

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Approximately 50 million people currently live with epilepsy worldwide. Childhood epilepsy is reported to affect 6 -10 children per 1000 children in developing countries. Promotion of medication adherence is important particularly in a disease like epilepsy which needs long term medication. Adequate knowledge of the caregiver on basic management of an acute seizure at home is essential.

Objective: To describe the epilepsy profile, adherence to medication, assess the knowledge of caregivers in basic epilepsy management and determine the association of selected factors with in epilepsy control and adherence to medication in children attending the epilepsy clinic at Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children.

Methods: A cross sectional study was conducted among 349 children with epilepsy accompanied by the main caregiver. Systematic sampling method was applied. An interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Data analysis was done using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 21). Chi square test was applied to assess the associations.

Results: The mean age of the children attending the epilepsy clinic at the Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, was 2.7 years. Of the children who were eligible for schooling, 95% were attending schools regularly. A majority (96.8%) of the main caregivers were the mothers. The commonest type of epilepsy among the children attending the clinic was generalized epilepsy (30.8%). It was found that 52.3% children of the study sample were on mono therapy while 47.7% were on more than one drug. Good adherence to antiepileptic medication was seen in 83.7% of the children. The employment status of the caregiver ($p<0.05$), the type of epilepsy ($p<0.05$), type of therapy ($p=0.01$) and the fit free duration ($p=0.03$) had statistically significant association with adherence medication in children with

epilepsy. In the study sample 82.6% of caregivers had above average knowledge on emergency management at home in an event of an acute seizure.

Conclusion and Recommendations: Regular assessment of adherence to anti-epileptic medication and updating care givers' knowledge on the disease is important to improve the overall care in children with epilepsy.

Key words: Epilepsy profile, Epilepsy control, Care givers, Children, Epilepsy clinic