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Patterns of neurological disorders among children presenting at the neurology unit of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Teaching Hospital Amaku, Awka

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**Background**: Many children in Nigeria suffer from detrimental, debilitating and lifelong neurologic disorders many of which are highly preventable using simple cost effective interventions.

**Objective**: we examined the pattern of neurological disorders among children presenting at the neurology unit of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Teaching Hospital Amaku, Awka.

**Methodology:** A retrospective review of the hospital records of children who presented at the Paediatric Neurology Unit of COOUTH between 1st March 2020 and 31st March 2022 was carried out. Data was abstracted using a proforma and analyzed using SPSS Version 21. Statistical significance was set at p<0.05

**Results:** A total of 138 children aged 0 to 15 years were seen in the unit during the period under review, out of which 115(83.35) were diagnosed to have chronic neurological disorders. Those who had chronic neurological disorders had a male: female ratio of 1.9:1 and majority (75%) of them were below 5 years of age. The commonest presenting complaints were delayed milestone (43.4%), seizures (23.8%) and speech disorders (17.2%) while the commonest diagnosis were cerebral palsy (34.7%), seizure disorder (29.8%) and attention deficit hyperactivity (8.9%). Perinatal asphyxia (47.7%), neonatal jaundice (17.0%) and CNS infections (12.5%) were identified as the major risk factors responsible for the neurologic disorders.

Conclusion: Cerebral palsy and seizure disorders constitute the major neurological disorders among children seen in our institution. Efforts should be intensified at reducing the incidence and impact of perinatal asphyxia, neonatal jaundice and CNS infections, which were identified as the major culprits, in order to curb the menace of these debilitating lifelong neurologic sequalae. Effective implementation of proven interventions such as the Integrated Maternal Newborn and Child Health Strategy (IMNCH) strategy and Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) is recommended.

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