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Pain management strategies for effective coping with Sickle Cell Disease: The perspective of patients in Ghana



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Aims: Prevalence of Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is high in Ghana but not much is known in terms of research into non-medical strategies for managing and coping with the pain associated with SCD. This study was carried out to examine effective non-medical related strategies patients use to cope and manage their SCD condition.

Methods: SCD patients (387) at the Korle-bu Teaching Hospital (Sickle Cell Clinic), consisting of 180 males and 204 females between 18 and 65 years old years participated in the study. A cross-sectional research design was used in which participants completed 9 questionnaires on pain, non-medical coping and management strategies, anxiety, and depression.

Results: Over 90% of participants reported that pains associated with SCD were the main reason for seeking treatment in SCD crisis. In terms of non-medical related coping strategies, attending a place of worship and praying were the main coping strategies used in SCD crises, suggesting that patients' beliefs, particularly in a supernatural being, served as a mitigating factor in the process of coping with the pain associated with SCD crisis. Also, avoidance and withdrawal from people and social activities were reported to be strategies used to cope with the pain associated with SCD crisis. Results of multiple regression analysis showed that socio-demographic characteristics contributed to the variance in the pain associated with SCD.

Conclusion: This study indicates that non-medical strategies, such as religious beliefs and psychosocial actions, are important factors for patients in Ghana for their coping and management

of the pains associated with SCD. This knowledge may add to the understanding of the SCD-patients' situation.

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PEARL – Pain in early life. A new network for research and education



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Aims: To establish a network for research and education and to provide expert knowledge to parents and health care professionals about pain in early life.

Methods: In November 2014 a group of Nordic researchers and research students, committed to the field of pain in early life, gathered for an open lecture day and workshop in Örebro, Sweden. Inspired by the work of the Canadian initiative PICH – Pain In Child Health, the network formulated its vision: To be a stable and competent research and training network within the area of pain in early life. A first collaborate project was designed: “Translation, cultural adaptation and validation of the revised version of the Premature Infant Pain Profile (PIPP-R): An effort to improve pain assessment in infants in the Nordic countries”.

Results: Fourteen months later, in January 2016, the second PEARL-meeting was held, in Oslo, Norway. The lecture day provided clinically active nurses and physicians from several countries with the latest findings on how to best manage pain in neonatal settings. The network which now consist of 18 researchers from different professions and academic levels presents itself on a five-language website: www.pearl.direct. The PIPP-R project has progressed according to the plan. The PIPP-R is translated into Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish. The cultural adaptation and validation should be finished in fall 2016. The members work on and plan for further collaborate projects. The next two steps are to translate and distribute educational material for parents via Internet and social media, and to establish a research and masters course about pain in early life. The work has been secured

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