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Knowledge, attitudes and practices of general practitioners on blinding eye diseases of children in Cameroon

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The causes of childhood blindness are largely treatable and avoidable if detected early and treated adequately. General practitioners are involved in the early step of children consultations, therefore contributing to the prevention of blindness. We aimed at assessing the knowledge attitudes and practice of General practitioners concerning some childhood blinding diseases in Cameroon. A cross-sectional descriptive study including registered general practitioners in health institutions in Yaoundé and Douala was undertaken. Using a structured multi point questionnaire, we assessed basic demographic data regarding the respondents and their responses to questions about cataract, glaucoma, newborn conjunctivitis, retinoblastoma ocular trauma and refractive errors in 3 sections of knowledge; attitude and practice patterns. The data were analyzed by SPSS. An ethical clearance was obtained from. Out of 458 general practitioners in 30 health institutions 115 participated. The knowledge higher scores was 106 for refractive errors followed by traumas. The poor score was in glaucoma 78. In average half of the GPs have a salvaging attitude especially in trauma and neonatal conjunctivitis with respective scores of 110,5(96.08%) and 102,66(89.26%) With Exposure in posting 77, 91% (29,6) right attitude increases. Visual acuity is not part of the routine examination by 80 GPs 69,56% irrespective of age of children. Practice pattern was good concerning cataract but poorest performance were with retinoblastoma 11 (0,9%). In conclusion general practitioners are able to screen and refer for most blinding eye diseases in children. A posting in ophthalmology during the training improve the practice pattern.

Biography

Epee Emilienne is a Cameroonian ophthalmologist trained in Germany for undergraduates and in Zimbabwe for Masters in ophthalmology. She is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Ophthalmology in University of Yaounde in Cameroon and a PhD student at UKZN in South Africa researching on ocular morbidity. Her area of interest is primary eye care.

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