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Knowledge, attitudes and practices of neurologists regarding the management of chronic non-cancer pain in the Republic of Moldova

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Abstract

Background: Chronic pain is a public health problem due to its high prevalence, disability, and associated comorbidities. In the Republic of Moldova, there are no health policies or strategies regarding chronic pain, and the burden on the population is not known because it is not registered nor monitored by the state. The aim was to analyze the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of neurologists regarding the management of chronic pain in the Republic of Moldova. **Material and methods:** Mixed observational study (qualitative and quantitative) was designed and carried out using a Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices research questionnaire. The study includes 50 neurologists, average age of 47.4±9.52 years, women (82%), and urban area (80%), interacting with chronic pain patients on a daily basis (86%).

Results: 42% of neurologists know about pain measurement tools, 40% of them use these pain measurement tools, 40% of neurologist know clinical guidelines, 92% of them practice pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments. The neurologists (62%) presented negative attitudes about chronic pain patients. Just 18% of them have sufficient knowledge and skills to deal with such a patient, 64% of neurologists received training on chronic pain issues.

Conclusions: Neurologists have little knowledge of pain measurement tools and guidelines and don't use them, which makes chronic pain poorly addressed, evaluated, and treated at the national level. They recognize the right of the patient to live without suffering and to benefit from quality services focused on their needs, but consider patients difficult to approach, communicate and work with.

Key words: chronic pain, knowledge-attitudes-practices research, neurologists.

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