, it was decided to do a parallel survey for Africa using a slightly modified version of the survey questionnaires. The survey will be sent to one neurologist/epileptologist (working in tertiary care/university hospitals) and the two first level hospitals (one in an urban setting, one in a rural setting) which are indicated by the neurologist in each African country.

Botanicals & Traditional Medicines

1. The task force continues to work on expanding its website information, which has listings and descriptions of multiple botanicals and traditional medicines. They are now working to get approval of the website information by the ILAE and have it linked to the ILAE website.
2. Task force Co-chair Dr Elsas participated in a Germany/Austria/Switzerland regional epilepsy conference entitled, "Symposium: Cannabidiol as Treatment for Epilepsy – Recent Developments" in Basel, May 8-11, 2019.
3. The first botanical antiseizure medication, cannabidiol, was approved in the USA (Epidiolex) and Europe (Epidyolex).

Dietary Task Force

The Dietary Task Force held two educational initiatives and one workshop in 2019:

1. First educational initiative: The Ketogenic Diet Symposium Shenzhen China & CME Paediatric Neurology Shenzhen on July 26-28 in China;
2. Second educational initiative: Dietary Therapies for Epilepsies - Ketogenic Diet Workshop on Sept. 26-28 in the Philippines;
3. Workshop: The Third Pediatric Neurology School - Ketogenic Diet in the Treatment of Epilepsy in Children on Oct 3-4 in Uzbekistan.
4. Many of the dietary TF members are participating together with the organizing committee for the "7th

Global Symposium for Medical Ketogenic Dietary Therapies,” which will take place in Brighton, UK from Oct 6-10, 2020.

Elderly

The task force on Elderly and Epilepsy conducted an initial content review of epilepsy-related websites and found that content on epilepsy in the elderly was either minimal or hard to find.

The group is also conducting a literature review collecting and sharing of references in order to prepare a review manuscript. Dr Faught spoke on "Epidemiology and Drug Treatment of Epilepsy in the Elderly" at the Epilepsy Society of Australia in November 2019.

Emergency Treatment

The task force has been working with EpiCARE (European Reference Network for Rare and Complex Epilepsies) to identify areas where development of needed epilepsy guidelines is needed, and then to develop these clinical practice guidelines and monitor them to assess adherence and impact. One of the critical areas chosen is treatment of status epilepticus. After critical appraisal, new guidelines will be formulated and submitted to the ILAE ExCo and the EAN for final approval.

Generic Medications

Generic Task Force conducted an international survey which demonstrated poor knowledge of generic products, less education in lower income countries, concerns with quality and regulatory control, greater concern in lower income countries, and for specific products. Also, the survey revealed issues related to access to medications. The task force presented preliminary findings from this survey in an AES abstract in 2019.

Psychology

1. All-day TF meeting: The TF met for an all-day meeting at the IEC in Bangkok this year.
2. Interactive forum session at IEC: The TF ran an interactive forum session at the IEC in Bangkok to present and discuss case-based educational activities that relate to the International Epilepsy Curriculum.

3. Submission of IEC 21 session proposal: The discussion at the forum session led to the submission of an IEC 21 session proposal entitled “Suicide and Seizures - Suicide Management in Routine Clinical Epilepsy Care: Equipping Health Care Providers”.
4. ILAE webpage offering mental health care resources: The TF designed an ILAE webpage to provide mental health care resources, e.g. free downloadable screening tools for depression and anxiety for adults and children.
5. Online survey of barriers to psychological treatment in PWE complete: The TF successfully ran an international survey to investigate barriers to psychological treatment in PWE. The results of the survey will be analyzed and published in 2020.
6. Update of Cochrane review, “Psychological Treatments for PWE”: This Cochrane review is a priority review due to the update of the NICE guidelines on epilepsy. The TF has therefore created and submitted an update of the review.
7. Input to online case-based International Epilepsy Curriculum: Christian Brandt and Rosa Michaelis co-coordinated input addressing psychosocial and psychiatric issues (e.g. counseling of anxious parents, screening for depressive symptoms, etc.). So far, five members of the Psychiatry Commission and Psychology TF have provided input to all six cases that have already been developed.

Regulatory Affairs Task Force

This year was focused on two things. The first was the issue of infant epilepsy. We designed and wrote a novel design which was published as an ILAE report (Auvin S, French J, Dlugos D, Knupp KG, Perucca E, Arzimanoglou A, Whalen E, Shellhaas RA). Novel study design to assess the efficacy and tolerability of antiseizure medications for focal-onset seizures in infants and young children: a consensus document from the regulatory task force and the Pediatric Commission of the International League against Epilepsy (ILAE), in collaboration with the Pediatric Epilepsy Research Consortium (PERC). *Epilepsia Open*. 2019 Sept 4;4(4):537-543). The design was also used as a post-hoc analysis of fenfluramine that was presented at AES, which demonstrated that the de-

sign would have been successful using real data. Our second task this year was to respond to the draft EMA guidelines that are under review at the present time. Our next meeting will be with the EMA in Vienna at the European Congress.

Women/Pregnancy

The global survey of existing guidelines and recommendations for the management of women with epilepsy during pregnancy was completed. The results were presented at a session on pregnancy organized by the TF at the Bangkok IEC in June 2019. At the same session, members of the TF also gave an update on neurodevelopmental outcomes after exposure to antiseizure medications, and on the practical management of epilepsy in pregnancy in resource-limited settings. The TF has published a full-length expert opinion report in *Epileptic Disorders* on the management of epilepsy in pregnancy. An executive summary of the same report was published in *Epilepsia*. A discussion with ILAE's Wikipedia team has been initiated, with the aim to develop a Wikipedia posting based on the *Epileptic Disorders* publication, and to also to make the full-length report available through Wikipedia. In December 2019, the TF had a full day meeting in conjunction with the Annual AES meeting in Baltimore, setting the goals for its activities during 2020.

Recommendations for Future Work:

Plans for the individual task forces of the Medical Therapy Commission are presented.

Access to Treatment

1. The task force began a survey one year ago involving more than 100 countries. It will continue analyses of this data. Unfortunately, it was impossible to analyze data concerning AED's prices. In order to get this data, another specific form was sent to all ILAE Chapters which responded to the survey in December 2019 (deadline: 15 January 2020). Data analysis and writing of the manuscript with the survey results will start as soon the data on AED's prices is collected. We plan to have the discussion about the final draft of the manuscript during the TF Meeting at ECE in Geneva (July 2020)

2. Parallel survey for Africa: In order to fill the gap of information from the African continent (LMIC/LICs), during the TF video conference in November 2019, it was decided to do a parallel survey for Africa using a slightly modified version of the survey questionnaires. The survey will be sent to one neurologist/epileptologist (working in tertiary care/university hospitals) and two first-level hospitals (one in an urban setting, one in a rural setting), which are indicated by the neurologist in each African country.
3. Ultimately, the task force plans to publish the data on an international journal.
4. A session proposal for ICE Paris 2021 on Access to Epilepsy Care has been presented.

Botanicals & Traditional Medicines

The task force will continue its work on expanding its website information, which has listings and descriptions of multiple botanicals and traditional medicines. They are now working to get approval of the website information by the ILAE and have it linked to the ILAE website. One of the group's members, Dr Ekstein, will be co-author of a chapter entitled, "Botanicals and Complementary Treatments," in the book "Personalized and Stratified Therapy in Epilepsy" in 2020.

Dietary Task Force

The Dietary Treatments Task Force has proposed to organize workshops and help neurology centers set up a ketogenic diet clinic by providing essential lessons regarding the ketogenic diets. These workshops will take place in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Iran, South Africa, and Taiwan.

Elderly

The task force plans for the next year include:

1. Task force meeting, Geneva July 5 2020.
2. Writing three reviews with recommendations for future research on the following topics: Epidemiology- Faught, Beghi, Leppik, Diagnosis and Etiologies- Akamatsu, Cretin, O'Dwyer, and Treatment and Prognosis- Kwan, O'Dwyer, Kraemer.

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3. The task force plans to make a more systematic review of websites to identify good content on 'Epilepsy and the Elderly' in order to offer better content to pertinent websites.
4. 'Epilepsy in the Elderly' was requested as a main theme at the IEC 2021.
5. The task force is offering to give talks on 'Epilepsy and Elderly' at meetings other than neurological meetings (e.g., American Academy of Family Physicians, American Society of Internal Medicine).
6. Dr Leppik will speak at the US Long Term Care Association on "Epilepsy in Nursing Homes" in April 2020.
7. Drs Faught and O'Dwyer will be writing an article on pharmacotherapy of epilepsy in the elderly for *Drugs and Aging*.

Emergency Treatment

The task force will continue its work with EpiCARE to develop guidelines for the treatment of status epilepticus. After critical appraisal, new guidelines will be formulated and submitted to the ILAE ExCo and to the EAN for final approval. New European guidelines (with the EAN) shall be published in *Epilepsia* and *E J Neurology*, and guidelines for the resource-poor countries shall be published in *Epilepsia*. Later, the group plans to monitor guideline adherence and impact.

Generic Medications

The Generic Medications Task Force is working to refine their survey and working with the Access to Treatment Task Force to seek new information. The Generic Task Force plans to publish the results of its survey and is working on the development of a manuscript that will serve an informational and educational basis for understanding generic substitution. The group also submitted a proposal for a major session on generic substitution at the ILAE Congress in 2021. They will continue to collaborate with Access to Treatment Task Force.

Psychology

The Psychology Task Force will continue to conduct a web-based survey to assess barriers to psychological care in different ILAE chapters. They will collaborate with the

Identification, Treatment and Prevention TF (Psychiatry Commission) on the development of specific strategies to address the identified barriers. The Psychology TF also plans a publication of results session at IEC 21. The Psychology TF and Psychiatry Commission plan to offer ongoing input to international epilepsy curriculum informed by the results of the survey.

Regulatory Affairs Task Force

Because clinical trials for new AEDs in children age one month to four years have become unfeasible, and have ethical concerns, the task force has designed and published a new trial design in infants. It was submitted to the EMA (Pediatric Committee, CNS Working Party and CHMP). The revision of the EMA guidelines on epileptic disorders has been put on hold because of the move of the Agency from London to Amsterdam; they are planning to resume their guideline-related activities by the end of 2019, and the new revised guidelines will be enforced by then. Because of the postponing of the EMA guidelines activities, these discussions and their outcome must be followed-up on. The TF will meet with EMA during the next European Congress on Epileptology (Geneva July 2020). In regards to the FDA, the annual Research Roundtable for Epilepsy (14-15 May 2020) is our only opportunity to meet with the FDA; thus, we will focus on seizure types and epilepsy syndromes, and how to classify patients in studies to make them more representative of the general populations.

Women/Pregnancy

The TF will continue to develop new expert opinion papers on relevant topics for *Epileptic Disorders* and subsequently for Wikipedia. For 2020, we plan to deliver a similar manuscript on breastfeeding and antiepileptic drugs. To facilitate these goals TF teleconferences as well as in person meetings will be conducted in conjunction with ECE and AES for those members attending the conferences.

Report by KJ Meador, consolidating reports from task force leaders.