

COMMISSION ON LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS



Marco Medina

Aims

1. To provide and promote epilepsy education and research with excellence, quality, efficient and humanistic approach for medical and non-medical professionals in Latin America
2. To coordinate academic activities among the ILAE Latin America Region chapters
3. To improve the health care of people with epilepsy in Latin America

Members

Marco T. Medina (Honduras)
Franz Chaves-Sell (Argentina)
Roberto Caraballo (Argentina)
Patricio Abad (USA)
Eduardo Barragan (Mexico)
Manuel Campos (Chile)
Laura Guilhoto (Brazil)
Lilia Maria Morales-Chacón (Cuba)
EC Liaison
Samuel Wiebe (Canada)

Task forces and Activities

At the 30th International Epilepsy Congress in Montreal, June 2013, the Commission on Latin American Affairs prioritized several new task forces and previous CLAA activities:

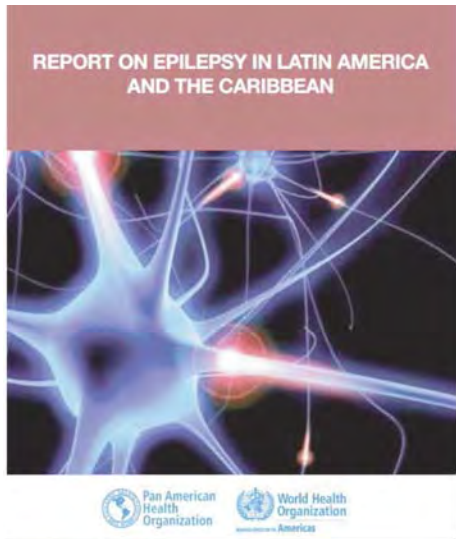
- 1) PAHO Strategy and Plan of Action on Epilepsy: Carlos Acevedo (IBE), Marco T. Medina (ILAE), Jorge Rodríguez (PAHO).
- 2) ILAE Website: Franz Chaves--Sell.
- 3) Health Primary Care: Lilia Morales.
- 4) Epidemiology and Publications: Patricio Abad, Patricia Braga, Laura Guilhoto
- 5) Epilepsy Surgery: Mario Alonso and Manuel Campos
- 6) Buenos Aires Latin American Congress: Roberto Caraballo, Silvia Kochen, Lilia Niñez, Sam Wiebe, Marco T. Medina and Patricio Abad.
- 7) LASSE: Esper Cavalheiro.
- 8) ALADE: Elza Marcia Yacubian, Jaime Carrizosa and Roberto Caraballo.
- 9) Latin America Epilepsy fellowships program coordinated by ALADE.
- 10) ILAE North American Commission collaboration.

1) Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) Strategy and Plan of Action on Epilepsy

Coordinated by Carlos Acevedo (IBE), Marco T. Medina (ILAE), Jorge Rodríguez (PAHO). At the 51st PAHO Directing Council meeting, representatives of PAHO/WHO Member States approved a Strategy and plan of action on epilepsy on September 29th, 2011, Washington D.C. with important support from ILAE and IBE. In this frame, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between PAHO, IBE and ILAE during the 7th Latin American Epilepsy Congress in Quito, Ecuador (November 2012). From June, 2013 to June, 2014 we have been working in the following activities:

- a) Regional Workshop on Epilepsy: "Epilepsy in Latin America: "Success stories and lessons learned", was held in Santiago, Chile on August 9th-10th, 2013. It was a joint initiative between PAHO/WHO, IBE and ILAE and was organized by Chile's Ministry of Health and the Chilean League against Epilepsy. The Epileptology Society of Chile and the Society of Psychiatry and Neurology for Children and Adolescents co-sponsored the event. The workshop's main objectives were to discuss successful experiences and lessons learned in selected Latin American countries, with emphasis on primary care, thus contributing to the implementation of the Strategy and plan of action on epilepsy in Latin America, and establishing priorities for action. Among the attendants were members and experts of the sponsoring organizations and representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Mexico and Uruguay.
- b) A Report on Epilepsy in Latin America and the Caribbean was published in 2013. This report was prepared with the collaboration of ILAE and IBE. Information from 25 out of 33 countries (70%) that responded a survey on plans, services and resources.
- c) Several Latin American and Caribbean countries are implementing the mhGAP-IG (mental health treatment gap program) as an important component in the process of integrating mental health and neurological disorders into primary health care. Epilepsy is one of the modules being implemented.

COMMISSION ON LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS *(continued)*



- d) A Pilot program on Primary Health Care is going on in Bolivia.
- e) The Treatment Gap Pilot Project is developing in Olancho, Honduras.
- f) Many Memorandum of Understanding at country level are implementing the Plan of Action and focusing resources on Epilepsy.
- g) The "Liga Chilena contra la Epilepsia" was designated PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center (first in the region on the epilepsy field); and the National Autonomous University of Honduras is in process to obtain this condition.
We have reports from Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil etc. about the progress on the PAHO Plan, based on these reports we are having a significant progress locally.

2) ILAE en Español and Portuguese websites

Coordinated by Franz Chaves--Sell (Chair)
ILAE en Español (http://www.ilae.org/Visitors/Centre/Trans_Spanish.cfm) and Portuguese (http://www.ilae.org/Visitors/Centre/Trans_Portuguese.cfm) websites have been developed. The ILAE en Español has 12 ILAE chapters' websites, 11 from Latin America. We have included important information on Epilepsy Classification, ketogenic diet, genetics, PAHO reports, books, etc.

3) Health Primary Care

Coordinated by Lilia Morales--Chacon (Chair).
A Survey was done on the status of the epilepsies in

the context of primary health care in the countries of Latin America, 15 countries had completed the survey. The results of the survey were discussed during the Latin American Congress of epilepsy in Buenos Aires.

4) Epidemiology and Publications:

Coordinated by Patricio Abad (Chair)
A Workshop and paper on Epidemiology Update and Guidelines for future studies was organized for the Latin American Epilepsy Congress in Buenos Aires (participants: Patricio Abad, Etorre Bhegi, Jorge Burneo, Arturo Carpio, Eduardo Barragan). A survey project on Epilepsy Services in Latin America is in process.

5) Epilepsy Surgery

Coordinated by Mario Alonso (Chair) and Manuel Campos
Support for the development of the Epilepsy Surgery program in Lima, Peru and Guayaquil, Ecuador. Participation of Epilepsy Surgery Centers in Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Costa Rica, etc. Educational conferences on Epilepsy Surgery in Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico, Guatemala and Chile.

6) Buenos Aires Latin American Congress:

Coordinated by: Roberto Caraballo, Silvia Kochen, Lilia Niñez, Sam Wiebe, Marco T. Medina and Patricio Abad
The 8th Latin-American Congress was held in Buenos Aires, September 17-20, 2014. The program is covering a broad range of topics selected from recommendations across the region. The abstracts were published in English, Spanish and Portuguese in a supplement of Epileptic Disorders.

7) Latin American Summer School in Epilepsy (LASSE)

Coordinated by Esper Cavalheiro and colleagues
The 8th Latin American Summer School on Epilepsy (LASSE VIII) took place between 16 and 25 February 2014. The central theme of this eighth edition was "Epilepsy in neurodegenerative diseases and aging". Of the 286 candidates, the organizing committee selected 63 participants attended the event and actively participated in all activities. Thus, the program could be completed in its entirety. On the last day, the students, divided into 8 groups presented the research projects developed during the school under mentoring of teachers. The lessons always related to the central

COMMISSION ON LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

(continued)

topic, were chosen by the students themselves. The discussions were stimulating and warm and involved the participation of all students and several teachers who remained until the end of LASSE. The projects submitted by groups of students were:

Group 1: Experimental model of status epilepticus for the evaluation of neuroprotection in immature and adult brains.

Group 2: Inflammatory biomarkers Involved in the development of epileptic seizures in familial Alzheimer's disease: The role of astrocytes.

Group 3: Biomarkers in Encephalopathy related to status epilepticus During Sleep.

Group 4: The story of Cain & Abel: Neurogenesis & epileptogenesis.

Group 5: Degenerative alterations in neurons and astrocytes from epileptogenic tubers of the Tuberous Sclerosis Complex and possible clinical correlation.

Group 6: Pharmacoresistant Temporal Lobe Epilepsy as a risk factor for Alzheimer's disease in animal models.

Group 7: A multicentric, longitudinal and interventional study on the evolution of early Mesial Temporal Lobe Epilepsy Diagnosed (MTLE) with Hippocampal Sclerosis (HS): Impact of physical activity and the possible role of oxidative stress. Group 8: Alzheimer's disease and epilepsy.

Analysis of the evaluations made by the students showed that, once again, the LASSE is an educational activity admired by all. The best evaluated items were, once again, the program and the quality and dedication of teachers and tutors. Thus, we are convinced that it is worth continuing with new editions of the Latin American Summer School on Epilepsy that its role is crucial in the formation of new thinkers in the area.

8) ALADE (Latin American Academy of Epilepsy)

Elza Marcia Yacubian (Chair), Jaime Carrizosa, Roberto Caraballo, Guilca Contreras and Loreto Rios have performed educational activities in different countries:

- a) ALADE Conference during the LASSE VIII on Neurodegenerative diseases: The view of a Pediatric Neurologist.
- b) Course of Epilepsy Surgery on March 3rd and 4th, 2014, Havana, Cuba;
- c). Launch and distribution of 300 copies of the book Tratamento Medicamentoso das Epilepsias in Portuguese during the 35th Congress of the Brazilian League of Epilepsy on April 3rd to 5th 2014, Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil;
- d). Launch and distribution of 300 copies of the book Tratamiento Farmacológico de las Epilepsias in Spanish during the 32nd. SOPNIA Congress of Child Neurology Chilean Society, in April 15th to 17th, 2014, at Punta Arenas, Chile.

9) Latin American Epilepsy fellowships program:

CLAA and ALADE have identified the "Epilepsy Centers" in Latin America for epilepsy training (clinical, EEG, surgery, etc.). We have had the ILAE support for three fellowships. We are evaluating the educational impact of this program.

10) ILAE North American Commission

collaboration and the Partnering Epilepsy Centers in the Americas (PECA) program. PECA aims specifically to support and expand exchange programs between the members of the Latin American Commission, the North American Commission and the Caribbean chapters of the ILAE, in order to significantly impact epilepsy care in these regions. The North American commission has supported visits to the Costa Rica, Panama, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Argentina, Ecuador, Peru, etc.

The American Epilepsy Society has a "Spanish Symposium" each year at the AES Congress.

Submitted by
*Marco T. Medina and
Franz Chaves-Sell*