

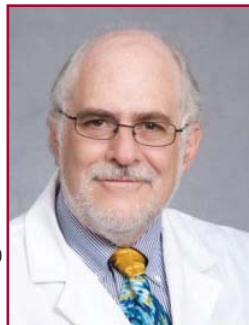
A Report from the ILAE Commission on Neuropsychobiology

Andres Kanner and Marco Mula, Co-Chairs

The principal aims of the Commission on Neuropsychobiology are to provide clinicians (neurologists and non-neurologists alike) with practical and user-friendly tools to identify the more frequent psychiatric comorbidities in epilepsy and to provide clinicians with a pragmatic approach to the treatment of these psychiatric comorbidities. To meet these critical goals our mission is to ensure that health professionals, patients and their care providers have the educational and scientific resources that are essential to understanding, diagnosing and treating psychiatric and cognitive complications of patients with epilepsy.

An important tool for evaluation and research is the availability of a standard tool that crosses languages and cultures. To meet this need the commission continued the project of promoting translation and validation of screening instruments for psychiatric disorders in epilepsy. New versions of the Neurological Disorders Depression Inventory for Epilepsy (NDDI-E) have been validated in several languages and psychometric properties have been published. The NDDI-E is currently available in validated versions in English, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese and Korean. It has been validated into Arabic as well.

VIREPA has allowed the League to provide quality education in small groups through an on-line learning platform. The first VIREPA course on psychiatric comorbidities of epilepsies has been developed and is currently running. The course is organized in two parts. Part one contains basic elements about epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical aspects and basic treatment approaches of major psychiatric problems in epilepsy, namely mood and anxiety disorders, ADHD. The advanced section discusses more



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complex problems such as psychogenic non-epileptic seizures or psychoses.

The Commission developed a pragmatic approach to treatment of psychiatric comorbidities in epilepsy. A special issue of *Epilepsia* is dedicated to this problem providing a very practical and user-friendly guide for the pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatments of major psychiatric disorders affecting adult patients with epilepsy as well as special populations such as cognitively impaired subjects.

The Task Force on Child Neuropsychiatry Task (Chair Frank Besag) is working on a number of consensus documents on specific topics that have been identified as particularly important, namely screening instruments, psychiatric complications of surgery, suicide in adolescents and ADHD in epilepsy.

The Task Force on Therapeutic Strategies, chaired by Marco Mula, published a consensus statement on the FDA

alert about suicide during treatment with antiepileptic drugs.

Under chair Michael Kerr, the Task Force on Intellectual Disabilities in Epilepsy developed, in conjunction with the IBE, a web-based survey in order to explore the views of health-professionals involved in the care of patients with intellectual disabilities. Data on burden, mortality/life expectancy, hospitalization and access to care of this subgroup of patients have been collected. Results of this project will be soon available in a special document.

The Task Force on Psychogenic Non-Epileptic Seizures headed by Curt LaFrance is working to a specific document on diagnoses of PNES and their approach. The document will soon be available.

The Task Force on Psychiatric Aspects of Epilepsy Surgery under Andres Kanner is finishing a protocol for presurgical psychiatric evaluations to be used in every surgical candidate to identify patients at risk for post-surgical psychiatric complications, in particular depression.

Epilepsy is a complex disorder that needs a comprehensive approach. Psychiatric comorbidities represent an important obstacle complicating the management of patients with epilepsy and significantly affecting their quality of life and prognosis. Further work is needed to develop models for cost-effective diagnosis and interventions taking into account local specificities. We have made great progress in the last term, but nothing would have been accomplished without the dedication and hard work of our fellow Commission members: Mike Kerr (UK), ES Krishnamoorthy (India), Frank Besag (UK), Bettina Schmitz (Germany), W Curt LaFrance Jr (USA), Lilia Nunez Orozco (Mexico), and Naoto Adachi (Japan).