

Pediatrics Commission

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Stéphane Auvin (France)

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Stéphane Auvin

The Pediatric Commission's work is mainly oriented by the operations of four Task Forces. A description of the 2020 activities of the pediatric commission and all related TFs is found below. In addition, the ILAE Pediatric Commission continues its involvement for the PET course dissemination (see below after the TF reports).

The ILAE Pediatric Commission has continued its involvement in the discussion and the work of the nosology TF for the definition of the epilepsy syndromes (Elissa Yozawitz, Jo Wilmshurst, Stéphane Auvin).

Neonatal Seizure Task Forces

Neonatal Seizure Guidelines Update Task Force

Members

Ronit Pressler, (UK), **co-chair**

Hans Hartmann, (Germany), **co-chair**

Nicholas S Abend, (USA)

Linda de Vries, (Netherlands)

Alberto Espeche, (Argentina)

Cecil Hahn, (USA)

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Tammy Tsuchida, (USA)

Jo Wilmshurst, (South Africa)

Elissa Yozawitz, (USA)

Geraldine Boylan, (Ireland)

The ILAE's Pediatric Commission set up a task force to update the guidelines on neonatal seizures, which were published jointly by the WHO and the ILAE in 2012. Seizures affect at least 2/1000 neonates. They often are signs of a severe acute health problem but also significantly contribute to morbidity and mortality of both term and preterm neonates. As of today, only very few high-quality studies have addressed optimal diagnosis and treatment of neonatal seizures. For the systematic review, we identified 8 priority questions which could be divided therapeutic and diagnostic questions. For logistic reasons we agreed to concentrate initially on the 6 priority questions around treatment and postpone the diagnostic guidelines.



The taskforce organized a workshop at the 2018 European Epilepsy Congress update in Vienna specifically on the work of the guideline as well as a parallel session on neonatal seizures in Bangkok where the results of the classification task force and of the guideline task force were presented. In 2020, we finalized the data extraction for the therapeutic questions. At a small workshop last year, we evaluated the evidence using GRADE and performed the metanalysis. Currently the taskforce is writing up the evidence with the aim to formulate recommendations in spring 2021 and to make the draft available for public consultation at the ILAE website in summer 2021.

Neonatal Classification Task Force

Members

Ronit Pressler, (UK), **chair**
 Maria Roberta Cilio
 Eli M. Mizrahi
 Solomon L. Moshé
 Magda L. Nunes
 Perrine Plouin
 Sampsa Vanhatalo

Elissa Yozawitz
 Linda S. de Vries
 Kollencheri Puthenveettil Vinayan
 Chahnez C. Triki
 Jo M. Wilmshurst
 Hitoshi Yamamoto
 Sameer M. Zuberi

The Task Force on Neonatal Seizures has created a classification for seizures in the neonate, which is based on the 2017 ILAE Classification of Seizures and Epilepsies, but modified for seizures in the neonatal period. As part of the approval and adoption process, the League published the manuscript on the IALE website and asked its members to review and comment on the [proposed classification](#).



A total of 67 comments from 32 countries as well as a joint review from the International Federation of Clinical Neurophysiology in addition to the comments from four Epilepsia reviewers. The vast majority of responses were positive and in favor of the new classification. The second Neonatal Classification Task Force adapted the manuscript of the proposed classification in line with the recommendations and the Epilepsia reviews. The final classification for neonatal seizures was accepted as position paper by the ILAE executive committee October 2020 and for publication by Epilepsia in Dec 2020.

The ILAE classification of seizures and the epilepsies: Modification for seizures in the neonate

Medical Therapy in Children Task Forces

Members

Lieven Lagae, (Belgium), **chair**
 Alexis Arzimanoglou, (France)
 Stéphane Auvin, (France)
 Marilisa Guerreiro, (Brazil)
 Cecilie Johannessen Landmark, (Norway)
 Doug Nordli, (USA)

Ronit Pressler, (UK)
 Kate Riney, (Australia)
 Kenji Sugai, (Japan)
 Jo Wilmshurst, (South Africa)
 Elissa Yozawitz, (USA)

Aims: The aim of our task force is to review the current treatment options in young children with epilepsy (<4 years old), in order to stress the need for more evidence-based data. It will be clear that most AEDs used in that age group are prescribed off-label. We focus on 6 typical scenarios and review the current literature. A worldwide survey will be done to understand common treatment strategies. The 6 typical scenarios are based on the following clinical situations: 1. Febrile seizures; 2. Epileptic spasms; 3. Dravet syndrome; 4. Tuberous sclerosis; 5. Acquired structural lesion in the neonatal period; 6. Presumed genetic epilepsy with focal seizures.

Progress: In 2020, the survey was prepared and distributed through several channels (CNS, EPNS, ICNA, AOCNO). The survey period was between September and November 2020. More than 550 clinicians did participate in the survey. A preliminary analysis showed a minor bias in the respondents: the majority was located in Europe and Asia. More importantly, the survey did confirm that the large majority of epileptologists follow the published guidelines in the typical scenarios and therefore prescribe AEDs which are frequently not registered for use in the <4 years old. Currently, an in-depth analysis is performed and it is hoped we can prepare and finalise a manuscript before the end of 2021.

Research Advocacy in Children Task Forces

Members

Pauline Samia, (Kenya), **chair**
Stéphane Auvin, (France)
Helen Cross, (UK)
Choong Yi Fong, (Malaysia)
Hans Hartmann, (Germany)

Vinayan K P [Kollencheri Puthenveetil], (India)
Martin Kirkpatrick, (UK)
Marilisa Montovani Guerreiro, (Brazil)
Jo Wilmshurst, (South Africa)
Samuel Wiebe, (Canada)

The research advocacy task force had a productive year in 2020 with the main achievement being completion of data collection for the systematic review on Epilepsy research in Africa for the last 30 years commenced in 2019. On initial analysis the authors were able to include 1246 records for review the vast majority of which were from observational studies and surveys. Only 374 reports indicated having received any form of funding and at least two thirds of the publications were by African authors only. Majority of the publications had clinical presentation, epidemiology and aetiology as the predominant themes with an almost equal split between paediatric and adult studies. While countries like Nigeria and South Africa contributed to most of the studies for some African countries no publications were identified. Forty percent of the publications were considered to have a unique African research focus. Deeper analysis of the data is ongoing.

Psychiatric Issues in Pediatric Epilepsy Task Force

(Joint TF with Psychiatric Commission)

Members

Kette de Valente, (Brazil), **co-chair**
Colin Reilly, (Sweden), **co-chair**
Stéphane Auvin, (France)
Mike Kerr, (UK)
Marco Mula, (UK)

Guilherme Polanczyk, (Brazil)
Mary Lou Smith, (Canada)
Elaine Wirrell, (USA)
Symon Kariuki, (Kenya)
Choong Yi Fong, (Malaysia)

The Task Force on Paediatric Psychiatric Issues, chaired by Kette Valente and Colin Reilly, represents a liaison between the joint task force of the Psychiatry and the Pediatric Commission.

Projects

In the term of 2019-2020, the Task Force has worked in two main projects:

1. Clinical Practical Guidelines (CPG) for Psychogenic Nonepileptic Seizures in Children and Adolescents.
2. Clinical Practical Guidelines (CPG) for Anxiety and Depression in Pediatric Epilepsy.

The projects have been registered in PROSPERO (CRD42020202702; CRD42020202682) and the search has been conducted by two librarians with expertise in the field, under the supervision of the Guidelines Task Force (Drs. Nathalie Jetté and Francesco Brigo). The co-chairs selected titles and abstracts and the first analysis of the text was done. At the moment, the Task Force and Working Groups are analyzing the texts to extract main data.

Educational Activities and Conferences

The Task Force has taken part in other activities of the ILAE:

- Applied successfully for three ECE Forum for the upcoming conference in Paris (2021)
- Contributed to three of the new ILAE e-learning modules (level 1 and 2) focusing in psychosocial aspects [Neurocysticercosis (Maria) Rolandic Epilepsy (Justin); Focal Cortical Dysplasia (Jason)]
- Contributed with Lectures and Case Discussion to the 2nd International Educational Symposium of the Psychiatry Commission (Chair: Mike P. Kerr) – Pediatric Aspects
- Contributed with the ILAE webpage – Mental Health in Persons with Epilepsy during the COVID-19 Pandemic



Dissemination of the Pediatric Epilepsy Training course - 2020

The ILAE Pediatric Commission has continued its implication for the dissemination of the PET course. Jo Wilmschurst has continued the initiation and support of the African related courses. Frustratingly the COVID pandemic precluded many of the planned activities occurring.

Two face to face courses occurred in 2020 / early 2021 in Africa, in Mauritius and Tanzania. The Mauritian course was a very successful meeting organised by the South African faculty and the first time the course reached Mauritius (6-7 March 2020). Gail Scher was the faculty lead and there were 35 attendees.

PET faculty Mauritius – Gill Riordan, Jo Wilmschurst, Vasantha Govender, Gail Scher, Regan Solomons, Ronald van Toorn

Most attendees were paediatricians and medical officers, including some of the heads of department and key opinion leaders in the country. Feedback during and after the course resulted in change in practice (management of status, febrile seizures etc) and request for more courses in the near future.

The course in Tanzania was also face to face (January 2021) with some 40 attendees, faculty lead Edward Kija.

Further courses were planned but had to be deferred in South Africa and similarly for the African faculties in the other countries (Kenya, Ghana, Uganda).

Over 2020 as the pandemic became more established communication with the BPNA resulted in pilot projects of the course via an on-line system. Lectures are delivered by local faculty, delegates are on-line but can also attend small socially distant tutorial groups and the BPNA projects the course material which has been adapted for on-line needs (eg the quizzes and questions). This has meant that the faculty have to adjust their teaching techniques and the group are exploring how to ensure that some of the collegial communications resulting from the courses are not lost. Many of the major changes in practice are instigated by conversations in the coffee / lunch break between delegates and faculty when points of practice are broken down and a way forward for upskilled care discussed.

In September and November 2020 Kenya (faculty chair Sam Gwer) and Ghana (faculty chair Charles Hammond) completed on-line courses. Both faculties felt that the courses ran well and would continue in 2021 with this process while COVID restrictions are in place. Extensive support and communication has been provided by the BPNA and further blended learning programs are planned for 2021.

Excitingly a proposal is underway for a course to be run across Ghana, Tanzania and South Africa at the same time. Each country will have 2 tutorial groups with dedicated faculty on-site to give lectures (to all), cover tutorial teaching and provide mentorship to local attendees. Delegates can opt to attend the small group sessions face to face or log on online.

For the planned course in between the Brazilian faculty and the Portuguese speaking African countries (Mozambique 2020) – these have had to be deferred and the collaborative funds from ILAE/ICNA requested to be rolled over until the course can run or an option to go online is decided.

For the roll-out of train the trainer / faculty for Zambia and Zimbabwe, again roll-over of allocated funds from the Pediatric and African Commission have been requested into 2021. At this point it is not clear if the courses can be run in this new timeframe. Great enthusiasm remains from both countries. Currently the complexities of undertaking the course on-line has precluded conversion. It is viewed as even more important to undertake this training face to face.

The planned development of translation of the PET courses into French has gone very well. All translations are complete and back translation underway. This has been a considerable achievement with support from colleagues in the Canadian North American Commission, the French Chapter (led by Stéphane Auvin) and the French speaking African countries (led by Chahnez Triki, Pierre Luabeya and many colleagues). It is hoped that the allocated funds from the African Commission can be rolled over to allow roll-out of the course and establishment of a French faculty in 2021 but again this is dependent on the COVID pandemic.



Successful recipients of the Tanzanian PET course (Dr Kija behind the desk)

Submitted by Stéphane Auvin