

Antiepileptic therapies in the Mifi Province in Cameroon

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Abstract:

PURPOSE: To evaluate the availability and accessibility of antiepileptic drugs (AEDs) in two health districts in Cameroon. **METHODS:** The study included 33 patients with epilepsy, 26 physicians, 13 private pharmacists, eight hospital pharmacists, three distributors, and eight traditional healers. Structured questionnaires were used to assess the knowledge of the disease, treatment accessibility, the methods of prescriptions, and the availability and the frequency of delivery of drugs. **RESULTS:** Only one of 33 patients did not take modern treatment; 91% of the patients were followed up by a traditional healer, and 78%, by an hospital physician. Phenobarbitone (PB) was the most frequently prescribed drug by 69% of the doctors; 54% of the physicians considered the traditional therapies to be incompatible with modern drug treatment. By pharmacists, PB was delivered regularly. Other drugs went out of stock frequently. The number of packages in stock varied significantly directly with the frequency of delivery. The mean price per package and the mean number of packages in stock were higher in the public hospital pharmacies than in the private pharmacies. A majority of healers explained epilepsy as the presence of excess foam in the abdomen. The remedies proposed were to stop foam secretion