

The Issue of the Global Challenge of Neurological and Neurodevelopmental Conditions

The term “neurological” refers to matters concerning the nervous system.

Neurological disorders are the leading cause of disability and the second leading cause of death worldwide. In the past 30 years, the absolute numbers of deaths and people with disabilities relating to neurological diseases have risen substantially, particularly in low-income and middle-income countries, and further increases are expected globally as a result of population growth and ageing.

Globally, major neurological disorders resulted in 10.06 million deaths and 349.22 million Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) in 2019. When combined, neurological disorders were the main cause of the 2019 global DALYs, just after cardiovascular diseases (excluding strokes).

Neurological disorders affect people in all countries, irrespective of age, sex, education or income.

They include a wide range of disorders, such as epilepsy, learning disabilities, neuromuscular disorders, autism, ADD, brain tumours, and cerebral palsy, to name just a few. Some neurological conditions are congenital, emerging before birth. Other conditions may be caused by tumours, degeneration, trauma, infections or structural defects. Regardless of the cause, all neurological disabilities result from damage to the nervous system. Depending on where the damage takes place, determines to what extent communication, vision, hearing, movement and cognition are impacted.

This rise in absolute numbers of people affected, suggests that prevention and management of major neurological disorders are not adequately effective.

Urgent measures to reduce this challenge are therefore needed. Due to resources for health care and research being uncontrolled, guidelines need to be set to guide policy makers, governments, and funding organisations to develop and implement action plans for prevention, health care, and research to tackle the growing challenge of neurological disorders.

Points to consider:

- How exactly are member states managing the effects of the “global challenge” of neurological disorders?
- To what extent have member states offered and facilitated sufficient healthcare for various neurological disorders?
- What contributed to the highest DALY rates of neurological disorders estimated for Western, Central, and Eastern Africa, including most countries in East and Southeast Asia, and the lowest DALY rates estimated for North and South America, Europe and Oceania?

- How can we reduce the impact of Paediatric Neurological Disorders on future quality of life and wellbeing?

Useful links:

https://n.neurology.org/content/98/18_Supplement/3286

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2022.952161/full>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S107190911830010X>