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Research Details:

Research Title

: <u>Pediatric neurologists in Saudi Arabia: An audit of current practice</u> Pediatric neurologists in Saudi Arabia: An audit of current practice

Description

: Abstract. Pediatric neurological disorders are common and constitute up to 30% of children seen in general pediatrics. Information about the availability and practice of pediatric neurologists is vital for strategic planning of management of neurological disorders. The aim of this study was to audit current pediatric neurology services in Saudi Arabia and establish a correlation with regional population figures. Physicians practicing in the field of pediatric neurology in Saudi Arabia were identified and contacted. A structured 17-item questionnaire designed to examine their clinical practice was completed and validated by a follow-up interview. Thirty-two full-time hospital based pediatric neurologists were concentrated in the 3 most heavily populated regions of the country. Saudi Arabia as a whole had a ratio of 0.4 pediatric neurologists per 100,000 children <15 years of age given that 38.3% of the general population was <15 years at the time of the study. Pediatric neurologists had an average of 3 half-day clinics per week with an average of 13.4 patients per clinic. The ratio of follow-up visits to new patients was 3:1. Waiting times for a new non-urgent consultation ranged from 1-6 months (mean 3.4 months). Inpatient hospital admissions ranged from 1-20 (mean 6.5) per week with an average of 5.7 in-hospital consultations per week. Major deficiencies were identified in the availability of specialized nurses, occupational therapists, and psychologists. The study documents a significant shortage of pediatric neurologists in our country. The currently practicing neurologists are required to see many patients with long waiting lists and inadequate support services in many institutions. I feel that a strong demand exists to train and recruit more pediatric neurologists and that generalists and pediatricians need to continue to take a proactive role in the routine care of children with neurological disorders in Saudi Arabia

Research Type : Article

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