
Adherence, Knowledge to Epilepsy Medication and their Associated Factors Among Caregivers of Epileptic Children Followed up at the Paediatric Clinic at TH, Jaffna

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Epilepsy affects both adults and children and requires long-term medication control, with antiepileptic drugs as the first-line therapy. Good adherence to anti-epileptic medication (AEM) is essential for optimal treatment outcomes, particularly in children who may not require lifelong treatment. Caregiver awareness and knowledge play a critical role, as non-adherence to AEM has become a significant concern. This hospital-based descriptive cross-sectional study aimed to assess caregiver knowledge and medication adherence among caregivers of children with epilepsy attending the Paediatric Clinic at Teaching Hospital Jaffna. A total of 127 caregivers aged over 18 years, caring for children under 14 years with epilepsy, participated in the study, with a response rate of 97%. Data were collected using a knowledge questionnaire (score range: 0–13), numerical, and the MARS-5 (Parent Version) adherence scale (score range: 6–30), categorized into good and poor adherence. Statistical analysis included Chi-square or Fisher's exact tests, Mann–Whitney U, and Kruskal–Wallis tests, with significance set at $p \leq 0.05$. Most caregivers were parents (96%). The mean caregiver knowledge score was moderate (8.43/13). Good adherence was significantly associated with higher knowledge scores, regular clinic attendance, fewer seizure episodes, family history of epilepsy, parental factors, and awareness of medication side effects. Higher knowledge levels were associated with being married, having a middle household income, a better understanding of epilepsy, and awareness of AEM side effects. The findings highlight the need for ongoing caregiver education and consistent support from healthcare professionals to ensure effective epilepsy management in children.

Keywords: *Antiepileptic medications, caregiver, knowledge, adherence*

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