

BRIEF REPORT ON 16TH INTERNATIONAL NEUROLOGY UPDATE AND JOINT PHS, PSS & MDSP CONFERENCE

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Keeping up to date with new developments in medicine is a real challenge. But it's a challenge all neurologists must take if they are to do justice to their patients and aim for superior clinical expertise. Although neurology specialty is in growing stage & by the Grace of Almighty in last decade neurology bodies showed remarkable development to strengthen and continuing the training & development for the undergraduates, graduates & postgraduates in Pakistan. This year it was also unique precedence that in Karachi, national neurology body jointly organized four days conference with three sub-specialties national organizations.

Pakistan Society of Neurology (PSN) organized the 16th International Neurology Update was the joint conference(s) i.e. 8th National Stroke Conference under the auspices of the Pakistan Stroke Society, 4th

National Headache Conference by the Pakistan Headache Society (PHS) and the 2nd National Movement Disorders Conference by the Movement Disorders Society- Pakistan (MDSP). at Moven Pick Hotel Karachi on December 22-25, 2016. The local organizer of this ever biggest academic activity of Pakistani Neurologist community was the Neurology Awareness & Research Foundation (NARF).

16th International Neurology Update was the helpful occasion for neurologists and trainees to benefit from the expertise of international and national leaders who communal their knowledge and wisdom on a variety of clinically useful topics. This four days event focused mainly on the advancement in different fields of neurology and latest updates on movement disorders, headache ailments & stroke care.



Prof. Ikuyu Nonaka (Japan) Inaugurating the Scientific Exhibition of the conference

This year the Karachi Chapter of Pakistan Society of Neurology formulate the organizing committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. M Wasay. I was its organizing Secretary. We started the preparation in consultation with the Presidents of PHS Dr. Aziz B Sonawala, President of PSS Dr. Mazhar Badshah & President MDSP Dr. Nadir Ali Syed. We started the dissemination of its first information by the end of July 2016. This year we focused not only the neurology community but our main emphasis to get participation from the medical students, trainees & rehabilitation professionals as well. First time we give special support for the nursing staff specifically dealing in the neurology departments of the different hospitals of Karachi. By using all latest tools of propagation By the Grace of Almighty we get tremendous registrations form the students & trainees. We gave them special privilege & support in term of registrations. We definitely claimed that this moot was the largest registered participants ever held in Neurology specialty. By joints bodies conferences this also give a good messages in term of proper utilization of resources for the betterment of the academics.

This conference had three workshops with eight CME hours and seven scientific sessions with maximum 15 CME hours accredited by the Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) , Karachi. These workshops was conducted by the faculty came from Japan, Singapore, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia & USA. The speakers from abroad and Pakistan shared their experiences pertaining to neurology.

Japanese and Singaporean neurologists has offered to train Pakistani doctors in the area of nerves and muscle pathology at their institutes as well as providing free genetic testing if the samples are transported to their labs in Japan and Singapore. They were spoke at an introductory workshop on Nerve and Muscle Pathology, held at The Aga Khan University Hospital on Dec. 22, 2016. Speaking at the inaugural workshop of the neurology conference, experts termed intra-family marriages as one of the biggest causes of the nerve and muscle disorders in Pakistan, and stated that at least 20 to 25 percent of the muscle and nerve disorders were due to the intra-family marriages. Speaking at the workshop, Dr. Sara Khan from AKU said neuromuscular disorders were very common in Pakistan but due to lack of diagnosis facilities, many physicians could neither identify the disorders nor they were able to offer proper treatment for such patients. She claimed that in most of the cases, diagnosis for neuromuscular disorders carried out on the basis of clinical symptoms and history of the patients and then supportive treatment offered.

Muscular Pathology Specialist from Japan Dr. Ichizo Nishino, Neurologist Dr. Ikuyu Nonaka, Dr. Umapathi Thirugnanam from Singapore and former President of Pakistan Society of Neurology Prof. M. Wasay also addressed the workshop participants while Organizing Secretary Dr. Abdul Malik introduced the international experts and speakers to the local participants. Another workshop on Botulinum Toxin Use in Neurological Disorders was held on the same day evening which was presided over by Dr. Nadir Ali Syed and it was addressed by experts from Saudi Arabia Dr. Jawad Bajwa and United States Dr. Danish Bhatti.

By controlling hypertension and smoking, 50 percent stroke cases can be prevented in Pakistan. This was stated by Prof. Ismail Khatri, a Pakistani neurologist associated with King Saud bin Abdul Aziz University for Health Sciences, Riyadh. Prof. Khatri said that enormity of stroke and its burden on the healthcare system in Pakistan was so gigantic that Pakistan would have to spend billions of rupees on the treatment and rehabilitation of stroke patients every year as thousands of Pakistanis, many in their early 40s and 50s, were having stroke due to their poor lifestyle. By spending just Rs. 400 to 500 million initially on prevention and awareness, Pakistan can save over 21 billion rupees which it would have to spend annually on the treatment and rehabilitation of stroke patients every year.

Prof. Ikuyu Nonaka addressed the conference offered to train Pakistani neurologists at National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry at Tokyo, Japan. We have state of the art equipment and facilities which could be offered to young Pakistani scientists and experts to learn from their experiences and apply the knowledge and training in Pakistan for the benefit of local people.

Speaking on identification and treatment of headaches, Consultant Neurologist from United Kingdom Dr. Fayyaz Ahmed Shaikh said that migraines, especially Cluster Headaches in men, there could be thousands of patients with the miserable condition in Pakistan but due to unfamiliarity with the neurological condition, most of the general physicians could not diagnose and properly treat the condition. He was of the view that consultant neurologists take up to two and half years even in the Britain to diagnose the cluster headache and then they start treatment for the painful condition. There could be thousands of patients of this neurological condition but due to lack of diagnosis, people and physicians were not aware of its severity and sensitivity in Pakistan. All the required

medicines are available to treat migraines and cluster headaches but the issue is of its identification and diagnosis. Pakistan Society of Neurology is commendable for its holding of such conferences and training sessions to help the young doctors learn from the experiences of trained neurologists, he added.

Chairman of the Neurology Update Prof. Muhammad Wasay while speaking at the opening session said that Pakistan Society of Neurology and its allied bodies were striving hard for the training of young neurologists, general physicians and paramedics regarding the management and treatment of neurological disorders. Pakistan he stated was facing a shortfall of trained and qualified neurologists while number of patients with nerve and muscle diseases were on the rise due to poor lifestyle and lack of awareness among the masses. No reliable data on the number of patients with

neurological disorders, their prevalence and incidence in the country was available.

National Guidelines for Epilepsy for the General Practitioners and Family Physicians were launched during the concluding session of 16th International Neurology Update 2016. These guidelines have been prepared to help young doctors and physicians to diagnose epileptic seizures and fits in patients and prescribe them inexpensive but effective drugs available in Pakistan.

Co-Chairs of the Conference Dr. Nadir Ali Syed & Dr. Aziz B Sonawala and General Secretary PSN Dr. Babar Khan in their talks were grateful to all speakers specially the foreign speakers and the participants who came from across the country. They also thanked to all supporters & organizers to mark this event successful.



Group photograph taken during concluding session of 16th International Neurology Update 2016 held in Karachi from December 22-25, 2016.

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