

Report of the Neurology International Conference in Primary Care

Organizer: Bolivian Society of Neurology

Coordinating: Prof. Dra. Silvia Kochen* and Prof. Dra. María Cusicanqui**

* Secretary of Education of the Latin American Commission of ILAE

** President of the Society of Neurology, Bolivia

Sponsors:

World Federation of Neurology

Pan American Society of Neuroepidemiology

Latin American Commission on Epilepsy, ILAE

Considering that the number of neurologists in Bolivia is much lower than the rate per capita recommended by the WHO, we believe that it is essential to provide the basic tools for the diagnosis and treatment of neurological disorders to primary care physicians and family doctors. For the above reasons we decided to provide training on basic concepts of methodology and epidemiology and on the most frequent neurological diseases such as stroke, epilepsy, dementia, headache, and central nervous system infections.

The conference was organized as a classroom course, with free but compulsory registration, with a total of 20 hours of teaching, divided in 4 hours per day. In agreement with the health authorities of Bolivia, each participant authorized to participate in the course and with complete attendance was to receive a legal certificate to be included in the physician's training curriculum. On the other hand, each participant received a CD with all the materials presented in each class.

There was an enrollment of 350 participants, but admission was declined to about 100 applicants due to lack of space in the physical location of the event. The daily presence of the students, their interest and active participation in the seminars was remarkable.

The final day of the course, we used the last hour to make a balance among all participants and we asked to answer anonymously, free criticisms and comments of the conference. There was a very positive outlook and the initiative was highly valued, noting that they had never before been asked to participate in a similar activity. They emphasized the importance of the information received; they noted the lack of taboos of many of the concepts seen during the course to eliminate the fear of seeing patients with neurological diseases; the difficulty not only in diagnosis but in monitoring these patients. And they rated as highly likely the possibility to implement in their daily practice what they had learned. They emphasized the importance of having received diagnostic and treatment protocols, as well as the educational value that used "clinical cases". A criticism was the lack of teaching materials before the conference and requested the repetition of similar activities. Most of those present said they had made comments on the course anonymously.

In summary, we considered this course a very valuable experience. It demonstrated that it is essential to consider the importance that neurological pathology should be not only in "the hands of neurologists." We suggest repeating this experience in other countries, attracting the audience of general practitioners by inviting leading neurology specialists in each congress of neurology.

The following is a summary of the Course Program and faculty participants.

Sunday 4 March: Neuroepidemiology

Coordinator: Dr. Carlos Ketzoian

Teaching staff: Dr. Carlos N. Ketzoian, Dr. Abayubá Perna, Dr. Heber Jochen Hackembruch, Neuroepidemiology Section, Institute of Neurology, Montevideo, Uruguay

- Different stages of a research process using the example of a study of survival
- Planning a research study in primary care
- Writing a research protocol
- Building a database for clinical and epidemiological studies in primary care
- ethical
- Data analysis – general

Monday March 5: Cognitive impairment and dementia. Impact and pathogenesis

Coordinator: Dr. Raul Arizaga (Dementia Research Group of the Medical Federation Argentina)

Teaching staff: Dr. Raul Arizaga, Dr Gustavo Román (Vice-president of the World Federation of Neurology), Dr. Ricardo Allegri (Univ. Buenos Aires, Argentina), Jorge Campos (FLENI), Dr. Fernando Zegada, Dr. Maria Cusicanqui, Dr. Carlos Laforcada (Alzheimer's Association, Bolivia)

- The clinical and neurological evaluation of patients with cognitive impairment.
- The evaluation of patients with neurocognitive impairment.
- Neuroimaging and the laboratory.
- Clinical forms: Alzheimer, enf. Lewy bodies, frontotemporal dementia, vascular dementia.
- Drug treatment.
- Non-drug treatment, family support.
- Prevention of cognitive decline and dementia

Tuesday March 6: Epilepsy

Coordinator: Silvia Kochen (Univ. Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Teaching staff: Dr. Silvia Kochen, Dr. Arturo Carpio (Univ. Cuenca, Ecuador), Dr. Salvador Pal (University of Havana, Cuba), Dr. Patricia Braga (Universidad de la Republica, Montevideo, Uruguay)

- Epidemiology, social and cultural aspects of epilepsy
- Differential diagnosis
- Diagnosis, clinical tools and value of complementary studies
- Behavior therapy in the treatment of emergency and chronic treatment

Wednesday March 7: Central Nervous System Infection

Coordinator: Dr. Arturo Carpio

Cerebrovascular Disease Coordinators: Dr. Sebastian Ameriso (FLENI) and Dr. Leonardo Gonzalez (Univ. Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Teaching staff: Dr. Sebastian Ameriso, Dr. Leonardo Gonzalez, Dr. Marina Romano (CEMIC)

- Epidemiology and diagnosis of cerebrovascular disease
- Diagnosis and treatment of acute cerebrovascular disease
- Prevention and treatment of cerebrovascular disease

Thursday March 8: Headache

Coordinator: Dr. Violeta Díaz (Universidad Nacional de Chile)

Teaching staff: Dr. Violeta Díaz, Dr. Elder Sarmento (Latinoamericana Headache Soc Pte)

- Differential diagnosis of primary and secondary headaches.
- Red flags.
- Trigeminal autonomic headache
- Migraine treatment.

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