

## Survey of knowledge, attitude, and practice of epilepsy among school teachers in Pakistan: An interim report

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*Objective:* To assess the knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) of epilepsy among schoolteachers in Pakistan.

*Methods:* This study is part of School Awareness Workshops held under Comprehensive Epilepsy Control Programme of Pakistan, under ILAE/IBE/WHO Global Campaign Against Epilepsy. It was conducted in Karachi from October 2002 to January 2003, during 8 workshops in Karachi. A questionnaire with 15 questions was used.

*Results:* Of the 220 respondents who were schoolteachers, 198 questionnaires were filled correctly and were analyzed. The teachers were from government (77%) and private (23%) schools. Females consisted of 88% and males 12%. The levels of education were: master (31%), bachelor (53%), higher-secondary certificate (11%) and secondary certificate (6%). For the causes of epilepsy, the responses were: stress and tension (51%), abnormal electrical discharges in brain (38%), and supernatural/possessed/magic (0%). For the prevalence, the responses were: "less common" (55%), uncommon (21%), very common (16%). For the age of epilepsy sufferers, the responses were: any age (66%), young age (21%). For epilepsy semiology, the responses were: unconsciousness/convulsions (78%), "disconnection/behavior-change" (2.5%), both (13%). For first-aid measure, the responses were: lay in bed (42%), smell a shoe (22%), put a spoon in the mouth (17%). For effectiveness of treatment, the responses were: effective up to 90% (33%), success up to 50% (25%), uncertain (30%). Epilepsy was considered: a harmless disease (41%), not a disease (20%), hereditary (12%), transmissible (3%). On attitude to schooling, the responses were: persons with epilepsy can study in normal school (75%), cannot study in normal schools (10%), can study in normal school but in a separate classroom (5%). Most (46%) believed that persons with epilepsy could be a successful schoolteacher or sportsperson. As for the availability of antiepileptic drugs (AEDs), 37% believed that most AEDs were available, 22% felt that one or two AEDs were easily available while 19% were unaware whether AEDs were available in Pakistan. Six percent said they could name an AED and 5.6% named it correctly. As for the impact of society on people with epilepsy, the responses were: negative impact (44%), no impact (40%). As for marriage, 68% thought that persons with epilepsy should get married, and 60% believed they should have children. Twenty-seven percent had met and 24% were acquainted with persons with epilepsy. The responses were independent of age, gender or educational level.

*Conclusion:* There were many misunderstandings about epilepsy among schoolteachers in Pakistan. However the attitude of the teachers towards epilepsy was generally positive. Majority believed that students with epilepsy should be in normal school.