

Central Nervous System Infections: Developing Country Perspective

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Abstract

Central nervous system (CNS) infections are the third leading cause of under-five mortality in Myanmar. Both viral and bacterial infections including CNS tuberculosis are common. Out of total admission of 17,000 children in 2016 in Yangon children hospital, there were 191 children with meningitis (13 mortality), including 49 children with tuberculous meningitis and 118 children with encephalitis (11 mortality). In one study on 83 children with acute encephalitis syndrome in Yangon children hospital in 2016, 35 children were positive for Japanese encephalitis virus. Another study on 66 children with viral encephalitis in three university hospitals in 2013 revealed dengue virus, Japanese encephalitis virus and Herpes simplex viruses as common etiologies.

There are significant sequelae in these children. Developmental and behavioral complications, movement disorders like dystonia are common, serious sequelae. Management of dystonia is quite challenging.

There are still many other challenges like lack of local epidemiology and etiology data, lack of easily available diagnostic tests, lack of facilities like intensive care units and neuroimaging, delayed arrival or referral to health centers.